



Sinn Féin

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INTERNATIONAL REACTION TO ISRAELI ANNEXATION PLANS

Sinn Féin President, Mary Lou McDonald TD, calls on Irish Government to oppose Israeli annexation and recognise the State of Palestine

In a letter addressed to the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, Sinn Féin President, Mary Lou McDonald TD, has called on the Irish Government to condemn Israeli annexation plans and recognise the State of Palestine.

She said:

“The Programme for Government commits to play a strong role in promoting peace and international partnership through the United Nations and other international organisations, and to protect human rights in every state.

“In that context I urge you to ensure Ireland uses its position on the UN Security Council to challenge in the strongest terms the proposed annexation of Palestinian lands by Israel which has been roundly condemned as a flagrant violation of international law.

“Israel’s intent is in defiance of strong



international opposition to these plans, including from the United Nations and European Union.

“I am grievously concerned that these plans could indefinitely hold back any prospect of a long term democratic and peaceful solution to the plight of the Palestinian people, or worse still be permanently lost.

“Sinn Féin believes that Ireland and the international community has a diplomat-

ic and moral obligation to act. Failure to do so is a perverse incentive for Israeli authorities to continue flouting international law and to consistently breach UN resolutions. The absence of effective international sanctions has emboldened aggressive and oppressive actions by the Israeli government against the Palestinian Authority, and its citizens across the West bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.

“I therefore call on the government to recognise the State of Palestine, to publicly condemn Israeli annexation plans on behalf of the Irish people, and also use its influence within both the UN Security Council, and the European Commission, to progress European Union words of opposition against the planned annexation of the West Bank into a robust diplomatic intervention.”



Palestinian Government report on serious threats and consequences facing State of Palestine as a result of Israeli annexation

In a report presented to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee of the ‘Office Of The United Nations Special Coordinator For The Middle East Peace Process’ the Palestinian Government outlined that annexation will mean:

- The removal of the asset and resource rich Jordan Valley from the State of Palestine;
- The isolation and suffocation of East Jerusalem, the Palestinian capital;
- The denial of Palestinian control over use of land and natural resources;
- The prevention of efficient and free movement of people and goods;
- An increase of violations of Palestinian rights;
- The end of the two-state solution.

The current Israeli government was formed based on a political agenda that sets annexation of Palestinian territory as a strategic priority, despite the widespread international condemnation.

The State of Palestine calls on the international community to use all measures necessary to prevent annexation, including:

- ▶ To recognize the State of Palestine on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, if they have not yet done so;

- ▶ Not to recognise any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations, including by ensuring that agreements with Israel do not imply recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;
- ▶ To distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967;
- ▶ Not to render aid or assistance to illegal colonial activities, including not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used in connection with colonies in the occupied territories, in line with Security Council resolution 465 (1980);
- ▶ To respect and ensure respect for international law, adopting measures of accountability, including sanctions;
- ▶ To exert all efforts to end the Israeli occupation of all territories occupied in 1967 and to achieve, without delay, a just, comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative.



Former World leaders warn against Israeli annexation plans

The 'Elders' group, founded in 2007 by Nelson Mandela, and currently led by former Irish President, Mary Robinson, with Nelson Mandela's widow, Graca Machel, and former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, as co-chairs — said in letters to the leaders of France, Germany, Britain and the European Union that they should insist to Israel that annexation would have negative political and economic consequences for bilateral and regional relations and that

Israeli annexation 'is fundamentally contrary to the long-term interests of both the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples.'

They said annexation 'will not dampen future Palestinian demands for rights and self-determination, but destroying hopes in a two-state compromise will increase the risks of future violence in one of the most combustible areas in the world.'

The Elders called on EU leaders to consider suspending the 27-member bloc's As-

sociation Agreement with Israel if annexation goes ahead in any form. They also recalled the United Kingdom's 'historical and abiding responsibility' as the colonial power in pre-1948 Palestine.

They urged European states to keep pressuring Israel against annexation of parts of the West Bank, and warned against complacency after the plans to take over the territory on July 1 were delayed.



