

Ireland, Spain: Six European Countries to Recognize Palestine

DUBLIN (Dispatches) – Irish and Spanish leaders have said the time when a group of six European countries officially recognizes Palestine as a state is coming closer.

New Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris and his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez affirmed their commitment to “recognize Palestine as a state as soon as possible, when the conditions are appropriate.”

Harris and Sanchez announced during a joint press conference in Government Buildings in Dublin.

Harris said the EU states agreed last month that they would move to recognize Palestine when the conditions were right.

“That point is coming much closer and we would like to move together. The people of Palestine have long sought the dignity of their own country and sovereignty,” he said.

“When we move forward, we would like to do so with as many others as possible. And then we send a decision to the people of Israel,” he added.

Harris added that the people of Palestine deserved equal respect. “In a region where people of all faiths and traditions came together in peace, I know that is our shared aim.”

The Irish leader said both Irish and Spanish nations are “strongly committed to the vision of a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living in peace and in security side by side.”

Iceland, Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania are among the countries to have already given legal recognition to a



Protesters hold Palestinian flags and placards during a demonstration in support of the people of Gaza, in Paris.

Palestinian state.

Sanchez said it was not possible at present to say when the countries would move to recognize the Palestinian state.

“As of now, no one can discern clearly the phases or times for the process. We are in uncharted terrain,” he said.

The comments came hours after Norway announced during a visit by Sanchez that it too was ready to recognize a Palestinian state.

The Spanish leader is currently on a European tour, which is aimed at boosting support for the move, a Spanish government spokesperson said.

Harris became Ireland’s prime minister this week after previous Prime Minister Leo Varadkar unexpectedly quit last month.

Ireland has frequently stated to recognize a Palestinian state and its new leader appears eager to make good on the pledge.

“Let me this evening say our assessment is that that point is com-

ing much closer and we would like to move together in doing so,” Harris said at the joint press conference with Sanchez.

“When we move forward, we would like to do so with as many others as possible to lend weight to the decision and to send the strongest message,” Harris added.

“The people of Palestine have long sought the dignity of their own country and sovereignty -- a home that like Ireland and Spain can take its place amongst the nations of the earth,” he added.

Sanchez added that enthusiastic countries would announce their decision “when the conditions are appropriate” and that they would support the new Palestinian state becoming “a full member of the United Nations.”

Earlier, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said the decision would be closely coordinated with “like-minded countries.”

“Norway stands ready to recog-

nize the state of Palestine,” Store told a joint press conference with Sanchez.

“We have not set a firm timetable,” he added.

Norway’s parliament passed a resolution in November to be prepared to recognize an independent Palestinian state.

On the sidelines of an EU leaders summit on March 22, Spain, Ireland, Malta and Slovenia issued a statement saying they were “ready to recognize Palestine” when “the circumstances are right.”

Sanchez said last week during a Middle East tour that he hoped it would happen by the end of June.

Since October 7, hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets across Europe in a public display of solidarity with Palestinians amid Israel’s genocidal war against the people of the besieged Gaza Strip.

The Western camp, not least the United States, Britain, Germany, and France, has offered “steadfast support” to Israel, instead.

The Zionist regime launched the war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas waged the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli intensified violence against Palestinians.

Tel Aviv has also blocked water, food, and electricity to Gaza, plunging the coastal strip into a humanitarian crisis.

Since the start of the offensive, the Tel Aviv regime has killed 33,634 Palestinians and injured nearly 76,214 others.

UN: Waterborne Illnesses Spread in Gaza Due to Heat, Unsafe Water

GAZA (Dispatches) – Waterborne diseases are spreading in Gaza due to the lack of clean water and rising temperatures, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Gaza says, Reuters reports.

“It is becoming very hot there,” Jamie McGoldrick told reporters via video link from Al-Quds. “People are getting much less water than they need and, as a result, there have

been waterborne diseases due to lack of safe and clean water and the disruption of the sanitation systems.”

