

Milei says Argentina to move embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2026

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Argentina's President Javier Milei addresses Israel's parliament during a session of the Knesset in Jerusalem on June 11, 2025 [Menahem Kahana/AFP]

Tel Aviv, June 13 (RHC)-- Argentinian President Javier Milei has announced that his country will move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem next year, as the populist leader signalled his support for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's increasingly isolated government.

Argentina's embassy is currently located in Herzliya, just outside Tel Aviv. But in a speech to Israel's parliament on Wednesday, staunchly pro-Israel Milei said he was "proud to announce" his country will move its "embassy to the city of west Jerusalem" in 2026.

"Argentina stands by you in these difficult days," Milei said. "Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about a large part of the international community that is being manipulated by terrorists and turning victims into perpetrators," he told the Knesset.

The Argentinian leader, currently on his second state visit to Israel since taking office in 2023, said Buenos Aires will continue to demand that Israeli captives held in Gaza be released, including four with Argentinian citizenship taken during the Hamas-led October 7, 2023, attack.

Milei also criticised Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who was detained and deported by Israeli authorities this week after being taken with other activists from a Freedom Flotilla Coalition ship attempting to break Israel's naval blockade on Gaza.

Thunberg has been a vocal critic of Israel's war crimes in Gaza and deliberate starvation of the territory's Palestinian population. "[Thunberg] became a hired gun for a bit of media attention, claiming that she was kidnapped when there are really hostages in subhuman conditions in Gaza," Milei said, according to a translation of his remarks from Spanish provided by the Knesset.

Israel is facing mounting international pressure over the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, with the overall death toll after more than 20 months of war surpassing 55,000 Palestinians.

Milei had pledged to move Argentina's embassy during his first visit in February 2024, in which he also prayed at the Western Wall, a revered religious site for Jews in Jerusalem.

Speaking in advance of Milei's address to parliament this week, Prime Minister Netanyahu said "the city of Jerusalem will never be divided again". The status of Jerusalem is one of the most delicate issues in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, with Israel claiming the entirety of the ancient city as its capital, while Palestine claims its occupied eastern sector as the capital of any future Palestinian state.

Israel first occupied East Jerusalem during the 1967 Six-Day War, before unilaterally annexing it in 1980 in a move rejected by the United Nations Security Council. Due to its disputed status, the vast majority of the 96 diplomatic missions present in Israel host their embassies in the Tel Aviv area to avoid interfering with peace negotiations.

Currently only six countries – Guatemala, Honduras, Kosovo, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and the United States – have embassies located in West Jerusalem.

During his first term in 2017, President Donald Trump made the shock decision to unilaterally recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital before moving the U.S. embassy there a year later, prompting Palestinian anger and the international community's disapproval.

This status was not revoked under the Biden administration and Washington continues to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital today.

[SOURCE: AFP and NEWS AGENCIES]

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