**The UN Human Rights Farce Gets Worse**

August 12, 2014

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Commentary

https://www.commentarymagazine.com/2014/08/12/the-un-human-rights-farce-gets-worse-william-schabas-israel/

Over the past few decades, the bias against Israel at the United Nations has reached the level of caricature. The disproportionate interest in anything that the Jewish state does matched with the world body’s general indifference to real crimes being perpetrated anywhere else is an object lesson in the definition of prejudice. But just when you thought it couldn’t get any worse, the choice of a man [to head a UN Human Rights Council probe](http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-gaza-conflict-2014/.premium-1.610046) of the fighting in Gaza who has already called for the prosecution of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu demonstrates just how ridiculous the anti-Israel farce there has become.

That the UN Human Rights Council, whose membership is made up of many of the worst dictatorships and human-rights offenders in the world, wouldn’t give Israel a fair hearing was already a given. The Council devotes most of its attention to attempts to undermine the Jewish state’s legitimacy or to promote libelous attacks on its policies. While a lot of the attention on this panel was devoted to the decision of George Clooney’s fiancée to decline participation in the probe, the appointment of Canadian law professor William Schabas demonstrates that the Council is not even interested in the appearance of fairness.

Schabas has already demonstrated his animus for Israel and actually called for Netanyahu to be hauled before the International Criminal Court in The Hague for prosecution. Lest anyone think he takes sides in Israeli political debates, he also advocated the prosecution of Shimon Peres in a comment in which he compared Israel’s actions in Gaza to the genocide in Darfur.

The organization UN Watch, which performs the tiresome yet essential task of monitoring the unfortunate doings of the Human Rights Council, [assembled this collection of quotes and dubious positions](http://blog.unwatch.org/index.php/2014/08/11/ngo-william-schabas-must-recuse-himself-from-un-gaza-inquiry/) from Schabas. A dive into his record shows that he is not only an avowed foe of Israel but also something of an apologist for Iran.

Of course, the appointment of someone like Schabas is hardly unique in the history of the UN, a world body where anti-Semitism and hatred for Israel is deeply embedded into the culture of the institution. Why, then should we bother even commenting on this?

The first reason is that the UN probe into Gaza will undoubtedly be used to bolster attacks on Israel and to delegitimize its right of self-defense against Hamas terrorists. No matter how outrageous the nature of anything produced by the Human Rights Council, the mere fact that such a report will bear the imprimatur of the UN will give it a hearing and a bogus legitimacy in the mainstream media.

Second, Schabas’s appointment is significant because it marks the further descent into Jew hatred at the world body.

It should be remembered that the last time the Human Rights Council injected itself into the war between Israel and Gaza, it took great pains to appear to be fair to the Jewish state. The appointment of Judge Richard Goldstone to head that probe was seen as an attempt to avoid accusations of prejudice since he was a respected member of the South African Jewish community. Goldstone was merely the beard for a UN panel determined to destroy Israel’s reputation and, until he subsequently recanted his involvement in an unfair attack on the Jewish state, an effective defense against accusations of prejudice against Israel.

More than five years later, the Human Rights Council has no such compunctions. Rather than bother putting up a chair that would pretend to be even-handed, Schabas’s anti-Israel advocacy is a statement of contempt for even the pretense of fairness. It demonstrates that in the UN world, Israel is so hated that no one there even thinks it worth the bother to staff this commission with people who are, at least in principle, unbiased.

While Schabas [attempted to defend himself](http://www.timesofisrael.com/un-gaza-probe-head-says-hes-not-anti-israel-will-be-impartial/) in an interview with Israel’s Channel 2 today, he actually just dug himself a deeper hole. Schabas not only attempted to explain his comments about Netanyahu in a way that made it clear he already thought Israel’s actions were unjustified and that he had no opinion about whether Hamas is a terrorist group; he even tried to claim that Israel gets favored treatment by the UN, an assertion so absurd that it would barely merit an attempt at refutation.

Israel should not have anything to do with a commission headed by a person whose view of the conflict is already a guarantee of bias. But the main takeaway here is not the obvious one about a report whose anti-Israel conclusions are already a certainty. It’s that anti-Semitism and hate for Israel has now reached such high levels that no one at the UN thinks it necessary to veil their bias.