UN official compares Israel's settlements to war crimes, sparking backlash

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A United Nations human rights investigator is being called anti-Semitic for remarks made Friday against Israel at the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. Critics say this is just another long line of anti-Israel bias stemming from the world body as it seeks to rewrite history.

Michael Lynk, a Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories, was speaking to a meeting of the U.N. Human Rights Council presenting findings from his report where he said he wanted, "to make it clear to Israel that its illegal occupation, and its defiance of international law and international opinion can and will no longer be cost free.'' Lynk, who has long been criticized for his anti-Israel views, noted, "I conclude that the Israeli settlements do amount to a war crime.''

Lynk's remarks immediately drew fire from critics who noted that his report and remarks excluded any criticism of terror group Hamas or the Palestinian Authority.

Anne Bayefsky, director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, told Fox News, "Missing from his so-called 20-page expert report is a single reference to Hamas using human shields, to any of the Palestinians killed by misfired Hamas rockets, or in fact to any Palestinian having committed any war crime at all. The real question is why the Biden administration has decided to join and legitimize this Council and its preposterous human rights authority figures, knowing full well neither the Council nor Lynk's platform can be or will be changed."

Then-President Trump took the U.S. out of the Human Rights Council in 2018. Nikki Haley, the United Nations ambassador at the time, said the 47-member council was "a protector of human rights abusers, and a cesspool of political bias." In one of many policy changes from the Trump administration regarding the U.N., Secretary of State Antony Blinken said this past February the Biden administration would re-engage with the council and challenge for a seat for its 2022 session.

Blinken, in a statement, noted, "The United States has long been a champion of human rights. If elected to the Human Rights Council, we will use the opportunity to be a leading voice within the Council for promoting respect for human rights."

Bayefsky, who is also president of Human Rights Voices and who speaks regularly and monitors the Human Rights Council, told Fox News, "The U.N. Human Rights Council's so-called expert on the ‘Palestinian territories,’ Michael Lynk, is a notorious extremist. Three days after 9/11, he blamed ‘disregard’ by Western nations of the law for ‘breeding these kinds of acts.’ He routinely makes the grotesque analogy of Israel, and the Jewish victims of the Nazis, to the Nazis. He constantly challenges the legitimacy of the existence of a Jewish state at all, repeatedly reverting to the supposed affront of 1948."

Bayefsky concluded, "Today's revolting example of promoting anti-Semitism under the guise of protecting human rights is par for the course, both of the U.N.'s top human rights body and its representative, Michael Lynk."

While Israel doesn’t participate in agenda item 7, which is solely used to condemn the Jewish state, the Palestinian representative thanked Lynk for his report.

Its Ambassador, Ibrahim Khreish said it was imperative to take into consideration the recommendations, "so that we can punish this colonial and plantation system, put an end to investment there, and to boycott this system and impose economic and political sanctions in order to condemn the injustices committed by this (Israeli) government."

While no comment was offered by Israel's [United Nations](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/united-nations) ambassador to Fox News, the International Spokesman for the Jewish Community of Hebron, Yishai Fleisher slammed Lynk calling him, "a national identify thief."

Fleisher told Fox News from Hebron that he should understand that the areas he called settlements shows that he lacked a basic knowledge and understanding of history. "The[Jewish people](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/religion/judaism) are indigenous to Judea, we had two commonwealths here and we are now in the period of the third commonwealth. We hail from this land, our language is filled with idioms from this land, our whole identity is tied up with this land, and the only war crime that should be discussed right now is the war crime that Michael Lynk is perpetrating by denying our history."

Of all the agenda items of the U.N.'s top human rights body there is only one that is dedicated to attacking a single country which is Israel - agenda Item 7. Despite multiple efforts to reform item 7, it still continues to this day.

Members of the 47-country Human Rights Council includes [China](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/china), [Cuba](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/cuba), [Russia](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/russia), [Qatar](https://www.foxnews.com/us/thief-steals-qatar-consul-generals-car-crashes-in-nyc) and [Venezuela.](https://www.foxnews.com/category/topic/venezuelan-political-crisis)