



## General Assembly GA/SHC/3966

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Sixty-fourth General Assembly  
Third Committee  
41<sup>st</sup> & 42<sup>nd</sup> Meetings (AM & PM)

### THIRD COMMITTEE APPROVES RESOLUTION AIMED AT 'COMBATING DEFAMATION OF RELIGIONS'

#### ONE OF 16 DRAFT TEXTS RECOMMENDED TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### Refugee High Commissioner, Globalization, Disabilities Convention, Palestinian Self-Determination, Protecting Migrants Among Other Issues Addressed

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#### Background

The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) met today to take action on 21 draft resolutions, on ... the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (document [A/C.3/64/L.56](#)); ...

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#### Action on draft texts

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Following that action, the Committee then turned to a draft resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (document [A/C.3/64/L.56](#)), which was introduced by the representative of Egypt.

By that text, the Assembly would reaffirm the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine. It would urge all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination.

The representative of Israel requested a recorded vote on the text.

Speaking in explanation of position before action, the representative of United States said that, with respect to the situation in the Middle East, his Government's policy was to support the goal of two states living side by side in peace and security. That policy was backed up by substantive diplomatic assistance to both sides, as well as through financial support to the Palestinian Authority and to Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). There was no contradiction in its support for Palestinians and its support for Israel.

He was discouraged by the tabling of that resolution, which was unbalanced, unlike those with respect to other States, geographic area or issues. It placed demands on Israel, and did not refer to steps that both sides needed to take towards peace. The text presupposed the outcome of talks on the right of return and the status of east Jerusalem, which made it difficult to resolve them. It would undermine the institutional credibility of the United Nations, which, through the Quartet, had an important role to play in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The representative of Israel said that, earlier in Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Netanyahu had reiterated Israel's desire to restart negotiations. He had called on President Abbas to begin talks immediately. In June, Prime Minister Netanyahu outlined his vision for a genuine peace that was defensible and permanent, involving one Jewish and one Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security. Real progress towards self-determination did not happen because of one-sided resolutions such as this, and so many others. Progress took place on the ground through bilateral negotiations. For that reason, Israel had called on the Palestinian leadership to return to talks.

Turning to the draft, she said it reflected a pattern in which there was a failure to address all sides in an equitable manner, and did not serve the cause of peace. It failed to place responsibility on Palestinians to ensure the safety and security of the State of Israel and its people. It ignored the road map, in which incremental steps towards peace had been laid out. She called for the resumption of peace negotiations, which could bear the fruit of peace, where the stale resolution did nothing. For that reason, she had called for a vote, and would vote against it.

The draft resolution was adopted by a vote of 171 in favour to 6 against ( Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau and United States), with 5 abstentions ( Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Tonga and Vanuatu). (See Annex I).

The representative of Australia said he had voted in favour, because it supported the rights of Palestinians to self-determination, in line with his Government's longstanding view that peace between Palestinians and Israelis must be predicated on a two-state solution. Australia urged those parties to resume negotiations. In earlier years, until 2004, Australia had abstained on the resolution because the text had included references to the International Court of Justice advisory opinion on Israel's security barrier. But, it had come to the view that, while the court's opinion was not supported by the Australian Government and it considered that opinion non-binding, it would not oppose the text because of the references.

The representative of Argentina said self-determination required an active subject for its exercise. Without this being so, that right must be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and other relevant provisions. With regard to the Malvinas Islands, the resolutions of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee [Fourth Committee] highlighted the special status of those islands. In particular, they recognized that the form to settle the dispute in the Malvinas was the resumption of bilateral negotiations between his country and the United Kingdom, bearing in mind the interests of the inhabitants of those Islands. The Malvinas Islands were illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, which had expelled the local population. As a result, self-determination did not apply to the situation there.

Iran's representative said his delegation had voted in favour of the resolution, but his delegation wished to re-emphasize that it would continue to maintain its longstanding position on the issue of the Palestinian people. It believed that a durable peace in Palestine would be possible through the end of the occupation, the return of all refugees and the establishment of a democratic Palestinian State with Al-Quds as its capital, among other things.

The representative of the Federated States of Micronesia reaffirmed its commitment to the two-State solution and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. However, his delegation could not accept language which prejudged the outcome of the negotiations between the parties, which needed to resume. Further, his delegation feared that operative paragraph 2 also endangered the impartiality of the United Nations on the matter. It was also concerned with the reference to the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion. For these reasons, it had voted against the draft resolution.

Noting that she had been late to push her voting button, the representative of Norway said her delegation had co-sponsored the resolution and would like for its vote in favour of the text to be included in the meeting's records.

Botswana's representative said her delegation had abstained, but as a co-sponsor it wished to vote in favour of the draft text.

The Secretary, MONCEF KHANE, said the Secretariat had duly noted the wishes of Norway and Botswana, which would be reflected in the records of the meeting. However, the vote could not be changed.

Making a general statement, the representative of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine thanked those delegations that had voted in favour of the text. She also thanked the over 140 co-sponsors. She said that foreign occupation remained the crux of the problem facing the Palestinian people. Thus, support for the resolution was crucial, until the day when this right was realized.

She said the statement made by Israel merited no response. However, something must be said regarding Israel's vote against the draft, which indicated that the Government did not support the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people. One could not say one recognized the rights of the Palestinian people and, at the same time, refuse their right to self-determination. Indeed, the right to self-determination was not a matter to be negotiated. Moreover, the blatant refusal to recognize the right of the Palestinian people by Israel was evident in its actions. As regards the peace process, it should be said that the continuation of Israel's illegal colonization campaign were evidence, in that respect. The extension of settlements must be ended before peace negotiations could be launched.

She said her delegation continued to be perplexed by the dichotomous United States position. On the one hand, it said it supported the establishment of two States, while, on the other, it cast a vote against Palestinian self-determination. Her delegation had hoped that, with the new administration, this would change. The message the United States sent with its vote against this draft must be considered.

She welcomed, on a positive note, Australia's vote in favour of the draft text. If peace in the Middle East was to be achieved, a solution must recognize the rights of both peoples. The Palestinian people had been striving for that right for over 40 years. They would not give up that struggle until a Palestinian State was not just a dream, but a reality.

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## ANNEX I

### Vote on

The draft resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (document A/C.3/64/L.56) was approved by a recorded vote of 171 in favour to 6 against, with 5 abstentions, as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia,

Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against : Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States.

Abstain : Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Tonga, Vanuatu.

Absent : Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kiribati, Norway, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sao Tome and Principe, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan.

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