



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: JULY 2025 UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TWO-STATE SOLUTION

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Last week, the United Nations in New York [held](#) the “High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.” The July 28-30 conference was co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia. Approximately 160 of the 193 UN member states and the Palestinian delegation [participated](#) in the conference, while [Israel](#) and the [United States](#) boycotted. The goal of the conference was to reaffirm the international consensus on a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and take concrete steps towards the implementation of the two-state solution.

The conference was initially planned for June 2025, but the Twelve-Day War between Israel and Iran forced the co-chairs to [postpone](#). Notably, ahead of the conference, French President Emmanuel Macron [announced](#) that France would officially recognize the State of Palestine at the 80th UN General Assembly in September, and conference participants [called on](#) other countries to follow suit. On the second day of the conference, the United Kingdom joined France as it [announced](#) that it would recognize Palestine by September unless Israel abides by a Gaza ceasefire and commits to a two-state solution. Another significant outcome of the conference was the [signing](#) of the “[New York Declaration](#),” which marked the first time that all 22 member states of the Arab League jointly condemned the October 7 Hamas massacre and called for Hamas to disarm. The declaration outlines a phased roadmap for ending the conflict and establishing an independent Palestinian state.

Preparation for the UN Conference

On May 23, a [preparatory meeting](#) was held in New York to decide on conference themes and finalize arrangements, and on June 13, another [preparatory meeting](#) was held in Paris. Representatives from Israeli and Palestinian civil societies [gathered](#) at the Paris Peace Forum and [produced](#) the “Paris Call for the Two-State Solution.”

Before the conference, Palestinian Authority (PA) Chairman Mahmoud Abbas [sent a letter](#) to President Macron, reaffirming his commitment to a two-state solution. The historic letter calls for an end to the war in Gaza, an end to Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian “conflict once and for all.” Crucially, the PA letter unequivocally condemns October 7 and demands that Hamas disarm and immediately release all remaining Israeli hostages from Gaza. Abbas also committed to PA reforms in the areas of governance, finance, women and youth participation, and incitement – including an overhaul of the controversial PA [prisoner payment system](#). Lastly, the PA chairman wrote to Macron that he plans to hold elections within a year.

Significance of the “New York Declaration”

The “[New York Declaration](#) on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution” was [signed](#) by all 22 Arab League states, 27

European Union states, and 17 other countries. UN member states [have until](#) the General Assembly session in September to endorse the declaration. Most notably, the “New York Declaration” unequivocally condemns October 7 and calls for:

- A negotiated two-state solution, in accordance with relevant UN resolutions, the 2002 [Arab Peace Initiative](#), the principle of land for peace, etc.;
- Ending Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and establishing a demilitarized, “independent, sovereign, economically viable and democratic State of Palestine;”
- A Gaza ceasefire agreement that includes the release of all Israeli hostages (living and deceased), exchange of Palestinian prisoners, and full Israeli withdrawal from the Strip;
- Ending Hamas rule in Gaza and for Hamas to “hand over its weapons” to the PA;
- Implementing the [Arab Recovery and Reconstruction Plan](#) for Gaza, put forth by the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in March 2025;
- Israeli-Palestinian programs for combatting extremism, incitement, and discrimination;
- PA elections and reforms, in line with the commitments made by Chairman Abbas in his [June 2025 letter](#) to President Macron; and
- Israeli-Palestinian regional integration and peaceful coexistence throughout the Middle East, including renewed efforts on the Israel-Syria and Israel-Lebanon tracks.

This declaration is unprecedented in that the entire Arab League condemned October 7 while ruling out Hamas rule of the Gaza Strip on the day after the war. It also includes virtually all of Israel’s conditions for a two-state solution, including a *demilitarized* Palestinian state, while promising Israel full regional integration in return. The Israeli vision of transforming the region together with Arab world acceptance of Israel is clearly laid out by this historic declaration.

Reactions from Israel, Palestine, and the United States

Israel’s Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon [called](#) the UN conference a “political circus against the State of Israel,” falsely claiming that participants did not address the Israeli hostages who remain in Gaza or the removal of Hamas from Gaza. [Section 8](#) of the “New York Declaration” reads, “Hamas must release all hostages,” and [Section 11](#) of the declaration reads, “Hamas must end its rule in Gaza.” Danon also [accused](#) declaration signatories of “legitimizing terror,” i.e. rewarding Hamas with statehood following October 7.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry [welcomed](#) the UN conference, where the Palestinian Authority was [represented](#) by Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa and Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian. Meanwhile, US State Department Spokesperson Tammy Bruce [issued](#) a statement rejecting the conference as a “reward for terrorism” that emboldens Hamas and “keeps hostages trapped in tunnels.” This is despite [repeated condemnations](#) of Hamas and October 7 [throughout](#) the conference.