

Ireland Set to Recognize Palestine as a State



Dublin, February 13 (RHC)-- Following the new Israeli decision to legalize settlements on Palestinian land, the Republic of Ireland appears poised to recognize Palestine as a legitimate state in the near future.

According to the newspaper Haaretz, Israeli Ambassador to Ireland Zeev Boker warned Jerusalem that Dublin likely will soon recognize Palestinian statehood. Boker is reportedly planning to ask Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to call Ireland Prime Minister Enda Kenny to smooth out the issue and ask Donald Trump's fresh U.S. administration to pressure Dublin away from Palestinian recognition.

While Ireland's view on the situation has been known for some time, it has been bolstered by the fact that Israel passed a law earlier this week to retroactively legalize around 4,000 settler homes built on privately-owned Palestinian territory in the occupied West Bank.

Palestinians are fearful that the legalization of the outpost settlements will crush any hopes of a future Palestinian state by eroding the basis of a two-state solution. Activists and human rights groups have called for an end to the illegal settlements, a view supported by last year's U.N. Security Council resolution vote. All Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are illegal under international law.

In Western Europe, a number of countries have called for the recognition of Palestine, and following

Israel's latest approval of the settler homes, the European Union postponed a summit meeting with Israeli authorities, scheduled for the end of this month in Brussels.

While the majority of U.N. member states recognize Palestine, the U.S. and most of Western Europe remain notable exceptions. If Ireland goes ahead with the move, it will join Sweden, Iceland and the Vatican City as the only other Western states to recognize Palestine.

Throughout history, Irish people have shown solidarity with Palestine, where many view their struggle as similar to the colonization of Irish land and suppression of Catholics by British occupation authorities, particularly in Northern Ireland.

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