

URGENT

PWG NOTE: AMPLIFYING THE IMPACT OF RECOGNITION OF PALESTINE

In light of the French-Saudi initiative to promote international recognition of the State of Palestine and the boost given by President Emmanuel Macron's announcement that France will recognize Palestine at the upcoming UN General Assembly session in September 2025, we have seen additional countries, including the UK, Canada, Australia, Malta, Luxembourg, San Marino, and Portugal, indicate that they, too, will take the step. In so doing, these countries will join Sweden, the first Western European country to have recognized Palestine in 2014, and Ireland, Norway, Spain, and Slovenia, which did so in May and June 2024.

We welcome recognition of the State of Palestine at this critical time, with Israel's brutal war on Gaza about to enter its third year, Israeli hostages remaining in Hamas captivity under hellish conditions, the people of Gaza facing starvation in an area that has been laid waste, and Palestinians in the West Bank facing increasing violence meant to drive them off their lands.

We believe recognition must be more than a symbolic gesture and should mark the realization of the Palestinian right to self-determination, the reinstatement of the two-state paradigm, and the conferment of equal standing to the two parties, resulting in *parity of esteem* between Israelis and Palestinians.

Given that recognition is a foundational element in the implementation of the two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, we believe that declarations of recognition of Palestine should be rich in content that underscores the significance and ties it to international law. Accordingly, we call for the inclusion of an explicit reference to the June 4, 1967 lines as the basis for determining the borders between the two countries with the assertion that any changes, including with regard to Jerusalem, must be agreed to by the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolution 2334.

Furthermore, we propose that declarations on recognition of Palestine include a reference to the International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the Israeli occupation, which determined that all states are obligated to respect the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and "not to recognize any changes in the physical character or demographic composition, institutional structure, or status of the territory occupied by Israel on 5 June 1967, including East Jerusalem, except as agreed by the parties to the conflict through negotiations."

We believe that those states that recognize the State of Palestine should make it clear that they are also reaffirming their recognition of the legitimacy of the State of Israel within the 1967 lines with two capitals in Jerusalem and that the move lays before the two parties a political horizon for achieving security and stability in the region.

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"We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians." (Nelson Mandela, 1997)