

UK and Australia Call for Ceasefire in Gaza and Support Conditional Palestinian Statehood

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UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese have jointly called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, greater humanitarian access, and renewed efforts toward a two-state solution. The leaders met in London on 31 July to discuss the ongoing crisis and the possibility of recognising a Palestinian state.

Starmer indicated that the UK could formally support Palestinian statehood as early as September at the United Nations General Assembly, unless Israel makes substantial progress in improving conditions on the ground. He stressed that recognition would only take place if conditions align with long-term peace and regional stability.

Albanese echoed the sentiment, stating that Australia supports both Israel's right to security and Palestinians' right to self-determination. While Australia has not committed to a specific timeline, the Prime Minister said recognition is a matter of 'when, not if', with the exclusion of Hamas from any future governance a key condition.

Both leaders agreed that Hamas should have no role in any future Palestinian government. They also urged the release of hostages and emphasised the need for unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza, where the situation remains dire.

Starmer's position reflects growing pressure within the UK, including from Labour backbenchers and more than 200 MPs who have publicly supported recognition of a Palestinian state. However, the UK government has maintained that any recognition must be part of a broader peace process, not simply a symbolic act.

Meanwhile, several key allies, including France and Canada, have already announced plans to support Palestinian recognition at the upcoming UN gathering. Their decisions have added diplomatic momentum to the issue but have also drawn criticism from Israel, which argues that such moves risk legitimising Hamas and compromising Israeli security.

Despite differing political contexts, both Starmer and Albanese stressed the need to balance immediate humanitarian responses with long-term diplomatic solutions. They reiterated their commitment to a peaceful resolution based on a two-state framework, while keeping any move toward formal recognition tied to concrete developments on the ground.