

Trump to Recognize Jerusalem as Israel's Capital Based on Historical and Current Reality

President Donald Trump will announce the United States will recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and will eventually be the home of the U.S. Embassy. However, senior White House officials said there is not yet a timeline for moving the embassy.

In the immediate future, Trump will sign the same waiver that three predecessors have signed to delay moving the embassy. However, Trump will ask the State Department to conduct a review of a cost effective way to relocate the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, officials told reporters Tuesday.

"It will take some time to find a site, address security concerns, design a new facility, fund a new facility—working with Congress, obviously—and build it," a senior official said, adding it will be done "with the minimal additional burden on American taxpayers."

The senior administration officials framed the decision as "recognizing reality, both historical reality and current reality." That's because the city is the ancient capital of Israel and is the current seat of government where the country's prime minister, legislature, and Supreme Court function.

Trump made the right move, but it will be complicated, said James Phillips, senior research fellow for Middle Eastern affairs at The Heritage Foundation.

"President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem will reward a

close ally and correct an historic injustice: the fact that Israeli sovereignty over its own capital has not been recognized,” Phillips told The Daily Signal.

“But in the Middle East no good deed goes unpunished. To mitigate the risks of a violent backlash, the president should declare that this move does not preclude a negotiated final settlement or change the status of the Islamic holy sites.”

The officials also noted this is the will of Congress and it is keeping the promise made by several presidents.

Some Middle Eastern leaders warned against the move. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas [reportedly](#) “warned of the dangerous consequences such a decision would have to the peace process and to the peace, security, and stability of the region and of the world.” Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia’s King Salman told Trump recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital “would constitute a flagrant provocation of Muslims, all over the world.”

Trump administration officials stressed the policy would not change any other United States policy on borders in regard to Israel and the Palestinian authority. Further, they noted that delaying recognition of Jerusalem for the last two decades has done nothing to advance peace between the two sides.

“President Trump is prepared to support a two-state solution to the dispute between the Israelis and Palestinians if agreed to by the two parties,” an official said. “Specific boundaries of Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem are subject to final status negotiations of such an agreement.”

Recognizing Jerusalem would essentially reaffirm existing law. In 1995, President Bill Clinton signed the [Jerusalem Embassy Relocation Act](#), which formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The law called for the capital to be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem no later than 1999. However, the law allowed the president to issue a waiver every six months

to keep the embassy in Tel Aviv if necessary to protect national security interests. Presidents Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama did so, and in June, Trump also issued a waiver.

Earlier this year, the [Senate voted 90-0](#) to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

The officials say this simply brings policy in line with Congress, and promises from past presidents.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, then-Sen. [Barack Obama said](#): “Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, and it must remain undivided.”

Under the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace accords, the status of Jerusalem was to be determined through negotiations. The Palestinian Authority has claimed East Jerusalem as the capital of a future state.

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