
UN Security Council Isolates US Over Golan Decision

28/03/2019



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The United States was isolated at the United Nations Security Council Wednesday over President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights as the other countries on the council opposed the move which they decried as a violation of the international resolution.

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In a letter requesting Wednesday's meeting, Syria described the U.S. decision as a "flagrant violation" of council resolutions, while North Korea issued a statement backing "the struggle of the Syrian government and people for taking back the [occupied Golan Heights](#)."

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it in 1981 in a move the 15-member U.N. Security Council declared "null and void and without international legal effect."

British U.N. Ambassador Karen Pierce told the council that the U.S. decision was in contravention of that 1981 resolution, while Russia's Deputy U.N. Ambassador Vladimir Safronkov said Washington had violated U.N. resolutions and warned it could fuel instability in the Middle East.

The European members of the council - France, Britain, Germany, Belgium and Poland - Tuesday also raised concerns about "broader consequences of recognizing illegal annexation and also about the broader regional consequences."

Trump, with [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu](#) looking over his shoulder during a visit to Washington, on Monday signed a proclamation officially granting U.S. recognition of the Golan Heights as Israeli territory.

Germany's U.N. Ambassador Christoph Heusgen described the Syrian letter as "deeply cynical."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said earlier Wednesday that Washington's decision would help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by removing uncertainty.

The Security Council deployed a peacekeeping force in 1974 - known as the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) - to monitor a ceasefire between Syria and Israel in the Golan Heights. There are more than 880 U.N. troops on the ground.

U.S. diplomat Rodney Hunter told the council that the U.S. decision on the Golan Heights does not affect the truce or undermine the deployment of the peacekeeping mission.

"UNDOF continues to have a vital role to play in preserving stability between Israel and Syria, most importantly by ensuring that the Area of Separation is a buffer zone free from any military presence or activities," he told the council.
