

Under U.S. pressure, UK and France drop plans to recognize Palestinian state



London, June 8 (RHC)-- France and the United Kingdom are reportedly retreating from earlier plans to recognize a Palestinian state at an upcoming international summit in New York.

French President Emmanuel Macron—co-sponsor of the June 17–20 conference alongside Saudi Arabia—had been urging European allies, including the UK, to support Palestinian statehood during the gathering.

Macron previously described recognition as “a moral duty and political requirement.”

However, French officials have informed Israeli counterparts that the summit will no longer serve as a platform for formal recognition.

Instead, the focus will shift to outlining a roadmap toward recognition, conditional on a series of measures from the Palestinian side, The Guardian reported.

Those conditions reportedly include a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, the release of Israeli captives held by Hamas, reform of the Palestinian Authority, Gaza's economic reconstruction, and a definitive end to Hamas's rule in the territory.

The shift comes amid pressure from the United States, reportedly urging Paris and London to hold back. Last week, Israeli diplomat Alon Pinkas told The Middle East Eye that France's push was "serious and has the backing of most of the European Union and Saudi Arabia."

Israel's ambassador to France, Joshua Zarka, also called Macron's initiative "disastrous."

Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich has vowed an "escalation" of land expropriation in the occupied West Bank if the European Union recognizes the state of Palestine. Human rights advocates have criticized the move to delay recognition.

Kenneth Roth, former executive director of Human Rights Watch, said the proposed preconditions risk turning recognition into an "endless (nonexistent) 'peace process'," and urged pressure on Israel to stop obstructing Palestinian statehood.

Although 147 countries already recognize Palestine, many European states have hesitated, often linking recognition to Israeli consent and broader diplomatic progress. Last year, Ireland, Spain, and Norway broke ranks and formally recognized Palestinian statehood.

In an open letter to Macron, The Elders—a group of former senior UN officials—called recognition "an essential transformative step toward peace," urging France to act on principle, regardless of the pace or terms of future negotiations.

[SOURCE: AFP and NEWS AGENCIES]

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