Vatican warns against West Bank annexation

The Vatican has warned the United States and Israel that plans to annex parts of the West Bank risk efforts to bring peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

On 30 June Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Holy See's Secretary of State, summoned US ambassador to the Vatican, Callista Gingrich, and Israel's ambassador, Oren David, to "express concern" about any "unilateral actions".

In a statement, the Vatican said Cardinal Parolin wanted to

"express concern of the Holy See regarding possible unilateral actions that may further jeopardise the search for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the delicate situation in the Middle East."

It added: "the Holy See reiterates that the State of Israel and the State of Palestine have the right to exist and to live in peace and security, within internationally recognised borders."



Amnesty International says Israel must abandon Annexation plans

Amnesty International has said that the Israeli authorities must immediately abandon plans to further 'annex' territory in the occupied Palestinian West Bank warning the move represents the 'law of the jungle'.

Amnesty is calling on the international community to take firm action against the annexation proposal. Amnesty is calling on the British Government to clarify the consequences of an Israeli annexation, urging the British to ban the trade in goods from Israel's illegal settlements 'as a minimum'.

Amnesty said that annexation is the claim to acquire territory by force and is a fla-

grant violation of international law. They believe that such a step by Israel would violate the UN charter, the norms of international law and obligations under international humanitarian law.

They say that under domestic Israeli law, moves towards further annexation of Palestinian territory would mean a continuation of Israeli settlement expansion and would further entrench policies of institutionalised discrimination and mass human rights violations faced by Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Recently, dozens of UN experts voiced concerns that annexation would create a "21st-century apartheid".

Saleh Higazi, Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa Deputy Director, said:

"International law is crystal clear on this matter - annexation is unlawful.

"Israel's continued pursuit of this policy further illustrates its cynical disregard for international law. Such policies do not change the legal status of the territory under international law and its inhabitants as occupied nor remove Israel's responsibilities as the occupying power - rather it points to the 'law of the jungle' which should not have a place in our world today.

"Members of the inter-

national community must enforce international law and restate that 'annexation' of any part of the occupied West Bank is null and void. They must also work to immediately stop the construction or expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a first step towards removing Israeli civilians living in such settlements.

"Settlements are created with the sole purpose of permanently establishing Jewish Israelis on occupied land; this is a war crime under international law and 'annexation' has no bearing on this legal determination."



120 FRENCH PARLIAMENTARIANS OPPOSE ISRAEL ANNEXATION PLAN AND URGE MACRON TO RECOGNISE STATE OF PALESTINE:

120 members of Parliament have co-signed a letter urging their President, Emmanuel Macron, to recognise the State of Palestine as a response to Israel's impending plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank. The signatories called for the necessity to impose international sanctions on Israel if it implements its annexation plans, slamming them as a blatant violation of international law and a real danger to regional peace and security.



DUTCH PARLIAMENT VOTES TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS ON ISRAEL IF IT ANNEXES WEST BANK:

The Dutch Parliament has passed a non-binding motion calling for the government to consider sanctions against Israel if it goes ahead with the annexation of large parts of the occupied Palestinian West Bank. The motion called the annexation a 'gross violation of international law' and noted that the Netherlands has in the past 'taken measures against countries that violate international law.'



'APARTHEID IS A CRIME' - FORMER SWEDISH DIPLOMAT:

A former senior Swedish diplomat, author and photographer, Mats Svensson, has said, after visiting the Palestinian occupied territories, that his experience was more than enough to convince him that what is taking place in Palestine is even worse than apartheid ever was in South Africa. He also said that 'silent diplomacy' will never work as a tool of pressure on Israel to end its subjugation of Palestinians.



EU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS WARNS OF DANGERS OF ANNEXATION:

Writing in the Jerusalem Post, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, warned of the dangers of annexation.

He said: 'Europe and Israel are very close not only geographically, but also culturally and economically. There is a strong bond between Israel and Europe, and we want to strengthen this bond and further deepen our relations, not see them retract. However, this is what will inevitably happen if unilateral annexation goes ahead.'



SPANISH POLITICIANS CALL ON THEIR GOVERNMENT TO OPPOSE ISRAELI ANNEXATION PLAN:

In a letter addressed to Spain's Foreign Minister, Arancha Gonzalez Laya, Spanish politicians, members of Parliament and Foreign Ministers, have called on their government to reject the Israeli annexation of Palestinian territories, and to warn Israel that the annexation will not pass without serious consequences.



