Netanyahu Appeals for US to Not Seek UN Move on Palestinians

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Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a public plea Sunday for the US continue its support for Israel and not seek a UN resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, “whoever wins” Tuesday’s election.

In an apparent message to incumbent US President Barack Obama, Netanyahu told his weekly cabinet meeting he expects the “United States will remain true to its commitment for many years that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be resolved through direct negotiations without pre-conditions, and of course not through decisions by the United Nations of other international bodies.”

Netanyahu also said ties would remain strong no matter who won Tuesday’s vote.

Members of the Israeli government are worried that before he leaves office in January but after his successor is chosen, Obama may seek to impose or advance a solution to the conflict, or at least set out parameters for how it should be solved. This may manifest itself in the Security Council, where the US could opt not to use its veto against any anti-Israel resolutions.

Support for or promotion of such a resolution would mark a drastic change in policy for the US, which has consistently vetoed and/or threatened to veto any UN resolutions deemed unfavorable to Israel.

Some have suggested Obama may be encouraged to push for a UN resolution if Republican candidate Donald Trump wins the election.

“Whoever wins this week’s election in the US, I am sure that the strong and stable relations with Israel will not only remain as such, but will be strengthened,” Netanyahu said. “The alliance with the US is the most important alliance we have in all of our international relations. That is how it has been, and that is how it will remain.”

[Speaking at the UN in September](http://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahus-full-remarks-at-un-general-assembly) a day before his final official meeting with Obama, Netanyahu sought to sow opposition to a change in US policy, praising Obama for using his veto for such resolutions in the past.

“A central pillar of that defense has been America’s consistent support for Israel at the UN. I appreciate President Obama’s commitment to that longstanding US policy,” he said from the podium at the General Assembly. “In fact, the only time that the United States cast a UN Security Council veto during the Obama presidency was against an anti-Israel resolution in 2011. As President Obama rightly declared at this podium, peace will not come from statements and resolutions at the United Nations.”

Last month, US Secretary of State John Kerry reportedly told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that the Obama administration has not yet made a decision on whether to back a UN Security Council resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after the November presidential elections.

In a phone conversation between Kerry and the Israeli prime minister, Netanyahu told Kerry he expects that the US will not support any diplomatic measures at the UN that are carried out without Israel’s consent, the Haaretz newspaper reported.

But while Kerry listened to the request, he told Netanyahu that no decision on supporting future resolutions had yet been made, the report said.