“We have to find a way in the months ahead of how we can have a better supply of water into the areas where people are currently crowded at the moment,” he said, after making his final visit to Gaza at the end of his three-month assignment.

Contaminated water and poor

sanitation are linked to diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery and hepatitis A, according to the World Health Organization.

Since mid-October, following the Zionist regime’s onslaught on Gaza, WHO has recorded more than 345,000 cases of diarrhoea, including more than 105,000 in children under 5.

The Gaza Strip’s only natural source of water is the Coastal

Aquifer Basin, which runs along the eastern Mediterranean coast from the northern Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, through Gaza and into the occupied territories.

Its quality over the years has deteriorated rapidly, largely because it had been pumped out to meet the demands of Gaza’s population more rapidly than it could be replaced by rainwater.

Hundreds of Undocumented Ethiopians Repatriated From Saudi Arabia

ADDIS ABABA (Xinhua) – Ethiopia has begun repatriating its nationals from Saudi Arabia, with 842 of them returning home, according to the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

“The official process of repatriating undocumented Ethiopian nationals who were held in prisons and detention centers in Saudi Arabia commenced today,” the ministry said in a statement on Friday.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Birtukan Ayano said a week ago

that the repatriation, the third of such a program since 2018, would target “70,000 Ethiopians who are in a difficult situation.”

The returnees received a warm welcome at the Addis Ababa Bole International Airport, and they were escorted to their accommodation centers, where they underwent medical examinations and were provided with food and other supplies, the statement said.

According to the statement, a national committee of 16 high-level

government officials is deployed in Saudi Arabia to facilitate the repatriation process.

The government plans to repatriate undocumented Ethiopian nationals from Saudi Arabia on 12 weekly flights over the next four months, the ministry said.

According to the ministry, there are an estimated 750,000 Ethiopians living in Saudi Arabia, 450,000 of whom are believed to be undocumented.

Ethiopians travel to Saudi Arabia

for economic reasons and to flee serious human rights abuses back home.

In August 2020, Human Rights Watch was the first rights group to report on the ill-treatment of Ethiopian migrant detainees in Saudi Arabia.

A few months later, in a series of phone calls with the New York-based group, migrants described their experiences of being held in unsanitary rooms with “up to 350 other migrants for months on end.”

IRGC...

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Israel, he said, has suspended the ground invasion of the city of Rafah in southern Gaza because it does not know how, where and when Iran will give its retaliatory response.

“This psychological, media and political war is more terrifying for them than the war itself, because they are waiting for an attack every night and many of them have fled and gone to shelters.”

Rahim Safavi said differences have been intensified among Israeli political and military officials “because all know that a consulate is a territory of a country.”

The hands of the U.S. and Israel will be cut off from the West Asian region, he said, emphasizing that they will suffer a defeat in Palestine soon.

The senior general noted that the resistance front and Palestinian people will achieve a definite victory in the face of Israel.

Angriest...

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learn more, to read more and really educate myself about not only Palestine, but also about imperialism and colonialism.”

Several protesters said they had tried to talk directly to their local MPs and councilors but had got no response. “I emailed my MP about stopping the sales of arms to Israel,” Stephanie explained.

“I got this rubbish generic email back. It makes me think, what’s the point of having MPs that say they represent us when they don’t listen to what their constituents say?”

Frustration at the political system was shown also by interest and some support for new group Youth Demand. It emerged from the climate movement, but now also takes up the Palestine issue.

The group had recently daubed Whitehall’s Ministry of Defense building—which marchers passed by—in blood red paint.

Protester Georgia said that targeting politicians such as Keir Starmer, as Youth Demand did earlier this week, was right.

“I’m for going to MPs’ homes if the protest is peaceful,” she said. “These things get more media coverage than even our demos. They send a message that we know who’s responsible for the killings.”

And a member of Youth Demand told Socialist Worker that, although those at the top aren’t changing, “The people are changing”. They said mainstream “politics has failed us”, before adding, “Youth are demanding something new. We want real democracy through people’s assemblies.”