BELGIUM PARLIAMENT CALLS FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST ISRAEL IF ANNEXATION GOES AHEAD:

An overwhelming majority in the Belgium parliament recently passed a resolution urging the government to act to prevent Israel from unilaterally annexing parts of the West Bank and to actively advocate for European-wide punitive measures against Jerusalem if it proceeds with its controversial plans.



LUXEMBOURG'S FOREIGN MINISTER WARNS AGAINST ISRAELI ANNEXATION:

Luxembourg's Foreign Minister, Jean Asselborn, says Israeli annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank would be 'stealing' and would make the European Union's recognition of Palestine as a State 'inevitable'. Luxembourg's top diplomat said that Israel's plans to annex the West Bank are no different from Russia's move to illegally annex the Crimean Peninsula, and this necessitates the EU taking a stronger stance.



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT VOICES CONCERNS OVER ISRAEL'S ANNEXATION PLANS:

The Australian Government has for the first time publicly voiced its concerns about Israel's potential annexation of land in the West Bank under the provisions of the Trump administration's peace plan. Foreign Affairs Minister, Marise Payne, said the Australian government was a long-standing supporter of a two-state solution, in which Israel and a future Palestinian state coexist in peace and security within internationally recognised borders. She said Australia had raised its concerns with Israel in relation to indications of annexations and she had done so directly with her Israeli counterpart, Gabi Ashkenazi.

BRITISH MPS 'SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN GROUP' CALL ON ISRAELI ANNEXATION PLANS TO BE FIRMLY OPPOSED:

25 British Labour MPs from the 'Socialist Campaign Group' have commented on Israeli annexation plans.

In a statement they say:

"With the new Government in Israel threatening further illegal annexation in July of occupied Palestinian land, including large swaths of the West Bank, now is the time to speak up for Palestine.

"As an internationalist and democratic socialist party, Labour must give real support to the call of the Palestinian people, and very many Israelis, for effective measures to Stop Annexation. "The core and fundamental purpose underlying annexation is that it permanently puts the 'nail in the coffin' of a two-state solution. It leaves no room for any conceivable viable Palestinian state.

"We must continue to commit to immediate recognition of the state of Palestine and an end to the blockade, occupation and settlements."



BRITISH SHADOW FOREIGN SECRETARY, LISA NANDY, URGES BAN ON IMPORTS OF WEST BANK GOODS:

Lisa Nandy, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, has called on the British government to ban the import of goods from illegal settlements in the West Bank if the Israeli government presses ahead with annexation plans. She said 'The proposal to unilaterally annex nearly a third of the West Bank is an illegal act which will undermine the prospect of a peaceful two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, and has serious implications for the stability of the Middle East.' She also said 'Such a blatant breach of international law must have consequences.'

ISRAEL'S ANNEXATION OF THE WEST BANK WILL BE YET ANOTHER TRAGEDY FOR PALESTINE:

Former British consul-general to Jerusalem, Sir Vincent Fean, called on the British government to recognise the State of Palestine alongside Israel on pre-1967 borders. He said the consequences of annexation for Israel should include banning the importation of goods produced in illegal settlements and sanctions similar to those imposed on Russia after its illegal takeover of the Crimea in 2014.



BRITISH CONSERVATIVE MP SAYS ISRAEL SHOULD PAY PRICE FOR ANNEXATION ACTIONS:

Crispin Blunt, a Conservative MP and former Chair of the Foreign Affairs select committee, said the British government 'should have made clear (to Israel) there is going to be a price' for the annexation plan, with trade agreements between the two countries ended or curtailed.



EU WON'T RECOGNISE ISRAEL'S WEST BANK ANNEXATION' - GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL:

The German Ambassador to Israel, Susanne Wasum-Rainer, has said that Israel's planned annexation of the occupied West Bank will negatively affect its relations with the European Union (EU). She said, 'The EU won't recognise the Israeli annexation move in the occupied West Bank.' The EU and Germany recently described the plan as being 'in violation of international law.'



