
PM lauds Norway's landmark decision to recognise Palestine

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Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday during a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister of Norway Jonas Gahr Store conveyed his deep appreciation for Norway's landmark decision to recognise the state of Palestine. According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the prime minister said that this principled decision by Norway would send a strong message of hope and solidarity to the brave Palestinian people who have been enduring Israel's brutality and suffering over 75 years of occupation and oppression. PM Shehbaz also welcomed the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) recent ruling regarding Rafah and Gaza and called for its full and effective implementation. He emphasised the importance of the two-state solution as the key to lasting peace in the Middle East, hoping that Norway's decision would encourage other countries to follow suit, paving the way for full UN membership of the state of

Palestine. In this regard, he further said that the international community needed to focus its attention towards the plight of the oppressed people of Kashmir, who had been subjected to brutal occupation and denial of fundamental rights for the past seven and a half decades. During the conversation, both leaders reiterated their commitment to strengthening bilateral ties in various sectors, including trade, investment, education, and renewable energy. he also recognised the important role played by Norwegians of Pakistani origin in creating a vital connection between Pakistan and Norway and contributing to the economic development of both nations. “The two leaders agreed to remain in touch and to meet soon, possibly on the margins of the UNGA Session later this year. The prime minister also extended a most cordial invitation to Prime Minister Store to undertake an official visit to Pakistan, at his earliest convenience,” the statement further said.

Norway’s decision comes as Israeli forces have led assaults on the northern and southern edges of the Gaza Strip in May, causing a new exodus of hundreds of thousands of people, and sharply restricted the flow of aid, raising the risk of famine. Non-EU member Norway has long said it would recognise Palestine as a country only if it could have a positive impact on the peace process, in step with what the United States has said on the issue. Norway is a close US ally, and the Nordic country has sought to help broker peace between Israel and the Palestinians on several occasions in recent decades.