

## **The American Jewish Committee Statement on the United Nations and Israel**

The American Jewish Committee was in the vanguard of non-governmental organizations that welcomed and supported the adoption of the United Nations Charter in 1945. We participated actively in the task of creating an appropriate structure to implement the Charter.

We played an especially significant role in support of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the establishment of the UN Commission on Human Rights. AJC remains engaged in human rights advocacy and in calling human rights abuses around the world to the attention of world leaders, high UN officials and opinion makers.

AJC is committed to the ideals of the United Nations as expressed in its Charter, especially as they relate to international peace and security, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all the world's peoples.

Regrettably, many delegations to the UN of member states appear to have little or no respect for these principles. A working majority of the UN General Assembly deliberately sidesteps the Charter's promise that the General Assembly would help to maintain international peace and security. That same majority has elected members to the UN Commission on Human Rights whose domestic actions and policies clearly make them unfit to serve and has succeeded in persuading the Commission to avert its eyes from many of the most serious human rights abuses in the world.

For many months the AJC has called on the UN to provide help to the hundreds of thousands of victims of the armed conflict in Western Sudan. However, such help as has been given has been consistently too little and too late. Just as the UN failed in Rwanda, it has failed in other conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa; nor, among the world's other armed conflicts and humanitarian catastrophes of recent years, did it act against "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia.

While ignoring its responsibility to confront and deal appropriately with these and other conflicts that have taken a huge toll in human lives, that pose the most serious challenges to international peace and security, and involve the most perplexing humanitarian crises, the UN has been obsessed with condemnation of Israel. The General Assembly and several of its subsidiary organs have been converted into instruments of propaganda for the Palestinian cause and the vilification of Israel while ignoring murderous assaults against Israeli civilians carried out by terrorist groups that oppose a peaceful resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict on any terms. Instead of attempting to play a constructive role in bringing peace to the region, a working majority in the General Assembly has employed a significant part of the time and resources of the UN in a relentless effort to delegitimize the State of Israel and, in effect, to give aid and comfort to terrorists whose declared goal is to kill as many Israelis as possible and to destroy the national homeland of the Jewish people.

Some governments that do not share the objectives of Israel's enemies nevertheless go along with this majority because they find it convenient to do so for many reasons that have nothing to do with the justice or propriety of the anti-Israel program. AJC is engaged in an effort to explain to leaders of such governments that such diversion of the UN's time and resources is clearly against the interests of the United Nations and the cause of peace and serves only to encourage acts of terrorism not only in Israel but in many other countries far from the Middle East.

The United Nations is one of the members of the Quartet that is sponsoring the Road Map to the establishment of a Palestinian state that is at peace with Israel. The American Jewish Committee supports the Road Map. It is as a supporter of the Road Map that we emphasize that the adoption of unbalanced

and vituperative UN resolutions directed solely against Israel and the engagement of UN staff in the dissemination of anti-Israel propaganda undermine the credibility of the UN and its ability to serve as an impartial participant in the peace process.

We shall, therefore, continue to encourage and support efforts by the Executive Branch and the Congress of the United States to make government leaders of UN member states aware that, when their representatives follow the lead of the Palestinian Observer Mission at the UN, they are undercutting efforts to bring the Middle East conflict to a peaceful resolution. Governments that believe in the ideals of the UN Charter and look to the UN as a forum for confronting and resolving global problems must recognize that if the UN is to perform that role in the Israel- Palestinian conflict, its mode of operation in dealing with that issue must be profoundly reformed.

The UN's obsession with Israel is reflected in the existence within the UN Secretariat of a Division on Palestinian Rights that is on a par with the Division on the Americas and Europe, the Division on Asia and the Pacific, and two Divisions on Africa. It is also reflected in the continued operations of the General Assembly's Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Human Rights Practices Affecting the Palestinian People. These are the only committees of the General Assembly to deal with a specific political problem in a specific geographic area, the size and affected population of which are both dwarfed by the size and populations of the other areas of crisis that threaten the peace and stability of the world.

These three entities – the Division and two Committees – that together form an anti-Israel propaganda apparatus within the United Nations system, paid for by the contributions of its member states, should be abolished. Instead of its egregiously unfair and unrelenting vilification of Israel, the UN General Assembly should seek to address, in a constructive and unbiased fashion, the many issues concerning the humanitarian needs of far larger numbers of people that are at present largely neglected.

*Adopted by the Board of Governors  
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