

# Israel reconsidering future cooperation with Swiss over Geneva Convention meet

**MFA spokesman Emmanuel Nachshon says Israel will boycott the conference next week, and will also reconsider its cooperation with other Swiss diplomatic initiatives.**

By [Barak Ravid](#) | Dec. 11, 2014 | 7:34 PM



The neighborhood of Ulpana, on the edge of the West Bank Jewish settlement of Beit El. Photo by Reuters

Israel lashed out at the Swiss government on Thursday over its decision to convene a meeting of signatory states to the Geneva Conventions on December 17.

As Haaretz has previously reported, the meeting is expected to issue a harsh condemnation of Israel for its [construction in the settlements](#).

In a statement issued Thursday evening, Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nachshon said that Israel will boycott the conference and will also reconsider its cooperation with other Swiss diplomatic initiatives.

Switzerland serves as the depositary of the Geneva Conventions. This is a technical function that includes responsibility for registering states that join the conventions and gathering information on issues relevant to the conventions.

Nachshon noted that its role as depositary obligates Switzerland to act in a neutral, apolitical manner. Thus by convening this meeting, the country is betraying its obligations as depositary, he charged.

“Israel views the Swiss government’s decision to accede to Palestinian demands to convene a meeting of signatories to the Geneva Conventions very gravely,” Nachshon said. “Via this decision, Switzerland is lending a hand to the politicization of the conventions and the laws of war in general. Convening the signatory states is a political move whose only purpose is to exploit the important platform of the Geneva Conventions for attacking Israel.”

The anger in Jerusalem is especially great because in the more than 60 years since the Geneva Conventions were drafted, only two meetings of the signatories have ever been convened – and both dealt with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“They’re convening a meeting like this at a time when many other conflicts are being waged throughout the world, including in theaters where atrocities are taking place right now,” Nachshon said. “It’s impossible to reconcile the planned meeting of signatories, which is tainted with severe political bias, with the stated position of the Swiss government and other parties that support the meeting that they are working to apply the laws of war neutrally.”

“Israel won’t take part in the meeting, alongside other countries that have made their opposition clear to the Swiss government,” Nachshon continued. “In light of the Swiss government’s problematic, biased conduct over this meeting of the signatories, Israel is currently reconsidering its position with regard to other Swiss initiatives relating to international humanitarian law. Israel urges every country that cares about the Geneva Conventions and the proper conduct of the depositary not to participate in this conference.”

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