MORE THAN 1,000 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS OPPOSE ANNEXATION PLANS:

Over 1,000 European Parliamentarians have signed a letter opposing annexation saying 'acquisition of territory by force must have commensurate consequences' and called on European leaders to 'act decisively.' Among the 240 British signatories were Michael Howard, a former Conservative party leader; Chris Patten, former Conservative party Chairman and Governor of Hong Kong; Pauline Neville-Jones, former Chair of the British Joint Intelligence Committee; and George Robertson, former NATO Secretary General.





EU must weigh in to ensure accountability as annexation looms, says Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories:

A UN human rights expert has urged the European Union to use its “economic weight, diplomatic expertise and aid, trade and investment leverage” to forestall looming Israeli plans to annex parts of the West Bank and the Jordan Valley.

Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, said in a statement that annexation “will lead to a marked worsening of the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and daily lives of millions of Palestinians”.

“The planned annexation after 1 July is a continuation of Israel’s illegal extension of sovereignty over Palestinian and Arab lands over the past decades, except that now it

is happening as the international community is more alert than ever to serious breaches of international law,” Lynk said.

“What would be left of the West Bank would be a moth-eaten Bantustan, which would be the end, not the beginning, of a genuine Palestinian state. This would be a modern form of apartheid, a political anomaly in the 21st century.”

“We have reached a point where resolutions without resolve can no longer contribute to reaching the just and durable peace and human security that Palestinians and Israelis deserve,” Lynk said. “This is a moment of truth for the EU and the integrity of its foreign policy.”

“Should Israel proceed with any form of annexation after 1

July – even if it is ‘annexation-lite’, consisting of several settlement blocs instead of the announced 30 per cent of the West Bank – the European Union must lead the world in imposing accountability measures,” said Lynk. “Any amount of annexation is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, and a fundamentally illegal act.

“It has sometimes been said by critics of the EU’s foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine that it suffers from paralysis and inaction,” said the Special Rapporteur.

“Nothing could better demonstrate that this argument is misplaced than for the EU to back up its criticisms of Israel’s occupation and looming annexation with a decisive menu of counter-measures.”

47 UN Human Rights Experts condemn Israeli plans

Recently 47 UN Human Rights experts condemned Israel’s plans to annex the West Bank saying it was a vision of ‘21st century apartheid’. They have predicted increased human right violations after annexation, saying that:

“What would be left of the West Bank would be a Palestinian Bantustan, islands of disconnected land completely surrounded by Israel and no territorial connection to the outside world.”



Group of prominent South Africans call for Sanctions to stop Israeli annexation

A significant statement has been released by a group of over 250 prominent South African citizens including; Deputy Secretary General of the ANC, Jessie Duarte, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, Blade Nzimande, Deputy Speaker in the National Assembly, Lechesm Tsnoli, former President of South Africa, Kgalema Motlanthe, former Cabinet Minister, Ronnie Kasrils, and representatives of Human Rights organisations, Judiciary, Churches, Academics and wider Civic Society. They stated:

“It is time for the international community to demonstrate that it is not oblivious to the suffering of Palestinians, who have been the main victims of Israel’s systemic racism and injustices for decades, and whose oppression is about to be further intensified.

“Palestinian civil society unions, organizations, and human rights and advocacy groups, assert that the “looming annexation is a political litmus test for the international community and for its ability to uphold international law”. This is expressed in a recent statement “Palestinian Civil Society Calls for Effective Measures by all States to Stop Israel’s Illegal Annexation of the Occupied West Bank and Grave Violations of Human Rights.” In response to this call, the South African Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (SA BDS) Coalition Statement has attracted the endorsements of more than 250 prominent South Africans, based on the one prepared by the Palestinian civil society organisations.

“We call on the South African government to spearhead a campaign in the United Nations (UN) to impose countermeasures and sanctions against Israel for its violations of fundamental principles of international law, its denial of the Palestinians rights to self-determination and its forceful and violent annexation of Palestinian territory.

