



[More Western Countries Recognize Palestinian State to Coincide with United Nations General Assembly's Annual Meeting](#)

As the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) annual meeting takes place this week in New York City, much of the focus has been dedicated to the ever-growing number of countries announcing formal recognitions of Palestinian statehood. This notable diplomatic development is occurring against the backdrop of increasing global criticism towards Israel's unlawful actions in both Gaza and the occupied West Bank. The significant wave of additional Palestinian statehood recognitions highlights the unprecedented level of denunciation regarding Israel's continued violations, as well as its deepening international isolation. On Sunday, in the lead-up to the start of the UNGA's high-level general debate, several Western countries including the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia issued official recognitions of Palestinian statehood which were followed by ones from France and a handful of others on Monday. The latest array of these has meant that over 80% of UN member states – an overwhelming majority of the international community – now formally recognize Palestine.

The motivations for the new wave of Palestinian statehood recognitions have been largely driven by growing outrage and objection to Israel's devastating military assault on Gaza and the appalling humanitarian catastrophe that it has created. This has prompted widespread condemnation from countries around the world, with many framing their diplomatic moves as a response to what has been unfolding during the past nearly two years there. Rebuke over the Gaza War has spurred large public protests and shifted public opinion against Israel, and thus a host of governments are responding to this domestic pressure by taking stronger positions too in order to signal their disapproval of Israel's actions. Furthermore, the strengthening consensus regarding Israel's genocidal conduct in Gaza has played a role in prompting additional nations to recognize Palestine as an important acknowledgement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people. On top of Israel's egregious actions in Gaza, the alarming uptick of illegal settlement expansion and settler violence in the occupied West Bank have also fueled the widening global efforts to recognize Palestine as a way to reaffirm the unlawfulness of Israeli occupation and land theft. Palestinian statehood recognitions are intended to try to preserve the potential viability of a two-state solution as well, particularly in light of blatant Israeli government attempts to hinder it. The recent moves by France, the United Kingdom, and others also allow countries to increase political and legal pressure against Israel and further diplomatically isolate it and its primary remaining backer, the United States.

In his remarks during a summit co-hosted by France and Saudi Arabia at the UNGA a day before the start of the high-level general debate, UN Secretary-General António Guterres fittingly pointed out that recognition of Palestinian statehood is an undeniable right under international law, not in any way a reward – rejecting Israeli claims echoed by some Trump administration officials that it was a “reward for Hamas.” Proponents like Guterres have aptly contended that by offering a political and diplomatic path forward, moderates will be empowered while conversely, further denials of statehood and perpetuation of injustice will only serve to embolden extremists. As such, this month, the UNGA adopted The New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine – a resolution supporting a two-state solution based on the 1967 lines, criticizing both Hamas and Israel, and calling for an end to the Gaza War. Various world leaders have also used the UNGA as a means of voicing their denunciation of Israel's actions throughout the Middle East – underlining how its bellicose conduct threatens the prospects of regional and international peace and stability.

While it does not immediately change the circumstances or realities on the ground, analysts have stated that growing Palestinian statehood recognition goes beyond mere symbolism. It demonstrates a shifting global diplomatic landscape which strengthens Palestine's legal and political standing, and places greater pressure on Israel to engage in a credible and legitimate peace process. The new wave of recognitions also solidifies the international community's belief in Palestine's right to statehood and increasingly isolates Israel, the United States, and the remaining holdouts on the issue. Moving forward, it remains to be seen whether or not this paves the way for the needed impactful political and economic measures to propel concrete positive progress.