



CHALLENGING THE UK'S VOTING RECORD AT THE UN

Introducing the United Nations

The United Nations (UN) was created in the aftermath of World War 2 (WW2). Founded in 1945, the UN is an international organisation which is currently made up of 193 Member States. The mission and work of the United Nations are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter.

The forerunner of the United Nations was the League of Nations (LoN), an organisation created in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles “to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security.” The onset of World War 2 showed that the LoN had failed in its original purpose (to stop any future world war) and after 26 years it was replaced by the UN. The UN inherited several agencies and organisations founded by its predecessor, including the The LoN’s Mandate for Palestine whose Article 6 testifies to the legality of



Jewish settlement in Palestine and which is implicitly recognised by Article 80 of the United Nations’ Charter.

Because of its unique international character and the powers vested in its Charter, the United Nations is able to take action on the issues confronting humanity in the 21st Century, such as peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, terrorism, humanitarian and health emergencies, gender equality, governance, food production, and more.

The UN also provides a forum for its members to express their views in the General Assembly (UNGA), the Security Council (UNSC), the Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and other bodies and committees. By enabling dialogue between its members, and by hosting negotiations, the UN has become a mechanism for governments to find areas of agreement and solve problems together.

Its Chief Administrative Officer is the Secretary-General. Past Secretary-Generals of the UN include Ban Ki-moon (Korea) who served from January 2007 to December 2016; Kofi Annan (Ghana) who held office from January 1997 to December 2006 and Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt), who held office from January 1992 to December 1996.

Anti-Israel bias at the United Nations

Regrettably, the UN has facilitated the pernicious elevation of dictatorships to high positions in its key bodies such as the UNGA, UNSC and UNHRC, as well as what can only be described as a peculiar obsession with scapegoating Israel, the Jew amongst the nations.

Because of this obsession, critics of the UN have quipped that if an alien from another planet visited the UN and listened to its debates, read its resolutions, and walked its halls, the extra-terrestrial observer would logically conclude that a principal purpose of the world body is to censure a tiny country called Israel.

Beginning around 1967, the full weight of the UN was gradually but deliberately turned against the country it helped to conceive by UNGA Resolution 181 a mere two decades earlier. The campaign at the UN to demonise and delegitimise Israel at every opportunity and in every forum was initiated by the Arab states in concert with the Soviet Union and supported by an automatic majority of Third World regimes.

The result today is that many of the UN's political organs, specialised agencies, and bureaucratic divisions have been subverted by a relentless propaganda war against the Jewish state, causing them to stray from their founding purposes and constitutional frameworks.

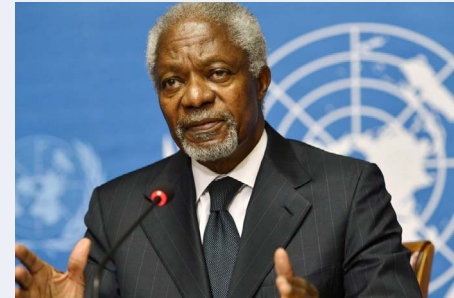
Several past UN Secretary-Generals have spoken out about the UN's obsession with Israel.

In December 2016, then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said whilst addressing the UNSC that *"Decades of political manoeuvring have created a disproportionate number of resolutions, reports and committees against Israel"*.

Furthermore, Ban Ki-moon said *"Over the last decade I have argued that we cannot have a bias against Israel at the UN" and that "In many cases, instead of helping the Palestinian issue, this reality has foiled the ability of the UN to fulfil its role effectively."*



Ban Ki-moon's predecessor, Kofi Annan was the first UN Secretary-General to strongly and consistently speak out against the UN's anti-Israeli discrimination.



