**New Zealand Jews Protest Country’s Support of UN Anti-settlement Resolution**

December 30. 2016

Haaretz

<http://www.haaretz.com/world-news/asia-and-australia/1.762205>

The organization that represents New Zealand's Jewish community has joined with other supporters of Israel in the country in condemning the New Zealand government's support of a Unites Nations resolution against Israeli settlements, local media reported.

New Zealand was one of four co-sponsors of the resolution adopted by the UN Security Council last Friday, which declared that Israeli settlements in the West Bank "have no legal validity and constitute a flagrant violation under international law."

In a letter to Prime Minister Bill English on Thursday, the New Zealand Jewish Council, along with 26 other groups and hundreds of individuals, called on him to make a public statement on the resolution and its implications.

They insisted that the resolution "violated the right of Jewish self-determination" and required that land where there had been a continual Jewish presence for thousands of years "become Jew-free."

The support of Foreign Minister Murray McCully for the resolution had made the prospect of peace ever more distant and "brought ignominy on New Zealand," the letter said. It also interpreted the resolution as meaning that some 200,000 Jewish residents of East Jerusalem were illegal settlers.

"It is extremely disturbing and devastating that it makes it illegal for Jews to attend Hebrew University or to pray at their most holy site, the Western Wall, the heart of Judaism, to which Jews have physically and spiritually directed their prayers for thousands of years," the letter said.

Council spokeswoman Juliet Moses was cited by the Stuff news site as saying that all the signatories to the letter had agreed to the wording. "It's quite strong wording," she said "That's representative of the depth of feeling on the issue, which is very strong and there is a sense of betrayal, and questions about New Zealand's role."

Foreign Minister Murray McCully says the UN resolution is "consistent with long-held New Zealand policy positions."

Also on Friday, 200-300 supporters of Israel demonstrated outside the Parliament building in the capital Wellington. "They've stabbed our traditional ally Israel in the back right on Christmas for the Christian, right on Hanukkah for the Jew," said Christian cleric Nigel Woodley, who led the protest, according to the New Zealand Herald. "A time of celebration and joy was turned into outrage."