
White House: US 'to Reevaluate' Backing for Israel at UN

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Angered by Netanyahu's shock campaign pledge to block the creation of a Palestinian state, the White House warned the foundation of its policy for backing Israel had been undermined.

The United States - a veto-wielding member of the UN Security Council - has frequently opposed moves at the UN to recognize a Palestinian state.

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"Steps that the United States has taken at the United Nations had been predicated on this idea that the two-state solution is the best outcome, said spokesman Josh Earnest.

"Now our ally in these talks has said that they are no longer committed to that solution. That means we need to reevaluate our position in this matter, and that is what we will do moving forward."

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erakat told AFP in the wake of Tuesday's vote that they would "speed up, pursue and intensify" diplomatic efforts aimed at winning international recognition.

The White House said that no policy decisions had yet been made, but sharply noted that US decisions in the past had "protected Israel from isolation in the international community."

The White House also gave short shrift to Netanyahu's efforts to walk back his remarks in a series of US television interviews Thursday.

"What is apparent is that in the context of the campaign, and while he was the sitting prime minister of Israel, he walked back from commitments that Israel had previously made to a two-state solution," Earnest said.

President Obama, who has yet to call Netanyahu to congratulate him, already had cool relations with his Israeli counterpart even before his remarks about Palestine.

Washington has been frustrated by Netanyahu's support for settlement building and a speech to the US Congress aimed at killing a nascent nuclear deal with Iran, which Obama supports.

The White House said Obama could call Netanyahu as soon as today.
