

Israel Pushes Law Banning Palestinian Flag

Bill advanced by far-right lawmakers passes preliminary vote in parliament

By [Middle East Eye](#)

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[Israeli](#) lawmakers are pushing a new bill that would see flying the [Palestinian](#) flag punishable by up to one year in prison.

The bill is backed by members of the far-right Jewish Power party and states that three or more people waving the flag of a "hostile entity" will be considered a prohibited gathering and therefore punishable.

The Israeli Knesset has already voted its approval at a preliminary reading of the bill and it will need three additional votes to pass.

"As a democracy, Israel enables its citizens to protest decisions they don't agree with the authorities on," reads the explanation of the bill, according to Haaretz.

"But the proposal draws a red line between legitimate protest and one in which there are flags of those who don't recognise the state of Israel, those who aren't friendly toward it or don't enable Israel to raise its flag in its territory."

Since coming to power earlier this year, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has introduced a raft of legislation aimed at appeasing the far-right in Israel.

Legislation aimed at restricting the power of the judiciary has already sparked off months of protests across the country.

On Thursday morning, Israeli settlers and politicians stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque ahead of thousands taking to the streets of Jerusalem for a divisive annual [ultra-nationalist march](#).

Security officers cleared the Qibli prayer hall of [Palestinian](#) worshippers following the Fajr dawn prayers, according to Palestinian media.

Then at 7 am local time, the Moroccan Gate (Bab al-Magharib) to Al-Aqsa's courtyards was opened and hundreds of settlers stormed into the holy site.

Several lawmakers were in their ranks, including Negev and Galilee Development Minister Yitzhak Wasserlauf, who belongs to the Jewish Power party.

Three MPs in Netanyahu's Likud party, Dan Illouz, Amit Halevi, and Ariel Kallner, were also involved.

Though many Jews believe it is forbidden to stand upon it, and the status quo agreement states Jewish prayer must also be avoided, far-right Israelis, most often settlers, have increasingly flouted these rules with the backing of Israeli forces.

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