Amb. Roet Addresses UNSC on Tensions in Israel

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Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations

<http://embassies.gov.il/un/statements/security_council/Pages/Amb.-Roet-delivers-speech-at-UNSC-emergency-meeting-on-the-Middle-East.aspx>

As we sit here today, Israel is facing an onslaught of terrorism; men, women and children are being stabbed to death on the streets on a daily basis. Yet for them there has been no demand for an emergency session at the Security Council; no calls for the Palestinian leadership to stop their incitement; and not even a whisper of condemnation of these acts in this hall.

Eitam and Naama Henkin were shot to death while driving in their car. Their 4 children were in the vehicle and watched their parents die in front of their eyes.

These are just a few of the silent victims of Palestinian terror. Apparently, this Council has not seen fit to honor their memories with even the slightest recognition.

Mr. President,

Over the course of the last month, 24 terror attacks have claimed the lives of 8 Israelis, and injured 70. 15 of them are still hospitalized. This tide of terror has washed over the entire nation and it spares no one: Young and old are being targeted every day.

Israelis do not feel safe walking down the street, they avoid taking the bus to work, and they fear for the lives of their children every time they walk out the door.

The root cause of this wave of terror is clear. It is inflammatory rhetoric and lies lit the fuse, and incitement that keeps feeding the flames.

The wave of violence that Israel now faces began with lies about the Temple Mount. Abbas has continually accused Israel of trying to change the Status- Quo. Just two days ago he claimed that, quote “Israel intends to make Al-Aksa Jewish”. This is a deliberate and malicious lie.

Let me be clear. Prime Minister Netanyahu has stated time and time again, including from the podium in the UN general assembly just two weeks ago: Israel is firmly committed to the status quo which protects the right of Muslims to pray in the mosque, as well as the freedom of all people, Muslims, Christians, Jews and others, to visit the Temple Mount.

Since 1967 Israel has placed the utmost importance on protecting the freedom of religion and worship for all faiths. From the outset, Israel has done everything in its power to preserve the sanctity of this site, which is sacred to the three monotheistic faiths.

In contrast, militant Islamist agitators have used the Al-Aqsa Mosque as a staging grounds for a calculated, violent provocation. On the Eve of the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashana, radical Islamists stockpiled rocks, planks, wooden sheets and fireworks, as well as Molotov firebombs and explosive devices to prevent Jews and Christians from visiting the Temple Mount.

The Palestinians and the representatives of the Arab countries speak of the sacredness of their holy sites. When the Islamist militants desecrated Al-Aqsa by using it as a weapons depot, did any of them speak out?

Of course not. Instead, Mahmoud Abbas defended these rioters, and lit the spark which set our region ablaze. He declared, and I quote: “We welcome every drop of blood spilled in Jerusalem... With the help of Allah, every shaheed will be in heaven, and every wounded will get his reward … Al-Aqsa is ours, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ours, everything is ours, all ours. They have no right to desecrate them with their filthy feet." I repeat, their filthy feet.

Can you imagine the reaction if an Israeli leader, any leader, would have uttered such a hateful statement? The Security Council would have wasted no time in convening to condemn it. Yet, when the President of the Palestinian Authority makes such a blatantly prejudiced statement, the reaction of this Council is complete silence.

Mr. President,

Even now, as the violence continues and lives are lost every day, instead of calming tensions, Palestinian leaders continue to lie and use inflammatory rhetoric. They are stoking the flames by portraying terrorists as innocent victims. Just two days ago, in a television broadcast to the Palestinian people, Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of killing an innocent thirteen year old Palestinian boy.

There are two facts that Abbas did not share with his public.

First, he is not dead. He is fully conscious and is being treated in an Israeli hospital.

Second, he is not innocent. This 13-year-old Palestinian terrorist brutally attacked a 13-year-old Israeli boy who was riding his bicycle, stabbing him no less than 15 times.

When a young child decides to pick up a knife, instead of a basketball or a book, something is deeply wrong.

Such acts of terror do not occur in a vacuum. They are a product of a deliberate policy of incitement aimed at filling the minds of Palestinian children with hate.

From an early age, Palestinian children are subjected to propaganda that promotes hatred and incites to violence; Young children watch TV shows with friendly hosts that encourage them to kill all the Jews and become martyrs. Schoolchildren in the West Bank study using official Palestinian Authority textbooks that legitimize indiscriminate violence against Israelis. Palestinian teenagers follow facebook posts and twitter feeds that call on them to stab Jews and that applaud violent acts like the murder of Eitam and Na’ama Henkin.

Mr. President,

The situation is indeed dire, but there is a way forward.

Just yesterday, Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed his willingness to meet with the Palestinian leadership in order to bring calm to the region.

Two weeks ago, Prime Minister Netanyahu stood here in the UN and declared that he is ready for direct negotiations with the Palestinians without any preconditions.

If this Council is serious about promoting peace, it must join in Prime Minister Netanyahu’s call, and insist that President Abbas comes to the negotiating table.

Israel’s historic agreement with Egypt and with Jordan proves that direct negotiations can lead to a real and a lasting peace. Only such negotiations can create a new reality for all the people of the region.