Many people shared the feeling that the system is working against ordinary people. Dominika, a student from the University of Arts London, said it’s vital to keep protesting. “It’s people going out on the streets that pressures the government to shift its position,” she said.

“We need to stop sending arms and funding to Israel.” She explained, “I’m on the streets partly because the Labor Party isn’t doing anything. They sit in parliament, and they don’t care.”

And, she added, regardless of what those at the top do, “we must continue doing what we have been doing since October 7.

“Unless the genocide stops, we have to be out on the streets or nothing will change. Protest, protest, protest.”

Ministry...

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Refugees (UNRWA) in the New Camp area in Nuseirat, causing severe damage to the school.

A number of Palestinians were injured in a series of Israeli air and artillery raids targeting areas north of the Nuseirat camp during the past 24 hours, medical sources told Anadolu.

On Friday evening, the Civil Defense in Gaza announced that a number of deaths and injuries had occurred after Israeli artillery targeted the same school in the Nuseirat camp.

The Civil Defense said the school shelters a large number of displaced people, mostly women and children.

Since Wednesday, the areas northwest of the Nuseirat camp have been subjected to Israeli military operations, resulting in casualties.

The occupying regime has also imposed a crippling blockade on the seaside enclave, leaving its population, particularly residents of northern Gaza, on the verge of starvation.

The war has pushed 85% of Gaza’s population into internal displacement amid acute shortages of food, clean water and medicine, while much of the enclave’s infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed.

Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which has urged it to do more to prevent famine in Gaza.

No...

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Persian Gulf leaders are now walking a tightrope between their U.S. ally, Iran, and their populations, who are seething with anger at the Zionist regime over its genocide in Gaza that has martyred more than 33,000 Palestinians, mainly women and children.

The U.S. has at least 40,000 troops in the Middle East. The majority are located in the oil-rich Persian Gulf states, where they are based at a string of strategic air and naval bases.

Saudi Arabia’s Prince Sultan Airbase is home to the U.S.’s 378th Air Expeditionary Wing which operates F-16 and F-35 jet fighters. The U.S. operates MQ-9 Reaper drones and jet fighters out of the UAE’s Al Dhafra Air Base. Kuwait’s Ali al-Salem Air Base is home to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing.

Qatar’s Al Udeid Air Base hosts the regional headquarters for U.S. Central Command. It has also hosted some Israeli military officials, MEE has previously reported, but it’s not clear if those officials are still in the country.

The island kingdom of Bahrain is home to around 9,000 U.S. troops who belong to the headquarters of the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and the U.S. Fifth Fleet.

Politico reported in February that the UAE was restricting the U.S.’s ability to launch retaliatory strikes against Iran’s allies from its air bases. The warnings underscore frustration with Washington.

The immediate spark putting the region on the brink of a wider war was the Israeli strike on Iran’s consulate in Damascus that martyred several military advisors, including General Muhammad Reza Zahedi, the head of IRGC operations in Syria and Lebanon.

On Wednesday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said that Israel “must be punished” for the consulate attack, which he equated to a strike on Iranian “soil”.

Media: Explosive Device Blows Up Car in Damascus

DAMASCUS (AFP) – An explosive device went off in a car in an upscale neighborhood of Damascus Saturday, Syrian state media said, quoting a police source and adding that there were no victims.

Security incidents, including blasts targeting military or civilian vehicles, occur intermittently in the capital. It was not immediately clear who was re-

sponsible for the blast or who was the target.

Syria’s official SANA news agency, quoting a Damascus police command source, said an explosion “in the Mazzeh area resulted from an explosive device detonating in a car in Al-Huda square.”

It added that there were no casualties.

Britain-based war monitor the so-

called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said without elaborating that the driver of the car was “a Lebanese national who has yet to be identified.”

The Observatory, which has a wide network of sources inside Syria, said the authorities had cordoned off the scene of the explosion, and that the vehicle had been “slightly damaged.”