Three basic lies in the UN commission’s report

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On June 7, the new United Nations’ anti-Israel Commission of Inquiry (COI), published its first report. Given the U.N.’s history, it will be unsurprising to most that the report is riddled with dubious narratives of villainous Israelis and powerless Palestinians. As is also usually the case with the United Nations, the report is also filled with basic factual errors.

Presented below are just three of the basic lies found in the COI’s report that show not only a disinterest in accuracy, but a willingness on the part of the U.N. officials to deceive readers.

**1) The COI conveniently forgets Gaza’s southern border**

In paragraph 16, the report states: “Despite the claim by Israel that it disengaged from Gaza in 2005 … Israel remains in occupation of the territory by virtue of the control exercised over, inter alia, its airspace and territorial waters, land crossings at the borders….”

In fact, Israel does not control all the “land crossings at the borders.” Gaza’s southern border is not with Israel, but with Egypt. That border contains the Rafah crossing, over which Israel exerts no authority. The respective Palestinian and Egyptian authorities remain in charge.

This is an error that cannot be chalked up to ignorance. The commissioners are well aware of the Rafah crossing, writing in paragraph 4: “The Government of Egypt indicated its willingness to cooperate with the Commission but has not yet responded to the Commission’s request to access the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing.”

The COI obviously knows the border crossing is controlled not by Israel, but by Egypt, since it is to the Egyptian authorities they appealed for access to the Rafah crossing, not Israeli authorities.

This error was not ignorance. It was pure dishonesty.

**2) Blatant falsehoods regarding eastern Jerusalem residents**

Demonstrating either a complete lack of knowledge or disturbing willingness to lie, the COI makes an objectively false claim about the status of eastern Jerusalem residents, writing: “The situation is different in East Jerusalem, which since its purported annexation by Israel has been subject to the Israeli domestic legal system, though its Palestinian residents are not eligible for Israeli citizenship.”

Palestinian residents, in fact, are eligible for Israeli citizenship. Indeed, in [2019](https://www.timesofisrael.com/unprecedented-1200-east-jerusalem-palestinians-got-israeli-citizenship-in-2019/), approximately 1,200 applied for and were granted Israeli citizenship. After Israel captured parts of Jerusalem from the Jordanians in 1967, all Palestinian residents were given permanent residency status with the option of acquiring Israeli citizenship if they so choose. While many refuse to apply for citizenship, for a variety of political and personal reasons, many have become Israeli citizens over the years. Indeed, successful [legal challenges](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2020-11-25/ty-article/.premium/israel-to-expedite-citizenship-process-for-east-jerusalem-palestinians/0000017f-e178-d7b2-a77f-e37f9f670000) recently have made the process even easier for Palestinian residents who would like Israeli citizenship.

**3) Falsifying the terms of the Oslo Accords**

Any “commission of inquiry” that is supposed to get to the bottom of a conflict should, at the very least, have a basic understanding of the core legal agreements pertaining to the conflict. In this case, that would include the Oslo Accords, which currently govern the relationship between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (created under the Oslo Accords).

Yet, here is how the COI addresses the accords:

“In the 1990s, the Oslo Accords were intended to start a process towards achieving a peace treaty, ‘to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the elected Council …, for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973)’. The entire territory, divided in the Oslo Accords into Areas A, B and C, was to be gradually handed over to the Palestinians.”

This is entirely false. Nowhere did the Oslo Accords state that the entire territory was to be handed over to the Palestinians. The issues of settlements and final borders were clearly reserved for “permanent status negotiations” to be concluded later. Articles V(2)-(3) of the 1993 Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements read:\\

“2. Permanent status negotiations will commence as soon as possible, but not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period, between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian people representatives.

3. It is understood that these negotiations shall cover remaining issues, including: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest.”

Far from determining final borders, as the COI falsely states, the Oslo Accords simply created an interim arrangement to be put in place until the two parties came to an agreement on the final status issues.

Tuesday’s report was just the COI’s first report—it is mandated with delivering two such reports every year, without end. These are just a few of the falsehoods being spread in its initial report. Given the U.N.’s long history of baseless and bigoted attacks on the Jewish state, expect much more of this dishonesty in the future from this commission.