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Guatemala FM defends Israel embassy move, says no reversal

President Jimmy Morales' top diplomat defended his decision to move Guatemala's embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, rejecting on Tuesday international and domestic criticism after he followed Washington's lead in announcing a switch. According to the Associated Press, Foreign Minister Sandra Jovel said the change amounts to "a foreign policy decision, therefore sovereign," and there is no intention to reverse it. "What we are doing is being coherent with our foreign policy and the ally we have been for Israel," she said. Morales announced the change Christmas Eve, becoming the first to follow U.S. President Donald Trump on switching from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Israel welcomed Guatemala's announcement, while Palestinian authorities criticized it. Guatemala's government has given no timeline for a move, and Trump has also not said when a U.S. switch might be made. Guatemala and Israel have long had close ties, especially in security matters and Israeli arms sales to the Central American nation. The U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Thursday to condemn the U.S. decision in a non-binding resolution. Guatemala was one of nine nations that sided with the United States.