During a 1998 visit to Israel, Annan acknowledged UN bias against the Jewish state, and called for it to *"rectify an anomaly: Israel's position as the only Member State that is not a member of one of the regional groups, which means it has no chance of being elected to serve on main organs such as the Security Council or the Economic and Social Council. This anomaly should be corrected. We must uphold the principle of equality among all United Nations Member States."*

So too did Annan recognise that *"Israelis see hypocrisy and double standards in the intense scrutiny given to some of [Israel's] actions, while other situations fail to elicit the world's outrage and condemnations."*

It must be noted that the UN's discrimination against Israel is not an irregular transgression, nor an insular nuisance of interest only to

those concerned with the interests of the Jewish people and the Jewish state. Rather, the world body's obsession with censuring Israel at every turn directly affects all citizens of the world, for it constitutes a severe violation of the sovereign equality principle guaranteed by the 1945 UN Charter and underlying the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

When a standard is applied selectively, it loses its very meaning as a standard. In the case of the UN, it has created a significant obstacle to the UN's ability to carry out its proper mandate. None of the above is to say that Israel should be above the law. Every country, including every democracy, commits certain human rights violations and countries should be held to account, domestically as well as internationally. Yet Israel, like every other country, does have the right to be treated equally under the law. Whilst it is perfectly legitimate for the UN to criticise Israel, the legitimacy is lost when this is done unfairly, selectively, massively, sometimes exclusively, and always obsessively.

Likewise, it is not discriminatory toward Israel to call attention to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, their difficult conditions, and right to self-determination. However, when one national claim is elevated above any other of the myriad aggrieved peoples around



Israel & the UN Human Rights Council

Article 4 provides that the work of the council shall be guided, inter alia, by the principles of “universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity.”

However, despite its declared purposes, the UNHRC has systematically turned a blind eye to the world’s worst perpetrators of gross and systematic violations of human rights. Paradoxically, many of these violators are themselves council members, including but not limited to countries such as China, Cuba, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Venezuela and Qatar – all serial human rights abusers.

Nowhere is this chasm between promise and performance more pronounced than in the UNHRCs seemingly pathological obsession with Israel.

the world, for the sole reason that the Palestinians happen to have the Jewish state as their purported aggressor, then clearly something else is at play. Regrettably for the Palestinian people, UN advocacy for the Palestinians is more often than not a tactic for targeting Israel. One of many examples is how the UNHRC and other UN bodies have been completely silent on the violations of Palestinian rights in Lebanon, where hundreds of thousands are denied the most basic freedoms, including the right to work. The UN, all too often, has shown that where Israel cannot be blamed,

Palestinians are of little concern.

There are of course other UN bodies which equally target and discriminate against Israel. However, to cover all of them would make this booklet far too long, as its main purpose is to draw the reader’s attention to the general bias in the UN against Israel, the few improvements the UK has made in standing against this bias at the UNHRC, and the role the UK regrettably continues to play in supporting discrimination against Israel, most notably in the General Assembly.

Paradoxically, one of the greatest violators of the UN Charter’s equality guarantee has been the UN body with primary responsibility for establishing and enforcing the principle of equality and other universal human rights: the 47-nation Human Rights Council (HRC / UNHRC)

The UN Human Rights Council was created in 2006 to replace its discredited predecessor, the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). Comprised of a rotating membership of 47 member states, the UNHRC is the highest body in the UN human rights system.

UNGA Resolution 60/251 (2006) provides, in Article 2, that the council is responsible for “protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner.” Article 3 provides that the council should address “situations of violations of human rights,” including “gross and systematic violations,” and make recommendations thereon.

UNHRC Condemnations, 2006-2021:

	North Korea 13
	Zimbabwe 0
	Venezuela 2
	Pakistan 0
	Somalia 0
	Belarus 11
	Eritrea 10
	Israel 90
	Turkey 0
	Russia 0
	Sudan 0
	Syria 35
	China 0
	Saudi 0
	Qatar 0
	Iran 10
	Iraq 0

Source:
Twitter feed
of @HillelNeuer
dated 08.02.2021



In its first decade, from 2006-2016, the UNHRC adopted 135 resolutions criticising countries. Of those 135, 68 have been against Israel. That's more than 50 percent!

When the UNHRC's creation was debated in 2006, the UN's Department of Public Information distributed a chart promising that, in its words, the "agenda item targeting Israel" (Item 8) of the old commission (UNCHR) would be replaced at the new council (UNHRC) by a "clean slate."

Despite the promise of reform, the new council, the UNHRC, revived the infamous agenda item, now as Item 7, and with the following title: "Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories," with the sub-title of "Human rights violations and implications of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories; Right to self-determination of the Palestinian people."

