

Report: 14 Countries to Form Block Against Israel's Membership of African Union

By [Middle East Monitor](#)

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Israel's return to the African Union (AU) as an observer state has sparked a huge backlash in the continent with as many as 14 countries said to be ready to form a block to reject the occupation state's membership.

Online newspaper *Rai Al-Youm* reported that Algeria has agreed with South Africa, Tunisia, Eritrea, Senegal, Tanzania, Niger, the Comoro Islands, Gabon, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Liberia, and Seychelles to expel Israel from the AU.

It's reported that the new block will reject the decision to include Israel in the AU to preserve the principles of the union and support the Palestinian Arab state.

Algerian **Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra** is expected to discuss the issue of Israel's membership in the African Union in his upcoming trips to Tunisia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt. He has previously [stressed](#) that Algeria will not stand idly by while Israel is allowed to join the block with the consent of its members.

Though *Rai Al-Youm* did not include Namibia on its list of countries to have agreed with Algeria to block Israel's admission, the southwest African state's ministry of international relations released a strongly worded denunciation of the AU's decision to grant observer status to the occupation state.

"Granting observer status to an occupying power is contrary to the principles and objectives of the Constitutive Act of the African Union," **Penda Naanda**, executive director of Namibia's Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, said in a statement.

Naanda said it was wrong to grant Israel observer status, particularly at this time, when the state of Israel is increasing its acts of oppression in total violation of international law and disregard for the human rights of the Palestinian people. He stressed that the AU Commission's decision was against the usual firm and solid commitments made by several African heads of state and government who unequivocally support the Palestinian cause.

“Namibia, therefore, disassociates itself from [granting observer status to the state of Israel](#),” the statement said.

South Africa was one of the first countries to express condemnation of the AU’s decision. It said that it was “[appalled](#)” by the decision to grant observer status to the 55-country block.

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