Haley promises to block any appointment of Palestinian official to senior UN post

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US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley indicated she would block any appointment of a Palestinian official to a senior role at the UN because Washington “does not recognize Palestine” as an independent state.

Speaking on Tuesday before the House Appropriations State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Haley was asked about the move by the US in February to oppose the appointment of former Palestinian Authority prime minister Salam Fayyad to be the new world body envoy to Libya.

“Ron Dermer, Israel’s Ambassador to the US, called Mr. Fayyad a peace partner,” Representative David Price (D-NC) was [quoted by the Jewish Insider](http://jewishinsider.com/12147/haley-vows-to-veto-any-palestinian-for-senior-un-post/) as saying during the hearing. “Was Mr. Fayyad denied simply because of his nationality? Would any Palestinian have been blocked? As you know, this isn’t a state representative.”

Haley said that while Fayyad was “very well qualified and is a good, decent person,” the decision was based on the fact “that the US does not recognize Palestine… and because that is how he was presented, we did oppose that position.”

“If we don’t recognize Palestine as a state, we needed to acknowledge also that we could not sit there and put a Palestinian forward until the US changed its determination on that front,” she said.

Fayyad was prime minister of the Palestinian Authority from 2007 to 2013, and also served as finance minister twice. He had been tapped by UN chief Antonio Guterres to replace Martin Kobler of Germany, who has been the Libya envoy since November 2015.

Haley said in February that she did not “support the signal this appointment would send within the United Nations,” where the Palestinians do not have full membership.

Israel welcomed the move at the time, even though Fayyad is widely respected in Israel and abroad as a pragmatic and moderate Palestinian leader.

Israeli ambassador to the UN Danny Danon hailed “the beginning of a new era at the UN,” less than a month after the inauguration of US President Donald Trump who had sharply criticized the UN for its anti-Israel bias and had vowed that “things owuld be different” once he is in office.

Trump and Haley also criticized the United Nations for adopting a resolution in December 2016 that demanded an end to Israeli settlement building. The resolution was allowed through after the administration of then US president Barack Obama chose not to use its veto power.

Haley too has vowed to back Israel at the UN, calling on the world body to stop its bias. She’s said that there was now a new era at the UN and that “the days of Israel bashing are over.”