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## Palestinians call for international recognition of statehood

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Palestinians on Tuesday urged the international community to immediately recognize a Palestinian state in response to Israel's decision to build 1300 new East Jerusalem settler homes.

"This latest unilateral Israeli act necessitates dramatic international action for immediate recognition of the Palestinian state [based] on the June 4, 1967 borders," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said in a statement.

Israel's decision on Monday to approve the new homes in occupied east Jerusalem sparked widespread condemnation from the international community with the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia all speaking out against it.

Erakat said the decision "further threatens the already stagnated negotiations process."

Direct talks resumed in early September but quickly ran aground when an Israeli moratorium on West Bank settlement construction expired later that month, prompting the Palestinians to freeze talks until Israel reimposes the ban.

Israel has so far refused, despite huge international pressure.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is currently in the US for talks aimed at finding a way to resume peace negotiations.

*-AFP/NOW Lebanon*