



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
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To the United Nations, Geneva

Statement on the Joint Report of the Special Rapporteurs
Item 7
Human Rights Council
23 March 2009

Thank you, Mr. President.

Today we gather in this chamber amid ominous signs and events in the Middle East.

We gather only days after a very serious and potentially very deadly terrorist attack in the city of Haifa in northern Israel. A vehicle laden with dozens of kilograms of explosives was activated but did not detonate in a shopping mall.

In the words of Prime Minister Olmert, “only through the awareness of citizens and the quick actions of the Israel Police did a miracle occur and this terrorist attack end without casualties.”

By contrast, a Hamas spokesperson said that his organization would have been proud had the bomb fully detonated.

We gather only days after this Council witnessed the hateful spectacle of the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran refusing to pronounce Israel’s name, denying our legitimacy — our very right to exist — before the United Nations.

We gather only one week after the leader of the terrorist organization Hizbullah proudly declared to the world: “Today, tomorrow and after 1,000 years and even until the end of time, as long as Hezbollah exists, it will never recognize Israel.”

Mr. President,

These are the realities of our region. These are the realities Israel faces.

Yet today’s report by the special procedures of this Council seems unable — or perhaps unwilling — to address these realities. The report claims to examine Israel’s actions while it willfully ignores and downplays the terrorist and other threats we face.

The report purports to address the situation in the region, yet it fails to address the relentless barrage of rockets, mortars, and other attacks against 1 million Israelis living in the southern part of my country.

This report fulfills the work of this Council — the same council that mislabels Hamas rockets as “crude” — a cynical attempt to use semantics to mislead the international community and pervert the very notion of human rights; the same Council that seeks to demonize Israel while it establishes equivalence between lawful self-defense and terrorism.

But there is no such equivalence, Mr. President.

There is no equivalence between Israel — a state using force in exercise of its right of self-defense — and Hamas, a terrorist organization that willfully kills civilians.

There is no equivalence between military commanders who struggle daily to ensure that their operations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of international humanitarian law, and the terrorists who flout this law by using women and children as human shields as they launch attacks from schools, homes, hospitals, and mosques.

There is no equivalence between Israel's efforts to ensure the flow of humanitarian supplies — even while under fire — and Hamas' despicable work to steal such supplies from those it claims to protect.

Yet these realities are disregarded for the sake of political expediency. But it would be dishonest — it would be wrong — to remain silent in the face of such selectivity.

Let us take the reference to the Karni Crossing that has been closed for over 46 days. Yet in a moment of historical revisionism, the report does not mention that Karni crossing has been — and remains — a principal target of Hamas terrorism, including a deadly attack that killed 6 Israelis.

Year after year, Hamas launched attacks aimed at closing and destroying Karni — a crossing that provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. How can this report claim objectivity when it willfully ignores such basic facts?

In a report widely cited by the Special Rapporteurs, the World Health Organization states that in the Gaza Strip, “full stocks of drugs are in place in most hospital facilities since the first week of the ceasefire.” The report further notes that a “surplus of many [medical supplies] is anticipated and that “...public health programs have been fully resumed...” Why is this report silent on these matters? Is it perhaps selectively using the WHO report in order to obey the double-standard established against Israel?

Mr. President,

Time will not permit me to fully enumerate further mistakes and inaccuracies. And sadly, we once again witness this Council consuming its time with reports such as this one that ignores critical information and selectively manipulates facts in order to arrive at pre-determined conclusions acceptable to certain automatic majorities in this Council.

Instead, with the limited time available, this council should consider promoting genuine peace and reconciliation aimed at fulfilling a two-state solution — one Jewish, and one Arab.

Peace in our region will not be achieved by adopting one-sided reports such as the one before us. It will not be achieved by a barrage of statements in this hall aimed at demonizing Israel. It will only be realized through direct, bilateral negotiations aimed at reaching an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

And so this Council should use its time and resources to rekindle the peace process without adding fuel to the fire. It should seek to promote the cause of peace by having the strength to defend its supporters and the courage to confront its enemies.

Thank you.

