Despite UNESCO's Bias, Jews Won't Abandon Israel's Holy Jewish Sites

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Forget fake news. UNESCO is promoting an entire fake universe.

Like so many other UN agencies with an assured anti-Israel majority, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) regularly [votes to deny some aspect of Israel’s legitimacy](http://in.reuters.com/article/israel-palestinians-unesco-idINKCN12D2Q6). Their diplomatic machinations at UNESCO serves as the backbone of much of the Muslim world’s refusal to recognize the Jewish people’s historic links to Israel, the Holy Land.

To legitimate their denial of the past and today’s reality of a Jewish state with more than [8 million citizens](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html), history itself must be re-written, holy sites rebranded. That’s where the Orwellian leveraging of the agency whose raison d’etre is supposed to be the protection of history and culture — not its eradication — comes into play.

 UNESCO’s [new resolution](http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/UNESCO-disavows-Israeli-sovereignty-in-Jerusalem-in-22-10-vote-489538), timed to coincide with Israel’s 69th Independence Day on Tuesday, May 2, rejects Israeli sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem, including modern West Jerusalem.

The resolution [passed](http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/UNESCO-disavows-Israeli-sovereignty-in-Jerusalem-in-22-10-vote-489538) with 22 nations supporting the measure, 10 opposing it, 23 countries abstaining, and three absent.

In its text, [Rachel’s Tomb and the Tomb of the Patriarchs](http://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-may-2017-unesco-resolution-on-occupied-palestine/) where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rivka, Jacob and Leah are buried were repackaged as Muslim mosques. To her credit, Irina Bokova, UNESCO’s Director-General, has been a [consistent critic of the charade](http://www.timesofisrael.com/unesco-head-calls-temple-mount-holiest-place-in-judaism/). “To deny, conceal, or erase any of the Jewish, Christian or Muslim traditions runs counter to the reasons that justified its inscription on the [UNESCO World Heritage list](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/statement_by_the_director_general_of_unesco_on_the_old_city-1/),” she insisted last year. But Madam Bokova’s term shortly expiries and Israel’s opponents could soon have a firmer grip.

What is particularly galling was the [role Germany reportedly played](http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Israel-blames-Germany-for-EU-support-of-UNESCO-anti-Israel-resolution-489358) in enabling fellow European Union members to be free to support for this outrage.

If the German Foreign Minister or any other European diplomat thinks this cynical maneuver which further fuels dreams of an alternative universe sans Israelis will impact Jews in Israel or around the world, they are dead wrong.

Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish people. Centuries ago, long before anyone heard of Mohammed, Jews understood the importance of the city that King David built and made his capital. They built two temples there, which became focal points for their religion and their peoplehood, maintaining that centrality, even in times that it lay in ruins. “[If I forget thee, O Jerusalem](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+137%3A5-6&version=ESV), let my right hand fail me,” spoke the prophet.

In their unparalleled, 2,000-year exile before returning home in modern times, [Jews never left Jerusalem](http://www.jpost.com/Blogs/The-Zionist-Advocate/We-Never-Left-The-Jews-Continuous-Presence-in-the-Land-of-Israel-475161). A small group remained in the Holy Land throughout; the rest, scattered literally around the world, were united by the shared prayers offered three times a day for the return to Zion. Jews survived the Crusades, [Torquemada](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14783a.htm), [Chmielnicki](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/chmielnicki-khmelnitski-bogdan-x00b0) and Hitler without ever diluting their passion for Jerusalem.

The Jewish people will not abide by the ballot box stuffing of morally bankrupt regimes at UNESCO and they won’t forget when Arab were custodians of Jerusalem’s Old City, seized during the 1948 war of independence. Synagogues in the Old City were [razed](http://www.jta.org/1967/11/02/archive/cabinet-report-says-jordan-destroyed-56-old-city-synagogues-desecrated-cemetery). Tombstones became latrines. Jews were [barred](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/israel-1948-1967/) from visiting holy sites. Christians took note of the mindset of the conquerors and reacted with horror at the thought that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher could become the next Palmyra.

Indeed, anyone [concerned](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/introducing-unesco/) with the protection of educational, scientific, and cultural treasures of others, should look at Israel’s record. It may be the only country in the Middle East in recent years where [the Christian population has consistently increased](http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=2&x_outlet=2&x_article=3104). The [Jerusalem municipality gives out free Christmas trees](https://www.jerusalem.muni.il/en/Municipality/Municipal%20info/Pages/ChristmasTreesDisribution.aspx) to its Christian citizens each year. (If it only gave out one, that would be more than the number of Christians and Jews [allowed](http://wikitravel.org/en/Mecca) to visit Mecca!) When different Christian sects come to blows occasionally over the administration of their holy sites, it is the Israeli police whom they call in to restore peace.

Israel’s sovereignty over Jerusalem is the only guarantee that holy places will be preserved for everyone.

Reality and mutual respect, not fantasy, are the first building blocks of trust and treaties. It is a toss-up as to who has done more damage with the latest UN Middle East fiasco — Arab regimes that continue to deny that the Jewish people has risen from the ashes, or dapper European diplomats who think they can still denigrate cowering Jews. Take note Berlin and Brussels. Those days are over.