Pro-Israel protesters interrupt UN Security Council meeting, call for freeing hostages

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As the United Nations Security Council met about the Israeli-Palestinian file on Wednesday, two women interrupted the proceedings calling for the hostages to be freed from Gaza.

Yaffa Ben-David, who leads the Israel Teachers Union, told Israeli media that it was her ‘duty to influence in every place I can, even if it means I’m expelled from the hall.’

Protests inside the Security Council chamber are rare. Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, who was chairing the quarterly open debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, didn’t appear to understand the women’s cries.

‘I don’t understand. Speak more clearly,’ the Russian diplomat said. ‘One of you can speak clearly to say what you want to say. I see you don’t wish to do so. Very well.’

Ben-David said later that ‘it’s time for the U.N. to understand that this is about human life and that we, the people of Israel, won’t give up on a single hostage.’ She pointed to an image of the hostage Ohad Yahalomi, who ‘is married to one of our teachers, who I’ve personally supported, and seen her pain and struggle from up close.’

A U.N. official said the women were asked to leave the chamber and did so peacefully, without further incident. The second woman, who held a sign that said, in Hebrew, ‘the people of Israel lives’ with a Star of David, has yet to be identified publicly.

Ben-David [wrote](https://www.facebook.com/ybd.morim/posts/pfbid035E2EQ3tVhZSfQgerNfCt4ejpZLydDvPSCZHzRhGssd8C2b9Vj36DjehkwpHrgoFtl) on Facebook in Hebrew that ‘today at the U.N. Security Council, I raised the picture of the kidnapped Ohad Yahlomi and read ‘the people of Israel lives’ and ‘bring them home.’ I am committed to raising the voices of the families and demanding the release of the captives. We won’t be quiet until they all return home.’

The Jewish State has criticized the Security Council, and the United Nations at-large, harshly for largely ignoring the plight of the hostages. Only once has the council met with a focus on the hostages, and that gathering was informal.

The two women protested shortly after Gilad Erdan, Israel’s ambassador to the global body, addressed the council.

Marking the 30th anniversary of Hezbollah’s deadly bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Erdan focused exclusively on Iran’s malign influence throughout the Middle East and the larger world.

He has sought on numerous occasions to redirect the council’s attention away from the minutiae of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict onto Iran’s role in perpetuating the conflict.

He told the council that the anniversary, which is on Thursday, ‘should be a stark reminder of two things. Firstly, that Iran has been obsessed with killing Jews everywhere.’

Secondly, Erdan said, ‘Iran has a global reach and is exporting its bloodshed and destruction to the four corners of the earth.’

The Islamic Republic’s terror proxy includes Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis and other factions.

Erdan chided the council on Wednesday for a ‘willful blindness’ on Iran, ‘never to be named and addressed.’

Lavrov, the Russian minister, was also critical of the Security Council, but for different reasons.

Chairing the meeting in Russia’s capacity as council president for July, Lavrov said the council’s resolutions on the Israel-Hamas conflict have failed to halt the war.

‘Four resolutions have been adopted. However, the ongoing bloodshed,’ he said, ‘only reaffirms that all of these decisions have remained ink on paper.’

Moscow’s top diplomat said a ‘frank and honest conversation is needed’ to halt hostilities and reach a political settlement. He blamed the United States for its support of Israel, saying that ‘Washington has become a direct participant in the conflict, just as in the case of the situation in Ukraine.’

‘If this support stops, the bloodshed will be stopped,’ Lavrov said.

Russia, which has partnered with Iran in an apparent marriage of convenience, has been harshly critical of Israel since Jerusalem began showing outward support for Ukraine’s defense against Moscow’s invasion.

Russia purchased Iranian-made drones to attack Ukraine, and some analysts say Tehran learns lessons from those attacks about how it can improve its chances in a military operation against Israel.

Washington’s U.N. ambassador tried to keep the focus on Hamas’s refusal to accept a ceasefire proposal.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. envoy, said the ceasefire framework created by Israel and publicly backed by U.S. President Joe Biden in May remains in place.

‘There are still gaps to be closed, and this council must keep pressure on Hamas to accept the deal,’ Thomas-Greenfield said, ‘and begin implementing it without delay and without conditions.’

‘This is what we all want here in this council,’ she added. ‘It’s what the Palestinians in Gaza want.’