**Palestinians turn to UN General Assembly to condemn Israel over Gaza deaths**

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The Palestinians and their supporters asked the UN General Assembly on Friday to hold an emergency meeting to adopt a resolution that would deplore Israel’s “excessive use of force,” particularly in Gaza, and seek recommendations to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians.

The move follows the US veto of a Kuwait-sponsored resolution in the Security Council on June 1 which United States Ambassador Nikki Haley called “grossly one-sided” for deploring the use of force by Israel while not mentioning Hamas which rules Gaza.

Palestinian UN Ambassador Riyad Mansour told reporters Friday that the Kuwaiti resolution was “extremely balanced,” and he said almost the same text will be put to a vote in the General Assembly.

There are no vetoes in the 193-member world body, but while Security Council resolutions are legally binding, General Assembly resolutions are not.

Mansour and supporters including representatives of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation met with General Assembly President Miroslav Lajcak Friday afternoon to officially request a meeting to vote on a resolution.

The meeting will be held Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. (19:00 GMT) following a request by a number of Arab countries, Lajcak announced Friday in a letter to the 193 member states.

“We are mobilizing all of our efforts with as many as we can reach from groups and member states to receive the largest number of votes possible to support us,” Mansour said.

Israeli Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon condemned the decision to hold the meeting.

“It is unfortunate that instead of condemning the terrorists of Hamas, some countries are looking to satisfy their domestic political needs by bashing Israel at the United Nations,” Danon said. “We will proudly defend our right to defend our citizens time and again, and in every forum where our adversaries seek to falsely malign us.”

The UN meeting took place as thousands of Palestinians protested near the Gaza border fence Friday. Israeli troops fired live rounds and tear gas and Gaza health officials said at least four demonstrators were killed, including a teenage boy, with over 600 wounded — which Mansour condemned “in the strongest terms” calling the Israelis “trigger-happy.”

“What happened today adds to our argument and to the urgency of providing international protection” for Palestinian civilians, he said.

The IDF said protesters hurled grenades, improvised explosives and rocks at soldiers, burned tires and flew dozens of incendiary kites and balloons into Israeli territory, sparking a number of fires.

At one point gunmen opened fire at an IDF post in the north of the Strip. There were no Israeli casualties.

In two months of mass protests at the Gaza border, over 110 Palestinians have been killed and thousands wounded by Israeli military fire. Most of the fatalities were members of terror groups, Hamas and Islamic Jihad have acknowledged. Israel said its troops were defending its border and accused Hamas of trying to carry out attacks under the cover of the protests.

The protests at Israel’s border peaked on May 15, when some 40,000 Gazans protested along the fence and violent clashes took place between troops and Palestinians. The protest came the day after the US opened its embassy in Jerusalem.

Mansour said the resolution to be put to the General Assembly, like the Kuwaiti resolution, will ask UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to make proposals within 60 days “on ways and means for ensuring the safety, protection and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population under Israeli occupation.”

Standing with half a dozen Arab and Islamic supporters, he said Guterres “should utilize all the tools available to him in the [UN] Secretariat and on the ground, and with all of the collective mind of all of us who are ready and willing to help in any possible way.”

“Our intention and our desire is to find practical ways supported by the international community to provide protection for our civilian population,” Mansour stressed.

The resolution expected to be put to a vote also demands that Israel refrain from the use of excessive force and “deplores the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip against Israeli civilian areas.” It calls for an immediate cease-fire. The Palestinians are also strongly backing an investigation into events in Gaza by the Geneva-based Human Rights Council and a separate General Assembly investigation, Mansour said.

The Palestinians and their supporters are following the same route they took last December after the United States vetoed a Security Council resolution calling on US President Donald Trump to renounce his recognition of Israel as Jerusalem’s capital.

They went to the General Assembly — where they have an automatic majority — which largely ignored Trump’s threats to cut off aid to any country that went against the United States and voted 128-9 to denounce the US president’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and declare it “null and void.”