

Bolivia cuts diplomatic ties with Israel

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Bolivian president Evo Morales said today his country is breaking diplomatic ties with Israel over the offensive in the Gaza Strip that has killed hundreds of Palestinians.

Mr Morales, a leftist, is a close ally of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez, who last week expelled Israel's ambassador in protest over Gaza.

Venezuela is also a major supplier of aid to Bolivia, the poorest country in South America.

Mr Morales made the announcement in a speech before diplomats in the government palace.

Israel launched its 19-day-old campaign in Gaza on December 27th with the declared aim of halting rocket attacks by Hamas into Israel. The Palestinian death toll in the offensive rose today to 984, medical officials said. Israel says 13 Israelis have been killed.

Reuters

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