

Israel Appoints Former Leader of West Bank Settlers as New Ambassador to Brazil

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Image: Daniel Dayan, former chairman of the West Bank settlement council. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Israel has appointed prominent settler-advocate Dani Dayan as new ambassador to Brazil. Dayan publicly opposes the two-state solution and has previously told the press that [‘those who do are either naive or liars’](#).

Brazil officially [recognized the Palestinian](#) state in December, 2010. However, Brazil has not established full diplomatic ties with Palestinians.

Following the disproportionate use of force during the [Israeli offensive in Gaza](#) in July 2014, Brazil called back its ambassador in Tel Aviv for consultation. This prompted Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor to lament Brazil’s decision and call it a [“diplomatic dwarf”](#) and an “irrelevant diplomatic partner”.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed Dayan’s appointment on Twitter:

I have appointed [@dandayan](#) as ambassador to Brazil. I am confident that he will be able to strengthen relations between Israel and Brazil.

— Benjamin Netanyahu (@netanyahu) [August 5, 2015](#)

Argentina native, Dani Dayan, 59, acts as foreign envoy of the Yesha Council, an organization formed to promote Jewish settlement in the West Bank and, before 2005, in the Gaza Strip as well. He served as chairman of the organization between 2007 and 2013. In 2012, he signed an op-ed in the New York Times titled [“Settlers are here to stay”](#), in which he argued Israel “legitimately seized” the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967 and has a “moral claim” to these areas:

Giving up this land in the name of a hallowed two-state solution would mean rewarding those who’ve historically sought to destroy Israel, a manifestly immoral outcome.[...] The insertion of an independent Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan would be a recipe for disaster. The influx of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and elsewhere would convert the new state into a hotbed of extremism. [...] The American government and its European allies should abandon this failed formula once and for all and accept that the Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria are not going anywhere.

Dayan publicly opposes the violent attacks carried out by Israeli extremist settlers, such as the attack last week which left an [eighteen-month-old Palestinian baby dead](#) and his family injured. He says these attacks threatens the settler movement's credibility. For Israeli non-profit Peace Now Director Yariv Oppenheimer, who advocates for a two-state solution, Dayan became a sort of 'rational face' of the settler movement. [He told Forward.com last year](#):

He has the same agenda as the most fanatic, right wing settlers. But he has this ability to hide it and to speak with the public with a much more sensible argument and a much more moderate image.

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