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## **US WITHDRAWAL FROM UNESCO: REASONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

### **ВЫХОД США ИЗ ЮНЕСКО: ПРИЧИНЫ И ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN). All in all UNESCO includes 195 member states and 10 associate members. Nowadays the situation is changing. On 12 October, the U.S. State Department announced that the United States would pull out of UNESCO at the end of 2018. The U.S. ambassador called the reason for the situation when UNESCO this summer designated the city of Hebron in the West Bank a Palestinian World Heritage site. The US previously withdrew from UNESCO under Ronald Reagan, only to rejoin under George W Bush.

The U.S. generally stopped funding UNESCO after it voted to include Palestine as a member in 2011. So since the year of 2011 the U.S. owes more than \$500 million to UNESCO. The money issue can also be one of the reasons for this withdrawal.

Israel is also planning to quit UNESCO. The reason for it is the statement about an attempt to deny the Jewish character and heritage of the Holy Land. Irina Bokova, director-general of UNESCO, expressed regret over the decision.

The withdrawal marks another decision by the Trump administration to distance itself from the international community. It can lead to breaking ties with other nations and further misunderstandings.

Washington will lose its rostrum for speeches and for UNESCO the effectiveness of some programs will be reduced, because it will need some time to adapt.

In any event, Israel has to stop behaving like a pariah state and live up to its responsibilities to the human race. Moreover, the states should come to the agreement on the attitudes to each other. The tolerance is no less important.