Boycott the UN-Sponsored Hate Fest in Durban

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Next month, the [United Nations](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/united-nations) will [convene](https://www.un.org/pga/75/wp-content/uploads/sites/100/2021/07/PGA-letter-Durban-Declaration-and-Programme-of-Action_rev.pdf) its infamous Durban anti-racism conference for the fourth time. Despite the conference's innocuous branding, the event has provided a forum for participants to bash the Jewish state of Israel and revel in antisemitism. The history of the Durban conference is so ugly that it is worth reviewing.

The first conference was held in 2001 in Durban, South Africa. The only true democracy in the Middle East—Israel—was also the only country under discussion at the week-long conference. Iran, Russia, North Korea, Syria and China were all ignored. Nor was any other country with actual human rights violations against ethnic and religious minorities called out.

While the [declaration](https://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf) from that conference following U.S. and European pressure included "concern [with] the increase in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in various parts of the world, as well as the emergence of racial and violent movements based on racism and discriminatory ideas against Jewish, Muslim and Arab communities," at the conference itself, speech after speech was dedicated to the demonization of Israel. Founder of the PLO terrorist organization Yasser Arafat decried the "ugliness" of "Israeli racist policies and practices against the Palestinian people." Arafat's rhetoric included every slanderous accusation, including calling Israel "a racist colonialist conspiracy of aggression, forced eviction, usurpation of land, and infringement upon Christian and Islamic holy places," and a "colonialist challenge against international legitimacy...moved by a mentality of superiority that practices racial discrimination, that adopts ethnic cleansing and transfer." To this day we hear echoes of Arafat's hateful language from those who seek to delegitimize the Jewish state.

Others who joined the anti-Israel chorus included Cuban dictator Fidel Castro, who condemned what he called a "dreadful genocide perpetrated, at this very moment, against our Palestinian brothers." Iranian foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi [opined](https://www.un.org/WCAR/pressreleases/rd-d21.html) that "the most vivid manifestation of institutionalized racism is Zionism" and accused Israel of "unabated killings and massacre of innocent Palestinians" and "the destruction of entire Palestinian villages."

Kharrazi went on to belittle the murder of six million Jews during the Holocaust. He described those events as the "oppression of the Jewish people in Europe during the Second World War" so as to compare the Holocaust to "today's Islamophobia, anti-Arabism and anti-Palestinian practices."

In a separate declaration, the UN-sponsored NGO Forum formally [labeled](https://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/africa/09/02/durban.racism/) Israel a "racist apartheid state" and claimed that Israel was responsible for "racist crimes including war crimes, acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing."

According to [that declaration](https://i-p-o.org/racism-ngo-decl.htm), Israel should be punished for its "crimes" by "the launch of an international anti Israeli Apartheid movement as implemented against South African Apartheid" along with "a policy of complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state...which means the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, and the full cessation of all links (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military operation and training) between all states and Israel." This rhetoric helped launch the organized and well-financed effort to boycott, divest and sanction Israel, known as BDS.

And in case conference participants had not yet gotten the point of this gathering, during the conference attendees were offered copies of the infamous and libelous antisemitic Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and handed fliers that suggested Hitler should have won the Second World War.

Ahead of the 20-year anniversary of the Durban conference, at least 11 countries have announced they will boycott the fourth Durban conference: the United States, Israel, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Australia and France. Fourteen countries, including the United States, boycotted the last Durban conference, which was in 2011.

It is time that other countries, such as Italy, Poland, Brazil, Argentina, Norway, South Korea, Japan and Mexico join the boycott of this UN-backed platform to bash Israel. Such a forum is not "anti-racism," but rather simply racism. Participation by any country would aid and abet the world's oldest hatred.

That the United Nations still hosts this hate fest targeting the Jew among nations—namely the Jewish state of Israel—is a stain on an international body that was created to promote international peace and human rights.