Palestinians make anti-US statement on Durban as Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia boycott

September 14, 2021

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The Jerusalem Post

<https://www.jpost.com/international/palestinians-make-anti-us-statement-on-durban-as-greece-slovenia-boycott-679452>

The Palestinian Authority slammed countries boycotting the upcoming [Durban Conference](https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/new-zealand-cyprus-to-boycott-durban-iv-679020) anniversary event, with an emphasis on the US.

Meanwhile, Greece, Slovakia and Slovenia confirmed they also would not be attending the event in New York on September 22, bringing the number of countries boycotting to 19.

The 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, was marked with antisemitism and anti-Israel events. Israel was singled out for opprobrium as racist in the declaration released by UN member states participating, a declaration that accuses no other specific countries and that next week’s conference is meant to reaffirm. The parallel NGO forum accused Israel of apartheid, and organizations taking part gave out copies of the antisemitic canard The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and materials saying Hitler was right.

The Palestinian Authority Foreign Ministry tweeted in a statement on Tuesday that it “strongly objects to inimical statements and tendentious attacks against the upcoming Durban Conference... Such iniquitous calls to boycott the conference display an alarming level of deficit in morality and expose a hypocritical approach. The State of Palestine calls on all states and international organizations to attend the conference and adopt a political declaration for the full and effective implementation of its principles and values,” referring to the statement in which Israel is the only country designated a perpetrator of racism. “Palestine rejects morally corrupt and politically sinister attempts to disconnect the Palestinian struggle to freedom from this global cause” against racism.

In a thinly veiled reference to the United States, the statement adds: “It is not a coincidence that the same States that have long opposed the inclusion of acts of slavery in its current and past manifestations as a crime against humanity are now boycotting this past year’s conference on reparations, racial justice and equality for people of African descent.”

Israel and the US pulled out of the 2001 conference because of its anti-Israel slant, but even before the conference began, secretary of state Colin Powell announced that he would not attend, in part because one of the items on the agenda was reparations for slavery, targeting the US.

The Greek Embassy in Israel confirmed on Tuesday that it will be boycotting the conference at the UN, following high-level bilateral discussions with other countries.

The Slovakian Foreign Ministry also confirmed it will not be attending.

Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša tweeted “Slovenia won’t be there,” in response to a tweet from American Jewish Committee CEO David Harris listing all the EU member states that are not boycotting the conference. Greece was on Harris’s list, as well.

A total of 19 countries have confirmed they will not attend Durban IV: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovenia, Slovakia, the UK and the US.

In Ireland, the Ireland-Israel Alliance launched a campaign to pressure Foreign Minister Simon Coveney to boycott the conference. Ireland’s government is highly critical of Israel, its parliament recognized a Palestinian state, and has voted in favor of boycotting products of Judea and Samaria, though the bill ultimately did not go into effect because it conflicts with EU trade regulations.

A source in Dublin said that Ireland supports the “ethos and intentions” of Durban IV, but is concerned about the optics of attending when leading EU states like France and Germany are boycotting the conference.

“In only a few days, the Durban IV conference will take place in New York and our country must make a clear choice: will we be a party to the antisemitic legacy of Durban and continue our descent into extremism, or will we follow the example of other leading democracies in boycotting this conference of hate?” said Ireland-Israel Alliance Executive Director Jackie Goodall.

Goodall said she is not hopeful, and that the Irish government’s policy “has been one of cuddling up to the Iranians, whilst targeting Israel for condemnation and sanction at every opportunity. Perhaps Durban IV fits nicely with Ireland’s foreign policy, singling out one state – Israel – for vitriol, and applying standards of conduct to Israel’s self-defense that have no root in law or logic.”