



General Assembly GA/SHC/4033

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Sixty-sixth General Assembly

Third Committee

49th & 50th Meetings (AM & PM)

THIRD COMMITTEE APPROVES RESOLUTION CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SYRIA.

BY VOTE OF 122 IN FAVOUR TO 13 AGAINST, WITH 41 ABSTENTIONS

Also Approves 9 Other Texts on Range of Issues, Including Social Development, Disabilities and Development Goals, Child Rights, Palestinian Self-Determination

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Background

The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) met today to conclude its work for the current session by taking action on several draft resolutions...

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Also: ... the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (document [A/C.3/66/L.61](#)); ...

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Action on Draft Resolutions

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The Committee also took note, under agenda item 69 (c), of: the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (document [A/66/358](#)) ...

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Next, the Committee took up the draft resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (document [A/C.3/66/L.61](#)), which was presented by Egypt's representative.

The Chair said that a recorded vote had been requested on the resolution.

The representative of Egypt asked which delegation had requested the vote.

The Chair said that Israel had requested the vote.

Speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, Israel's representative said that history had shown that peace had to be negotiated. Only Israel and Palestine

could negotiate that peace. While Israel had demonstrated its preparedness to recognize Palestine's right to self-determination, Palestine must recognize Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and that it had had the right to live in peace. The resolution failed to even call the Palestinians to enter into bilateral negotiations with Israel. Peace would not be achieved through disingenuous resolutions such as this one, and for those reasons her delegation had called for the vote and would vote against the resolution.

The Committee then approved the draft resolution by a vote of 166 in favour to 5 against (Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia and the United States), with 4 abstentions (Cameroon, Haiti, Togo and Venezuela).

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 also urge all States, as well as 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.

Speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, Argentina's representative reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to form an independent free State within its 1967 borders. That was why it voted in favour of the resolution. Israel also had the irrevocable right to have its border recognized and live in peace, he said. Self-determination had nothing to do with the case of the Malvinas Islands, which had to do with territorial integrity. That was a particular issue pertaining to decolonization, and could only be resolved through negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

Algeria's representative said his country had voted yes to the resolution, and requested it be added to the records.

The representative of the United Kingdom, speaking in right of reply to Argentina's representative, said his country attached great importance to the principle of self-determination, which underlay its position on the Falkland Islands. There could be no negotiation on the Falkland Islands with Argentina unless at some time the islanders so wish.

Making a general statement after the vote, the observer of Palestine expressed gratitude to all countries who voted in favour of the resolution. The near unanimous vote in favour came at a unique time in the struggle for freedom of the Palestinian people as they sought to become Members of the community of nations. Along with expansion of its illegal settlements, the vote by Israel showed it rejected a peaceful coexistence side-by-side. The right to self-determination was not one of the permanent status issues – it was a given inalienable right for all people, including the Palestinian people, and it had been delayed too long. The two-State solution for peace, which enjoyed broad international support, was threatened by Israel's settlement campaign, which was the main obstacle to peace, as well as the expansion of its wall. That was the real threat to peace, not the resolution. Palestine continued to appeal to the international community to "stand for right before might" and to bring to an end the Israeli occupation that began in 1967.

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