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UK Threatens to Recognise Palestine Unless Israel Meets Key Conditions

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The United Kingdom has announced it will recognise Palestine as an independent state at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September unless Israel meets a set of specific conditions aimed at addressing the ongoing conflict in Gaza and the West Bank.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer made the declaration following an emergency Cabinet meeting focused on the escalating humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The announcement came shortly after he met with former US President Donald Trump. Starmer stated that unless

Israel takes “substantive steps” towards peace and humanitarian cooperation, the UK will move ahead with formal recognition of a Palestinian state in the upcoming UN session.

The conditions outlined by the British government are as follows: Israel must agree to a ceasefire; take meaningful action to end the dire situation in Gaza; recommit to a long-term peace process that revives the prospect of a two-state solution; allow the UN to resume delivering humanitarian aid; and refrain from any further annexation of the West Bank. These benchmarks aim to ensure that recognition does not come at the expense of Israel’s security or regional stability.

This marks a notable shift in Starmer’s previously stated position. He had long supported Palestinian recognition only as part of a comprehensive peace deal, with guarantees of “lasting security for both Palestinians and Israelis.” Now, that stance appears to have reversed, with recognition being used as a diplomatic lever rather than a reward for peace.

Israel has swiftly condemned the UK’s move, with officials accusing Starmer of playing politics to satisfy his party base and align with international allies such as France. Just days before the UK’s announcement, French President Emmanuel Macron declared that France would also recognise Palestine in September, potentially making it the first Group of Seven (G7) nation to do so.

Last year, Ireland, Spain, and Norway each formally recognised Palestinian statehood, citing the prolonged nature of the conflict and the lack of progress toward a negotiated settlement.

The Israeli Knesset, its national legislature, recently voted in favour of annexing parts of the West Bank, a decision that has drawn widespread international criticism. If no concessions are made by Israel in the coming weeks, the UK’s decision could mark a pivotal moment in shifting European diplomatic alignment on the Israel-Palestine issue.