Israel to UN Commission of Inquiry: Drop dead!

March 1, 2022

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JNS.org

<https://www.jns.org/opinion/israel-to-un-commission-of-inquiry-drop-dead/>

The United Nations Human Rights Council has a long history of unjustly singling out Israel for condemnation, but its most recent initiative seems designed to exceed all previous calumnies.

Already, every UNHRC meeting agenda, in its standing “Item 7,” makes time to condemn Israel alone among all the world’s nations. Now the UNHRC has launched a commission whose open-ended mission is to persecute Israel for alleged criminal violations committed anywhere against any people ever—headed by a prosecutor whose anti-Israel attacks are already legendary.

No wonder Israel has forcefully rejected cooperation with the latest UNHRC lynch mob.

Meirav Eilon Shahar, Israel’s ambassador to the U.N., has told the UNHRC that Israel will in no way cooperate with its kangaroo-court Commission of Inquiry (CoI) into the very legitimacy of the Jewish state’s existence.

In a letter to UNHRC president Federico Villegas of Argentina, Shahar noted that the Commission’s “open-ended mandate is effectively designed to investigate—in perpetuity—accusations against Israel since its inception. By mandating the investigation of so-called ‘underlying root causes,’ the Council has cynically set the stage for a never-ending inquest.”

Since such “root causes” would include the 1948 founding of the State of Israel, Israel’s very existence is within its investigative purview.

Shahar concluded, “There is simply no reason to believe that Israel will receive reasonable, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment” from the Commission.

The Commission’s charter calls for it “to investigate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel all alleged violations of international humanitarian law.”

Thus, before the investigation begins, the CoI assumes that all disputed lands in Judea and Samaria (the former West Bank), as well as parts of its capital, Jerusalem, are “Palestinian territory.” Note that the CoI is also invited to investigate Israel’s actions within its entire borders, even with respect to Arab Israeli citizens living, for instance, in Haifa or Tel Aviv.

The Commission is also tasked with gathering evidence “to maximize the possibility of its admissibility in legal proceedings,” and must “report on its main activities on an annual basis.” Uniquely among the UNHRC’s 32 past commissions, this one has no fixed expiration date, and is specifically tasked to produce findings that can be used to fuel criminal prosecutions of Israeli leaders at the International Criminal Court and elsewhere.

The Commission’s mandate—ratified by the UNHRC and endorsed and funded by the U.N. General Assembly last month—was established in the aftermath of the 11-day Gaza war last May.

In that conflict, Hamas and other terrorist gangs in Gaza indiscriminately fired over 4,000 rockets at Israeli civilian population centers. Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system prevented massive loss of Israeli life, and the Israel Defense Forces pummeled Gaza with air strikes and artillery to silence the terrorists’ missile launchers.

The CoI’s charter, most remarkably, doesn’t mention Hamas, let alone its attacks on Israeli civilians.

Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid called the CoI “total insanity,” emphasizing its departure from the norms of U.N. commissions.

“It has a budget of about $4.1 million a year and it has 18 staff members,” said Lapid. “In Syria, half a million people were killed, and there was a war for 12 years, but the budget [for that UNHRC inquiry] is $2.5 million and there are only 12 staff members.”

Adding to Israel’s outrage, the CoI is being headed by Navi Pillay, a long-time Israel-basher who has publicly declared Israel “an apartheid state” and is an impassioned activist in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. She also has a decades-long record of leading other U.N. lynch mobs against Israel.

As the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014, she was responsible for many actions against Israel, including the inquisition that resulted in the notorious Goldstone Report.

That report—focused on the 2010 *Mavi Marmara* flotilla attempting to break Israel’s embargo of Hamas’s Gaza arms trafficking—acidly condemned Israel’s actions in boarding the Turkish ship.

Less than two years later, amid proof of the Goldstone Report’s fraudulent content, Richard Goldstone, its red-faced lead author, embarrassedly renounced the legitimacy of its findings condemning Israel.

Despite the report’s principal author disowning it, Pillay resolutely stood by the report. She continues to propagate its lies in the press and at international meetings like the annual Durban Review Conferences, the anti-Semitic hate fests she has organized and endorsed.

Just to ensure guilty verdicts in Pillay’s new, endless prosecution, her CoI henchmen will, unusually, consist of criminal attorneys. The endeavor’s success will doubtless be measured not by “findings for remediation” but rather by criminal filings against their Israeli prey.

In keeping with its absolute rejection of the legitimacy, structure, staffing and budget of the CoI, Israel is expected to direct government and diplomatic personnel to reject all requests for information, and to work actively to bar all Commission members and their staff from physical access to Israel and the territories as well as Israeli libraries and media banks.

Encouragingly, at least Israel doesn’t stand alone in its denunciation of this UNHRC travesty of justice.

A bipartisan group of 42 members of Congress called last month on U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to defund the U.N. Commission, and to work against its nefarious objectives. The UNHRC was presciently defunded by the Trump administration, but this act was reversed by Biden’s team.

Following the bipartisan Congressional appeal, a U.S. State Department spokesperson agreed with Israel and the American lawmakers, announcing that “The United States will not cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry, and we encourage other member states to follow our lead.”

Israel is under no moral or legal obligation to provide the rope that clearly is intended to hang it in Geneva and at The Hague, where the International Criminal Court is already formulating bogus charges of “crimes against humanity” against past and current Israeli leaders.

This investigation goes far beyond all past and ongoing persecutions of Israel by the UNHRC and Pillay. Its unending mission and aggressive budget and staffing underscore the uniquely passionate hatred of the Jewish state by a broad swath of United Nations members.