



STRONGER TOGETHER  
**CONGRESS**  
Irish Congress of Trade Unions

19 July 2011

Mr Eamon Gilmore TD  
Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Department of Foreign Affairs,  
Iveagh House,  
Dublin 2

Dear Tánaiste,

As you are aware the Irish Congress of Trade Unions has been very active in the pursuit of a just solution to the Israel Palestine conflict for many years now. We are writing to you to seek Irish Government support for the efforts of the Palestinian Authority who will seek UN membership for a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders (Gaza, West Bank and East Jerusalem) at the UN this September.

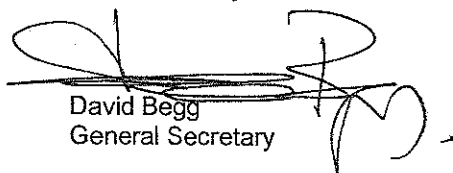
This is an issue of immense importance for Palestinians and is already a major concession of territory by them as the 1967 borders represent just 22% of their historic homeland, with Israel continuing to exist in the other 78%. Since then, the way has been open for a "two state solution", but it has been impossible to achieve because Israel has refused to withdraw from the territory meant for a Palestine State. Israel continually refuses to abide by UN resolutions and continues to occupy and deepen that occupation on the very land they are supposed to be negotiating about. UN recognition on the basis of 1967 borders would prevent Israel from starting at zero again – presenting the current day reality of Israeli occupation (there are around 500,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank) as the basis for any newly agreed borders.

Already 117 countries around the world have recognised a Palestine state and granted full diplomatic relations. Other states, including Ireland, while not going as far as recognition, established some form of diplomatic relations with it. We very much welcome that from January 2011, Ireland upgraded Palestinian representation in Dublin to that of a Mission.

Palestinians are now seeking the ultimate form of international recognition for their state, that is, UN membership. We urge the Irish government to not only vote for UN membership but also to encourage other EU states to do the same. It is clear to us that, whereas Palestinians are prepared to settle for a state in 22% of mandatory Palestine, Israel is not willing to settle for a state in the other 78%. A Palestinian state will only come about if external pressure is brought to bear on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.

We look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely



David Begg  
General Secretary

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