

# *Israel's Netanyahu to visit Colombia for Duque's swearing-in*

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Bogota, July 31 (RHC)-- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is scheduled to visit Colombia for the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected Ivan Duque, on August 7th, which would be his second visit of to Latin America in less than a year, when he visited Argentina, Mexico, and Colombia in September 2017.

His last visit was greeted with protests as he toured several countries in Latin America last year. Protesters accused the State of Israel of using genocidal policies against the Palestinian people, which included ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in Gaza and the Occupied Territories. He was also rejected due to his January 2017 comments expressing his support for the expansion of the border wall between the United States and Mexico.

During the campaign, the then far-right candidate Ivan Duque said that he was considering to move the Colombian Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, and become the third country in Latin America to follow the example of the U.S. Trump's administration, after Guatemala and Paraguay. He was considering "the possibility of placing the diplomatic seat in Jerusalem" and that he wishes to "maintain the best possible relations with the state of Israel," as Duque said on May 16th.

Duque has stated on several occasions his close relationship with Israel, he has praised them on the

recovery of "their historical territories" and blamed the Palestinian resistance for the attacks in which over one hundred Palestinians were murdered by the Israeli forces, using the same arguments used by the Israeli government.

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