
Jeremy Corbyn Promises to 'Recognize Palestinian State as Soon as We Take Office'

26/09/2018



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Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn received a long standing ovation Wednesday after pledging to officially recognize a Palestinian state once he takes office as prime minister.

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"In order to help make the two-state settlement a reality we will recognize a Palestinian state as soon as we take office," Corbyn said.

Labour party supporters waved Palestinian flags as the announcement was well received by the audience at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool.

@ShrewsLabour Standing ovation in the hall for recognition of a Palestinian state and a two-state solution



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Corbyn announcement, however, wouldn't come as a shock to many close followers of Labour party policy. In June, during a visit to Jordan, Corbyn said: "I think there has to be a recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people to their own state which we as a Labour Party said we would recognize in government as a full state as part of the United Nations."

Today's comments make it clear to many the policy is a priority for labor and would be enacted shortly after Corbyn takes office if elected.

Corbyn comments come after delegates of the Labour Party voted Tuesday to ban arms sales to Israel over its abuses against the Palestinians. A policy, which could also be translated into official government policy if the party is elected.

The unprecedented resolution noted that "the majority of Palestinian people were forcibly displaced from their homes" during the Nakba and condemned the "aggressive attempt to rewrite history and erase the victims of the 1948 war."

It called for an "independent international investigation into Israel's use of force against Palestinian demonstrators," an "immediate and unconditional end to the illegal blockade and closure of Gaza," and "a freeze of UK Government arms sales to Israel."

The motion also highlighted that amongst those killed during the Palestinian protests of recent months are paramedics, journalists, women and children, while than half of the injured were hit with live fire by snipers as they approached the border with Israel.

Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) Chair Hugh Lanning said: "We have witnessed extraordinary scenes of solidarity today and the Labour Party has done the right thing by recognizing the longstanding injustice of Israel's violation of Palestinian rights.

PSC handed out more than a thousand Palestinian flags at the conference. In remarkable scenes, many hundreds of delegates stood and waved their flags inside the conference hall when the motion was debated and chants of "Free Palestine!" were clearly heard.

PSC director Ben Jamal said: "This incredible show of support and this historic motion demonstrate the strength of feeling at the grassroots of the party. Labour members want to show real solidarity with Palestinians

The issue was in the top four of all issues discussed Tuesday in Liverpool. The vote to debate Palestine was fourth after housing, school systems, and justice for the Windrush generation. It gained more votes than the issues of Brexit, and the National Health System (NHS).

During the debate on Palestine, the party deliberated on U.K. arms sales to Israel, voting to end them until an independent investigation into the killing of more than 180 protesters in Gaza since Mar. 30 can be carried out.

Though conference votes are not binding on leaders, Jeremy Corbyn, a supporter of the Palestinian cause, has promised to recognize Palestine as a state if his party comes to power.

The anti-Semitism charges against Corbyn were rejected by him, his supporters, and Palestinians citing Israel's attempt to shut down any criticism of its policies and abuse against Palestinians and its occupation of their land.

But not all Palestinians are overjoyed with the new policies. Some are critical of the U.K.'s stand on the Oslo agreement which supports the creation of two states. For U.K.-based Palestinian author and academic, Ghada Karmi said during a Palestine Solidarity meeting that Labour cannot go on supporting a "defunct idea". She also asked the party to stop being apologetic about Israel's atrocities and to confront Israel and call out its actions against

Palestinians.

According to Hazem Jamjoum, a Palestinian-American academic, the British empire helped create the state of Israel; hence, it has a greater responsibility to support Palestine. He also warned that Israel's impunity regarding apartheid, racist laws and ethnonationalism is creating precedents all over the globe, which is witnessing an increasing identity-based nationalism in many countries.
