**EDITORIAL: THE UN IS THE JOKE**

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It was the laugh heard around the world: The UN General Assembly responded to US President Donald Trump’s boast that "in less than two years, my administration has accomplished much more than almost any administration in the history of our country” with mirthful chuckles that grew even louder when Trump expressed surprise at their reaction.

Nearly two years after Trump was elected, it’s clear that the man can’t help himself and brings the bluster to all public appearances, even when his bragging is totally irrelevant to the occasion. There is something humorous in that.

The real joke, however, was not Trump’s patting himself on the back. The UN itself is far more absurd than that. The UN consistently gets very serious matters laughably wrong, so their judgment about what is funny should not be trusted.

Not a chuckle was heard when Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said “we will never resort to violence and terrorism,” a laughable claim less than two weeks after a Palestinian teen, inspired by Abbas’ claims about Israeli designs on the Temple Mount, murdered Ari Fuld

This week, the UN Human Rights Council tweeted its opposition to the death penalty. That is the same council on which sit four of the five countries who exercise the death penalty most: Iraq, Saudi Arabia, China and Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia and Iran, countries that follow strict religious laws requiring women’s subjugation to men in various areas, are both on UN committees meant to improve the status of women. A leap in women’s rights in Saudi Arabia this year allowed them to have driver’s licenses, but all women are still legally considered to be under the power of a male relative. Iranian women have been courageously protesting their government by removing their head scarves – a dangerous endeavor in the Islamic Republic.

Perhaps most absurd is that Syria was the chair of the UN conference this year dealing with disarmament from chemical and nuclear weapons. Syria’s civil war has taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, and there have been dozens of chemical attacks by the Syrian government.

And then there is the UN’s treatment of Israel. Sometimes it seems as though the body voted on November 29, 1947, to create a Jewish state, just so it would have a punching bag. The UN has a long history of preposterous actions against Israel, including the infamous and since-canceled declaration that Zionism is racism, and letting arch-terrorist Yasser Arafat address the General Assembly and make threats from the stage as early as 1974. Then again, Arafat fit in well with the rogue’s gallery of tyrants that get an equal vote in the UN and continue to corrupt it to this day.

The UN Human Rights Council, featuring the aforementioned luminaries China and Saudi Arabia among others, has a permanent agenda item requiring it to debate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at each session. Israel is also the only country with a designated UNHRC rapporteur. The council dedicates far less time to the world’s greatest human rights violators than it does to the Jewish state.

UNESCO, the UN’s education and culture panel, which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called “morally corrupt” in his address Thursday, repeatedly voted to deny history by leaving out Israel and the Jewish people’s connection to holy sites in Jerusalem. The organization has adopted dozens of anti-Israel resolutions in the last decade with only one on Syria and none on Iraq, to give two examples of countries where ancient sites were destroyed in recent years.

In contrast with the UN’s many absurdities, Trump made many commendable – and dead serious – remarks in his speech. He called out Iran’s “corrupt dictatorship” for sponsoring terrorism around the world, as well as Syria’s genocidal regime. His reimposition of sanctions on Iran may have angered some other states represented in the room, but he is right to “deny the regime the funds it needs to advance its bloody agenda” and “isolate Iran’s regime as long as its aggression continues,” as the president said.

The US withdrew from the UNHRC, Trump stated, because it has been “shielding egregious human rights abusers while bashing America and its many friends.”

Trump pledged to make the UN “more effective and accountable,” in order to fulfill its potential to make the world a better and more peaceful place.

The UN General Assembly attendees may have laughed at Trump, but he’s the one who gets the last laugh.