Interpol Rejects Palestinian Membership Bid After Israeli Lobbying

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The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) rejected a bid by the Palestinian government to join the body on Tuesday after Israel lobbied against the move, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Tuesday.

"Today is a good day," Netanyahu said, speaking from the town of Afula in northern Israel. "This morning we prevented the Palestinians’ bid to join Interpol. This constitutes a change in Israel’s international standing."

The Palestinians' bid to join the international security organization was opposed by sixty-two countries after weeks of diplomatic efforts, according to a statement released by the Foreign Ministry and the Israel Police.

"The vote is a major achievement and reflects the change in Israel’s international status and the success of Israeli diplomacy," Netanyahu said.

The Palestinians had applied to join the international security body more than a year ago, but its request was delayed by "executive measures" a Palestinian foreign ministry official had said on Saturday preventing a vote during the organization's annual gathering on the Indonesian island of Bali this week.

"The Palestinians once again attempted to politicize a professional organization," the joint statement by the Israel Police and Foreign Ministry stated.

"This is part of the ongoing Palestinian campaign to try to to evade direct negotiations, and to transfer the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to professional international bodies, which disrupts their work," it added.

The Lyon-based Interpol currently has 190 member countries, enabling police across the globe to share information.

The Palestinians gained observer status at the United Nations in 2012 and since then have joined 54 international organizations and agreements. Among them are the International Criminal Court and the United Nations heritage body UNESCO.

Israel has opposed such moves, which gives them de facto recognition as a state in international forums.