Beverly Hills denounces U.N. commission

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The Beverly Hills City Council on Aug. 2 unanimously approved a resolution calling on the United Nations to disband the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Israel.

According to a staff report, the item was brought forth by Councilman John Mirisch after two commission members allegedly made antisemitic statements.

“Sadly, we see once again that the United Nations and some of its various associated agencies show their pathological hatred of Jews, and the attempt to delegitimize Israel is nothing short of antisemitism, also known as ‘geo-hatred,’” he said.

Mirisch said one of the commissioners made a “very cynical attempt” to trivialize Israel’s existence, but the U.N. has made several attempts to deny the connection between “the Jewish people and our ancestral homeland.”

According to a press release, the U.N.’s Human Rights Council on May 27 held a special session on “the grave human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem” and adopted a resolution “ensuring respect for international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and in Israel.”

Through the resolution, the council decided to “urgently establish an ongoing, independent, international commission of inquiry to investigate, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and in Israel, all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of international human rights law leading up and since 13 April 2021,” the release stated.

The resolution requested that the commission “investigate all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity,” according to the release.

Beverly Hills policy and management analyst Cindy Owens said one of the commission members, Chris Sidoti, of Australia, recently stated that “accusations of antisemitism are thrown around like rice at weddings.”

She declined to repeat some of the comments by Commissioner Miloon Kothari, of India, but they were included in a staff report.

“Yes, [Israel] has been illegal from the beginning,” Kothari said in an interview with David Kattenburg. “One of our roles is to look at human rights law, international law, criminal law, and on all three counts, Israel is in systemic violation of all the legislation. I would go so far as to raise the question of why they are even a member of the U.N., as the Israeli government does not respect its own obligations as a U.N. member state. They consistently, either directly or through the U.S., try to undermine U.N. mechanisms.”

Further, according to the staff report, Kothari on July 25 stated that “we are very disheartened by the social media, whether controlled by the Jewish Lobby or specific NGOs, a lot of money is being thrown to try and discredit us.”

Israeli-American Civic Action Network Dillon Hosier said the commission was created to destroy the future state of Israel. He said a federal bill has been introduced to ensure that the U.S. does not help fund the commission.

“Some may question the council’s involvement on international issues such as this, but at a time when antisemitism is on the rise and the safety and security of Jewish people around the world is at risk, your care, concern and attention to these issues is so important for our community,” Hosier said.

Beverly Hills Councilwoman Sharona Nazarian suggested that the council pen a letter to its federal legislators, and Councilman Lester Friedman agreed.

“What we’re seeing here is true antisemitism,” Friedman added.

Mirisch suggested that the city try to find additional municipalities to get involved.

“We should ask other organizations and other cities to join us, and we should make it clear that anti-Jewish racism is not acceptable,” he said.

Vice Mayor Julian Gold supported raising awareness about the commission, saying that the comments were “disgusting.”

“If there weren’t ladies present, I might say something else,” he added.

Mayor Lili Bosse said she hopes other organizations and municipalities get involved.

“I’m very proud to stand very strongly against this,” she added.