

BEHIND THE UN RESOLUTION TO HALT ISRAELI SETTLEMENT LIES OBAMA'S DENIAL OF THE ELECTION OF DONALD TRUMP. THE TWO MEN CANNOT STAKE EACH OTHER AND THIS IS THE WAY OBAMA HAS FOUND TO INFLICT A COVER-UP ON TRUMP, WHO WILL NOT LET IT GO, AND WILL WAIT UNTIL HE TAKES POWER TO PUT THE BRAKES ON OBAMA'S DECISIONS. HOWEVER, THE ISRAELI HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, SUPPORTED BY THE POPULATION, DOES NOT INTEND TO SUBMIT TO THE DEMANDS. HISTORICALLY JERUSALEM IS THE CAPITAL OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE AND THE 'EASTERN' PART WILL NEVER BE RETURNED TO THE ARABS. WHEN TO STOP COLONISATION? IN THE CURRENT STATE, THE TERRITORIES ALREADY HAVE BEEN ANNEXED IN SUCH PROPORTION THAT A STOP WOULD NOT CHANGE MUCH. AS FOR PEACE BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND ARABS, IT WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO INTERVENE WHEN THE ARABS RECOGNISE THAT THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES. "THE EXISTENCE OF THE HEBREW STATE IS NOT A GIVEN. . WHICH

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#### RESOLUTION OF THE RESOLUTION.

#### STOPPING ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE PALESTINIANS TERRITORIES

For the first time since 1979 the UN Security Council called on Israel to stop settlement activity in the Palestinian Territories and East Jerusalem, in a resolution made possible by the US decision not to use its veto power.

The United States abstained on Friday, whereas they had always supported Israel until now on this extremely sensitive issue. The 14 other members of the Council voted in favour of the text initially proposed by Egypt.

"Israel rejects this shameful anti-Israeli UN resolution and will not comply with it," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office reacted strongly in a statement.

This is a "great slap in the face" for Israel, said Nabil Abu Roudeina, spokesman for the Palestinian presidency, speaking of "a unanimous international condemnation of the settlements and strong support for a two-state solution".

This international issue is coupled with a marked divergence between the outgoing US administration of Barack Obama and US President-elect Donald Trump.

The latter had successfully intervened with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to postpone the vote on this text, initially scheduled for Thursday. And he quickly sought to reassure Israeli allies after the adoption Friday: **"Things will be different at the UN after January 20," when he takes office, he tweeted.**

## **- Israeli diplomatic reprisals -**

After Cairo's about-face, four countries - New Zealand, Malaysia, Senegal and Venezuela - had finally secured a vote on Friday.

Israel immediately applied "a series of diplomatic measures" against Senegal and New Zealand, as the Hebrew state does not have diplomatic relations with the other two countries.

Just hours after the vote, Mr Netanyahu announced, among other things, the "immediate" recall of his ambassadors to New Zealand and Senegal "for consultations", as well as the cancellation of all aid programmes to Senegal.

Wellington said the UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlements should not have surprised the Jewish state. "We have been transparent about our view that the (Security Council) should do more to support the Middle East peace process," New Zealand's mini-foreign minister Murray McCully said Saturday morning.

The resolution voted on Friday urges Israel to "immediately and completely cease all settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem", stating that Israeli settlements "have no legal standing" and are "dangerous to the viability of a two-state solution".

Frustrated by years of unsuccessful diplomatic efforts, the United States justified its abstention by the impact of settlement on the search for peace in the Middle East.

"One cannot simultaneously defend Israeli settlement expansion and a two-state solution," as Benjamin Netanyahu does, US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power said after the vote, which was greeted by applause.

The Obama administration vetoed a similar resolution in 2011. But five years later, the position of the outgoing president, who has a notoriously bad relationship with Mr Netanyahu, was the subject of much speculation about a possible reversal.

## **- Political transition in the United States -**

"When they learned that (the Obama administration) would not veto the resolution, Israeli officials contacted members of Trump's transition team to ask for the president-elect's help," an Israeli official told AFP on Friday on condition of anonymity.

This assistance was materialised by an appeal to Abdel Fattah al-Sissi, after which Egypt had called for the postponement of the vote.

Settlement is seen as a major impediment to the peace process, with Israeli construction on land that could belong to a future Palestinian state.

The UN considers it illegal under international law and has repeatedly called on Israel to stop it. Despite this, UN officials have noted an increase in construction in recent months.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday welcomed the adoption of Resolution 2334 as proof that a "two-state solution is still possible".

After the failure of the last American efforts to restart the peace process in April 2014, a conference has been convened by France for 15 January to reiterate the international community's support for this solution.

"The resolution adopted today and the international conference in Paris represent two sides of the same coin, aimed at affirming our common commitment to the two-state solution," said French Ambassador to the UN François Delattre.

The United States had so far used its veto power thirty times to block resolutions concerning Israel and the Palestinians, according to the Security Council Report. The last time the US abstained from a vote in the Security Council was in 2009 on a call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

In 1979, the Security Council adopted Resolution 446, which considered the establishment of settlements in the Palestinian Territories by Israel as illegal and an obstacle to peace. Even then, the United States abstained.

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