# Israel reaffirms commitment to West Bank settlements amid mounting international pressure



Israel's Defence Minister, Israel Katz, has boldly reaffirmed the government’s commitment to establishing a 'Jewish Israeli state' in the occupied West Bank, coinciding with the announcement of 22 new settlements in the region. This declaration was explicitly directed at French President Emmanuel Macron, who has recently advocated for the conditional recognition of a Palestinian state, dubbing it a "moral duty." Katz's statement is not merely a policy announcement but a strong rebuff to rising international calls for restraint amid Israel's ongoing settlement expansion.

This declaration comes at a time of escalating tensions between Israel and Western nations, particularly Britain, France, and Canada. These nations are not just voicing concern; they have threatened punitive measures against Israel unless it halts its military operations in the Gaza Strip. The UK government has taken notable steps, including suspending free trade negotiations and enforcing new sanctions on settlements throughout the West Bank. Foreign Secretary David Lammy has made it clear that while existing trade agreements remain, continuing dialogue with Israel is untenable given its "egregious" policies both in Gaza and the West Bank.

During his controversial visit to the Sa-Nur settlement, evacuated during Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, Katz reaffirmed his government’s defiance. He labelled the new settlements as a decisive response to terrorist organisations, stating that international recognition of a Palestinian state would ultimately be inconsequential. “The paper will be thrown in the trash can of history,” he declared, emphasizing Israel's unwavering goals in the region.

This declaration emerges against the backdrop of worsening humanitarian conditions in Gaza, where reports indicate that nearly one in five residents are facing starvation due to Israel’s extensive blockade on aid. Despite Israel’s Foreign Ministry denying the existence of such a blockade, critics reiterate that it severely limits essential resources. Macron's framing of a "political necessity" to recognise a Palestinian state is posited not just as a humanitarian effort but a diplomatic endeavor, designed to galvanise international response to a protracted crisis.

The recent shift in rhetoric and policy underscores a critical juncture in the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. Katz's hardened stance reflects a defiance that raises serious concerns about Israel’s long-term strategy and its implications for peace. Britain has condemned the new settlements as a "deliberate obstacle" to peace, with the United Nations warning that such actions are detrimental to any prospects for a two-state solution.

In light of these developments, an upcoming UN conference aims to reignite negotiations surrounding the two-state solution, with some diplomats suggesting that it may push for broader recognition of Palestinian statehood. This anticipated recognition by France could serve as a turning point in the discourse, inviting essential scrutiny of the Israeli administration's policies and their impact on regional stability.

As Israel doggedly pursues its claims over the West Bank, it faces the potential for deepening rifts within the international community, which is grappling with a delicate balance of diplomatic relations, humanitarian crises, and the overarching imperative for a sustainable resolution to one of the longest-running conflicts in modern history.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14765031/We-build-Jewish-Israeli-state-West-Bank-Netanyahus-defence-minister-declares-calling-clear-message-Emmanuel-Macron-associates.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data