

Israel-Hamas war

David Cameron pushes for 'irreversible progress' towards 2-state solution

UK foreign secretary says diplomatic moves could include UK and allies considering recognising Palestinian state



British foreign secretary Lord David Cameron: 'Most important of all is to give the Palestinian people a political horizon' © Reuters

Andrew England in London 5 HOURS AGO

Britain and its allies would consider recognising a Palestinian state as part of diplomatic efforts to create “irreversible progress” towards a two-state solution to end the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, foreign secretary Lord David Cameron said on Monday.

As the UK joins other states in stepping up its push to end [the Israel-Hamas war](#), Cameron said there needed to be an immediate pause in the conflict; the release of all the hostages held by the militant group in Gaza; and “most important of all is to give the Palestinian people a political horizon”.

Speaking at a reception for Arab ambassadors, he said Palestinians needed to see “there is going to be irreversible progress to a two-state solution and, crucially, the establishment of a Palestinian state”.

“We have a responsibility there because we should be starting to set out what a Palestinian state would look like; what it would comprise; how it would work,” Cameron said. “As that happens, we, with allies, will look at the issue of recognising a Palestinian state, including at the United Nations. This could be one of the things that helps to make this process irreversible.”

Arab officials have said recognition of a Palestinian state should be a crucial step to

underpin moves towards a longer-term resolution of the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to bolster a future administration for the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

The UK has [proposed a five-point plan to end the war](#), which includes the establishment of a technocratic Palestinian government to administer the West Bank and Gaza; the release of all hostages; guarantees that Hamas will not launch future attacks against Israel; and the relocation of its top leaders in the besieged strip to another country.

“We need a pause in the fighting. We need it to happen now,” Cameron said. “If that happens now, we can get aid in [to Gaza] and crucially we can get the hostages out. But the real challenge is to turn that pause into a sustainable ceasefire without a return to fighting.”

The UK plan is one of a number of initiatives being discussed by western and Arab states that have overlapping themes, including the shared goal of the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Diplomats say the initiatives are complementary and that governments are co-ordinating as international pressure mounts to end Israel’s offensive on Gaza, which has killed more than 26,000 people, according to Palestinian officials.

Qatar, along with the US and Egypt, is mediating between Israel and Hamas in [an attempt to broker an agreement](#) that leads to a temporary truce during which Hamas would release the remaining 136 hostages. In return, Israel would free Palestinian prisoners and allow more aid into besieged Gaza. The mediators hope to use a pause to negotiate a permanent ceasefire.

Separately, Arab states have been working on a US-backed initiative to secure a ceasefire and the release of hostages as part of a broader plan that could offer Israel a normalisation of relations if it agrees to irreversible steps towards the creation of a Palestinian state. That could include Saudi Arabia and other Arab states formalising ties with Israel.

Previous efforts to secure a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians have failed since the Oslo Accords of the early 1990s offered a fleeting moment of optimism. And launching any new peace process faces significant hurdles.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ruled out any moves towards the creation of a Palestinian state or working with the western-backed Palestinian

Authority, which administers limited parts of the West Bank. He has also rejected any permanent ceasefire to secure the release of hostages.

Instead, he has insisted that Israel would continue with its offensive in Gaza to destroy Hamas and pursue “total victory”, after the militant group’s October 7 attack killed about 1,200 people, according to Israel. Militants also seized about 250 hostages.

Cameron said: “We cannot give up. If the last 30 years tells us anything, it’s a story of failure.

“Ultimately, it’s a story of failure for Israel because yes, they had a growing economy. Yes, they had rising living standards. Yes, they invested in defence and security and walls and all the rest of it. But they couldn’t provide what a state most wants, what every family wants, which is security.”

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