



Mission permanente d'Israël  
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies  
et des Organisations Internationales à Genève

משלחת ישראל  
ליד משרד האומות המאוחדות  
והארגונים הבינלאומיים בג'נבה

*Check Against Delivery*

Statement by H.E. Aharon Leshno Yaar  
Permanent Representative

9<sup>th</sup> Regular Session  
Human Rights Council

Agenda Item 7  
General Debate

18 September 2008

Mr. President,

This is the first day I take the floor in an official capacity since my arrival in Geneva. During the excitement of this morning's session, I was unable to make proper introductory remarks. Thus, I would like to begin this afternoon by extending a warm personal welcome to the new High Commissioner, Ms. Pillay, and express my hope that both of our tenures here will be productive. Likewise, I would like to extend my hand to you, Mr. President, in a spirit of professional collegiality and mutual respect. I have heard only good things about your leadership since June, and look forward to benefiting from your able guidance of the Council's work.

Mr. President,

I had sincerely hoped my first address to the Council would be under significantly better circumstances. Addressing the Council on a day when the *only* thing on the agenda is the one-sided consideration of Israel's human rights record is not my idea of a particularly auspicious beginning. Nevertheless, for the time being, I will reserve judgment and merely reiterate Israel's long-standing position that we seek opportunities to constructively work with UN mechanisms on the many human rights issues that face our world today.

Mr. President,

Israel's views on Item 7 are well-known. Our views on all the myriad UN instruments which single out Israel are well-known. We have protested the bias, inequity, and futility of the UN's approach to dealing with Israeli-Palestinian issues in every conceivable forum, and in every conceivable manner. We have questioned the logic of setting aside an entire day on the Council's program of work for dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian question, when every other "human rights situation requiring the Council's attention" is crammed into a three-hour window. Yet, nothing I could say today would change the hearts or minds of those committed to this errant path. Therefore, I will not waste anyone's time by repeating that which we all know.

Progress will not be made in this forum, under this Agenda item. And there is far too much work to be done on issues which deserve real consideration in this forum for me to take up any more time. Therefore, I will leave you with the thought that this month marks a rare historical occurrence when the Jewish New Year *Rosh ha-Shana* and Muslim holy day of *Eid al-Fitr* happen to fall on the exact same day. In the spirit of this happy chronological coincidence, I ask all interested parties to take the time to consider the new opportunities presented through the Annapolis summit, recommit themselves to the Peace Process and pledge to work together to solve the real and pressing issues on the ground.

Thank you.