“We call on the South African government and the African Union, of which President Cyril Ramaphosa is currently Chair, to expend their full and untiring effort to ensure that African governments fulfil their obligations under international law and to demonstrate their support for justice, human rights and Palestinian liberation by:

“Ensuring the adoption of a resolution at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that renews the call for, and provides the means to im-

plement, targeted sanctions on Israel, including a boycott on all products from the illegal settlements, suspension of trade agreements with Israel, and a military embargo, as countermeasures to halt its annexation of occupied Palestinian territory and its other egregious violations of international law - similar to the measures repeatedly adopted by the UNGA and the UN Security Council in against Apartheid South Africa, labelling apartheid a crime against humankind and a serious threat to international peace and security.

“Campaigning for the activation of the UN Special Committee on Apartheid to address Israeli policies over the indigenous people of Palestine.

“Guaranteeing the effectiveness and regular updating of the UN database of companies involved in business with Israel’s illegal settlement enterprise.

“Supporting the International Criminal Court’s probe into Israel’s war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

“As South Africans who have a long and glorious history of struggle for national liberation, freedom and democracy, and against colonialism and apartheid, we raise our voices and our fists in deep solidarity with the Palestinian people in their quest for liberation and self-determination, a people who have suffered for more than seven decades with apartheid, occupation and colonization as the world watched and allowed the violations of international law and human rights. We, the undersigned, together with prominent leaders in the Global South, will not allow Israel, in partnership with the Trump regime, to triumph against justice and international law. At a time when the world is highlighting racism and the legacy of slavery and colonialism, when colonial icons are being pulled down by the actions of citizens ‘gatvol’ with a world order that tolerates injustice against the poor and vulnerable, we will tirelessly pursue the struggle of the Palestinian people for their freedom from racism, occupation, colonialism, and apartheid. Theirs is a struggle, together with that of other oppressed groups such as Black people in the USA, whose character defines the ethics and morality of our time. We will be on the right side of that equation!”



Justice Center urges Australian government to oppose Israeli annexation of Palestinian land

The 'Australian Center for International Justice' (ACIJ), has urged the Australian government to oppose Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian land, recommending imposing sanctions if Israel takes this step.

In a 10-page briefing paper on Australia's international law obligations regarding Israel's annexation of large parts of the West Bank, ACIJ said the Australian government should respond swiftly to any annexation step taken by Israel.

"The Australian Government is urged to respond swiftly to a matter of global concern and oppose any violation of fundamental principles of international law, regarding Israel's imminent annexation of

large parts of Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)," said Rawan Arraf, Principal Lawyer and Director of the ACIJ.

"Australia can be guided by its response in relation to the situation of the Russian annexation of Crimea. We recommend the implementation of effective measures such as targeted sanctions, and other measures for violations of international law arising from Israel's occupation and settlement enterprise – policies which have resulted in a situation of de facto annexation of the OPT and which have expressly denied the Palestinian people fundamental human rights guarantees. One such measure Australia is required to adopt, includes a ban on trade with

Israel's illegal settlements," she said.

"It is time to effectively challenge the international community's political and legal failures which have allowed Israel's occupation and de facto annexation to continue with impunity. These recommendations provide meaningful effective measures to prevent and end these serious violations and grave crimes in Palestine and Israel."

The center recommended that Australia enact legislations banning settlement goods from entering Australia's marketplace, and preventing Australian companies from operating in or trading with settlements, or contributing to their maintenance and/or expansion.

International Ecumenical Organizations: Israel's Planned Annexation Would Damage Hopes for Justice, Peace

Leading World ecumenical organizations have urged the international community to oppose Israel's planned annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), together with the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance issued a statement calling for an end to the occupation and for a resumption of dialogue to build lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

The Israeli government has said it plans to effectively annex parts of the West Bank by extending its sovereignty to areas that contain Jewish settlements, as well as parts of the Jordan valley. The settlements are considered illegal under interna-

tional law and an obstacle to a proposed 'two state solution' in the region, said the statement.

The ecumenical organizations said the planned annexation "is in direct violation of international law" and would further threaten hopes for justice and peace in the region.

They warned it would "undermine even more the rights of Palestinians, reducing their mobility, their access to land and livelihoods, to adequate infrastructure and basic services," as well as increasing forced displacement and putting at risk access by humanitarian organizations.

The organizations pledged to continue working for peace in the Holy Land, insisting that "peace can never be unilaterally imposed or achieved by violent means."

