How the UN is paving an 'irreversible path' to a Palestinian state

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The concluding document of the upcoming two-state conference, led by France and Saudi Arabia and scheduled to take place at the United Nations next week, is expected to include an unconditional commitment to an ‘irreversible path’ to the establishment of a Palestinian state. The document is also expected to be ‘action-oriented,’ according to a leak by Anne Bayefsky, a lawyer, scholar, and activist who currently heads the Touro University Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust. Her organization holds consultative status with the UN.

According to Bayefsky, the co-chairs of the conference, France and Saudi Arabia, are presenting the document as one intended to render the creation of a Palestinian state irreversible, sidestepping negotiations on core issues, so that UN member states will effectively dictate the outcome.

She contends that although the document will not explicitly declare recognition of a Palestinian state, its purpose is to ensure that this becomes a foregone conclusion. She says the term ‘action-oriented’ is deliberately vague to enable the imposition of punitive measures on Israel, including economic sanctions and international isolation.

Bayefsky further reports that the final document will be predetermined and not subject to a vote or public negotiation during the conference. It will instead be presented at the event as a fait accompli.

She claims the organizers portray the document as the result of recent working groups that gathered input from NGOs and civil society, but in reality, the process was biased from the outset.

Bayefsky notes that her own organization, despite its consultative status with the UN, was not invited to these consultations, evidence, she says, of the skewed nature of the document's drafting process. According to her, invitations were extended only to groups that agreed in advance with the predetermined outcome. She adds that the likely source for invitees was lists of UN-associated bodies with ties to Palestinian rights, many of which are openly anti-Israel.

Bayefsky says the organizers are actively encouraging countries to announce recognition of a Palestinian state during the event itself. According to her, they have stated they would be ‘very pleased’ if such declarations are made at the conference. In addition, she says the event will feature statements from ‘high-ranking international figures.’

**A clear attempt to sidestep US Involvement**

Bayefsky points out that the final preparatory meeting before the conference took place yesterday (Wednesday) with representatives from most UN member states in attendance, despite appeals from the Trump administration urging them not to participate. She sees this as a clear attempt to bypass US involvement and undermine its traditional role in the two-state process.

According to her, the conference poses a serious challenge to the Trump administration's foreign policy. ‘The European Union, Canada, the UK, the Arab League, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and many other countries that rely on US aid are all taking part in this initiative,’ she wrote. In her words, ‘They are working to weaken America's standing and position the UN as the driving force shaping Middle East realities.’

Bayefsky warns that the conference will embolden terrorism and fuel global antisemitism. ‘Empty declarations about 'peace' and 'human rights' will not conceal the distortion of truth and trampling of justice inherent in this move,’ she concluded.

It is important to clarify that a state is established through a UN Security Council resolution, and such a resolution will not pass due to the US veto. Nevertheless, a General Assembly resolution supporting such a state, as well as unilateral recognitions by other countries, have already occurred. Thus, this move presents a significant diplomatic challenge.

Nevertheless, while no senior representative of any state has yet announced their attendance, the French and Saudi co-chairs of the conference have said they expect participation of ‘world personalities.’