

Combating Antisemitism at the UN

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It is opening week of another session of the UN's top human rights body, the UN Human Rights Council, and antisemitism will once again be promoted around the globe via an organization built on the ashes of the Jewish people and sworn to hatred's eradication.

In March of last year, Israel decided not to cooperate with a UN "human rights" establishment that promises equality and delivers discrimination. Under heavy pressure from the Obama administration and European governments not to spotlight the dark antisemitic underbelly of UN "human rights" operations, however, Israel is considering reversing this decision.

Without fundamental reform, such an unfortunate about-turn by Israel would be a major boost to Israel's delegitimizers.

The current Council session in Geneva is a case in point. From the start on Monday, May 27, the UN human rights chief Navi Pillay, issued an opening statement highlighting her major human rights concerns the world-over. Her preposterous series of countries having "crises" worthy of specific criticism were Syria, Myanmar, Iraq, the Central African Republic, Israel and the United States.

On the other hand, in Pillay's view, Egypt, Libya and Yemen were "progressing in different ways and at different speeds."

Omitted from her list altogether was the denial of elementary freedoms to a billion people in China, the downward spiral of rights and freedoms in Russia, the forthcoming sham elections of lead terror-sponsor Iran, or the degradation of an entire female population in Saudi Arabia.

But Israel, according to Pillay, was guilty of "the widespread detention of Palestinians – nearly 5,000." It was irrelevant that the vast majority of these so-

called detainees were prisoners, already tried and found guilty often of horrible crimes, in a country governed by the rule of law.

And that was merely the opening act. On June 10, the Council will give the microphone to terrorist-sympathizer Richard Falk. He is the UN investigator on Israel who has made a career of justifying violent “resistance” from New York to Israel to Boston. A 9/11 conspiracy theorist, Falk recently generated disgust across America for suggesting the victims of the Boston marathon terror attack were “canaries” that “have to die” because of America’s “fantasy of global domination.”

Falk’s latest official UN report is outrageous. Contrary to even the lip service paid by the UN Secretary-General, but consistent with Falk’s fetishistic empathy for terrorists, he advises against “the value of direct negotiations at this time.” In one particularly repugnant line, Falk rails against Israel’s killing of Hamas “military leader” Ahmed Jabari because Jabari “kept [Gilad] Shalit...in good health while in captivity for several years.”

Later in his report Falk singles out, for abuse and harassment, corporations that do business with Israel. From his UN perch, he plugs the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign.

When Falk retires after his six-year time limit in 2014, he will be replaced by another such UN human rights “expert.” After all, his formal mandate is to investigate predetermined human rights violations, and only by one party to the conflict – Israel.

Following Falk’s performance, the Council will devote more time to Israel-bashing. Its permanent agenda has one item designated to the condemnation of Israel, and another to the remaining 192 UN members – if they should “require the Council’s attention.” The result of this process is that 39% of all Council resolutions and decisions condemning specific states for human rights violations have been directed at Israel alone.

Even the western democratic states that meet regularly during Council sessions refuse to allow Israel to attend their group gatherings. In Geneva, every UN member state is welcomed into one of the five key regional bodies that discuss policy, share information and divvy up UN jobs – except Israel.

Ironically, despite the entrenched discrimination, Israel finds itself pressed by democratic countries to get on the bus, move to the back and sit down. By refusing

to play this game, Israel draws attention to the UN's institutional bias and undercuts the credibility of the UN's alleged "universal" human rights apparatus. That's an inconvenience for the Obama administration, which has made membership and support of the Council a central component of its foreign policy.

The quandary for Israel, therefore, is this. The poisonous role of the UN human rights world in demonizing and isolating Israel cannot be overestimated. It is imperative to delegitimize the delegitimizers. Yet Israel's failure to participate in its own execution is now being cast at the Council as uncooperative and aberrant.

Israel cannot alter the twisted sense of right and wrong favored by its enemies, but there is an answer to the United States and Europe.

The cornerstone of every credible human rights institution is equality. Israel can and must articulate clearly identifiable sources of inequality that can be fixed – if the commitment to universal human rights standards is *bona fide*.

The UN Human Rights Council can modify its agenda to place Israel under the same item as all other states. The mandate of the Council special investigator on Israel can be changed to require reporting on the human rights abuses of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Western states in Geneva can end the exclusion of Israel from its regional group and abide by the UN Charter's promise of the equality of all nations large and small.

A global vehicle for modern antisemitism or a human rights instrument? The ball should not be in Israel's court.