



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on April 10, 2024

UN Committee to Consider Membership of Palestinian Authority

On Monday, April 8, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) requested that its membership committee evaluate the Palestinian Authority (PA)'s application to become a full UN member, as reported by various media sources, including [Reuters](#).

Notably, Malta's UN Ambassador Vanessa Frazier suggested that the committee convene on Monday afternoon to assess the application, adding that discussions had to take place this month. Malta is president of the Security Council for April.

"The committee has to deliberate within the month of April," Frazier told reporters prior to the meeting. The UNSC met in private earlier on Monday to discuss the letter from the PA requesting renewed consideration of their application.

"We sincerely hope after 12 years since we change our status to an observer state, that the Security Council will elevate itself to implementing the global consensus on the two state solution by admitting the state of Palestine for full membership," [Palestinian UN envoy Riyadh Mansour](#) told reporters. Last week, Mansour told Reuters that the plan was for the UNSC to adopt a decision at an April 18 ministerial meeting on the Middle East.

Reuters [reported](#) on April 2 that the PA had formally requested that the Security Council consider its 2011 application to become a full member of the world body once more.

In 2011, the PA's effort for UN application [did not even make it to a vote](#) owing to a lack of support in the UNSC even to claim a moral victory amid a U.S. pledge to veto recognition of Palestinian statehood. Also, Britain and France at that time declared that they would abstain on the premise that acknowledging a Palestinian state would imperil the prospects for a negotiated political solution with the Israelis. Thus, the Security Council never formally voted on a resolution on Palestinian membership. After the failed membership attempt, the UN General Assembly [changed](#) Palestine's UN status from a "non-member observer entity" to a "non-member observer state" in 2012.

The 15-member membership committee will convene for a second time this week, on April 11, to further discuss whether Palestine meets the requirements for UN membership. The Palestinians' "non-member observer state" status at the UN is the same as the Holy See's.

The committee can either dismiss the application or put it forward for a formal vote in the Security Council.

Currently, approval requires at least nine votes in favor of Palestinian statehood, with no vetoes. The



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UNSC's five permanent members — the United States, Russia, China, France, and Britain — hold vetoes.

Washington has maintained that its resistance to Palestinian member status in the UN, at the same time lacking a wider deal with Israel, remains in force.

“Our position has not changed,” Robert Wood, U.S. deputy ambassador to the UN, said last week, in [comments](#) cited by news outlet Al Jazeera.

What Wood's remarks imply is that the U.S. would most likely veto the PA's application if it does come up for a vote in the UNSC.

If the PA's application does get through the UNSC, however, it then proceeds to the UN General Assembly (GA), where it needs a two-thirds majority to be approved.

Palestine cannot join the UN as a member state unless both the SC and GA approve. Currently, 139 nations forming over two-thirds of the General Assembly acknowledge Palestinian statehood.

In response to recent developments pushing for Palestinian statehood, Israel's UN Ambassador Gilad Erdan [said](#) on April 9 on X (formerly Twitter) that a Palestinian state would jeopardize Israel's national security.

“The Palestinian Authority is the complete opposite of a ‘peace-seeking’ entity. It pays terrorists and murderers salaries of thousands of dollars a month, including the Hamas killers who participated in the October 7 massacre,” he posted.

In remarks [cited](#) by Reuters, Erdan added that “the UN has been sabotaging peace in the Middle East for years. But today marks the beginning of the point of no return.”

According to [an article](#) published by the Palestinian state-run news outlet Wafa, also known as the Palestine News Agency, in October last year, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas maintained that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), of which he is the chairman, instead of the Hamas terrorist group, is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Located in the West Bank, the area forming most of Palestinian territories, the PLO — and by extension the most eminent faction in the organization, Fatah — is at loggerheads with rival group Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip.

Although the original Wafa report read that “the president also stressed that Hamas' policies and actions do not represent the Palestinian people, and the policies, programs, and decisions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) represent the Palestinian people as their sole legitimate representative,” it presently states that “the president also stressed that the policies, programs, and decisions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) represent the Palestinian people as their sole legitimate representative, and not the policies of any other organization.”

Israel declared war on Gaza last October, after a series of lethal attacks by the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas that killed an estimated 1,200 people. Various Palestinian journalists and civilians posting on social media have documented the scale of Israeli actions in Gaza, including killing seven aid workers from the World Central Kitchen (WCK), which had been providing millions of meals to people in Gaza, on April 1.

Regarding the contentious issue of Israel permitting food aid into Gaza, French Foreign Minister Stéphane Séjourné suggested on April 9 in an [interview](#) with the France 24 news outlet that “there



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must be levers of influence and there are multiple levers, going up to sanctions, to let humanitarian aid cross check points.”

“France was one of the first countries to propose EU sanctions on Israeli settlers who are committing acts of violence in the West Bank,” he elaborated. “We will continue, if needed, to obtain the opening of humanitarian aid.”

Paris sanctioned 28 Israeli nationals in February, though the French government has not revealed their identities.



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