As stated by Hillel Neuer, Executive Director of UN Watch, "**No other country in the world is subjected to a stand-alone focus that is engraved on the body's permanent agenda, ensuring its prominence, and the notoriety of its target, at every council meeting.**"

As Hillel Neuer further stated, the council's selective treatment of Israel is a standing, gross breach of its obligation to act "without distinction of any kind" and "in a fair and equal manner."

In February 2020, the United Nations sank to a new low in its obsessive anti-Israel bias when the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

(OHCHR) published a list of 112 companies and corporations that do business in Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. It followed a 2016 UNHRC resolution to compile a list of companies that operate inside Israeli settlements. Israel is the only country against which such a list has been compiled. Of all the disputed / occupied territories across the globe, the UNHRC once again singled out the Jew amongst the nations for opprobrium. As UN Watch's Hillel Neuer said, "Dictatorships initiated this blacklist not because they care about human rights, but to divert attention from serial rights abuses committed by council members like Venezuela, Libya, and DR Congo, by scapegoating the Jewish state."

In recent years, Western countries have on numerous occasions stated their opposition to Item 7.

In statements delivered before and after its adoption, traditional supporters of human rights opposed the agenda item as biased.

The UK said that "the practice of 'singling out one' risked undermining the Human Rights Council's own principles." Australia and the Netherlands expressed similar objections, describing the agenda item as "unhelpful."

Canada said the Council breached its own principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity, and non-selectivity. Targeting any UN member state, said Canada, was "politicised, selective, partial, and subjective."

The US has also been a forceful opponent of Item 7 and under the Trump administration, it quit the UNHRC in 2018. Announcing the



Boris Johnson tells UN human rights council its Israel focus 'damages cause of peace'

Board Of Deputies praises Foreign Secretary's speech



Boris Johnson, pictured, announced a four-week lockdown for England (Photo: Getty Images)

USA's decision to quit the council, then US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley described the council as a "hypocritical and self-serving organisation" that displayed "unending hostility towards Israel". Speaking alongside her, then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo denounced the council as "a protector of human rights abusers".

In 2017, the UK took a more principled and decisive approach against this bias, announcing its decision that unless things changed, the UK would move to vote against all resolutions

under item 7. The following year, addressing the 38th session of the UNHRC, then UK foreign secretary Boris Johnson told the council, "We share the view that the dedicated Agenda Item 7 focused solely on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is disproportionate and damaging to the cause of peace, and unless things change we shall vote next year against all resolutions introduced under Item 7".

You can read more about the UK's stance regarding the UNHRC and its Agenda Item 7 by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/uk-item7>

In February 2021, UN Watch published a 58-page report in response to anti-Israel claims at UNHRC. This report can be read/ downloaded by going to <https://tinyurl.com/unwatch-item7>

How the UK targets Israel at the UNGA

Most recently, during its November/ December General Assembly session in New York, the UNGA singled out Israel in 17 different resolutions, while it adopted six on the rest of the world combined.

The United Kingdom voted for 12 of those 17 resolutions which singled out Israel.

That's 12 times more than the UK condemned Syria, Iran or North Korea.

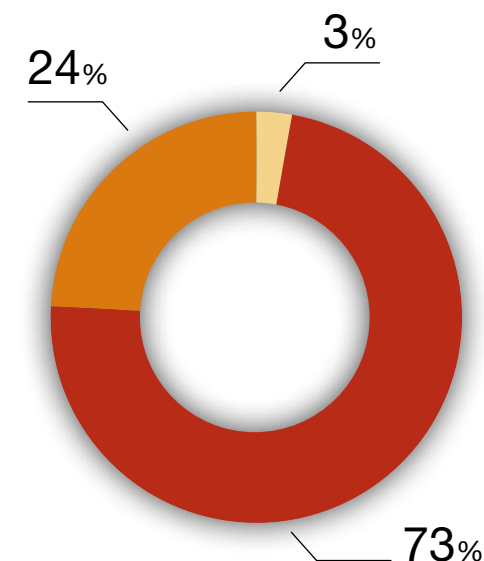
Not one of those resolutions actively sought to bring the Palestinians and the Israelis together to negotiate a peaceful end to the decades-old conflict. In fact, the overwhelming majority of the 17 resolutions maligned Israel, whitewashed Palestinian terrorism and Palestinian intransigence whilst suggesting that only Israel is to blame for the lack of peace.

And the UK, alongside European states, failed to introduce even a single UN resolution on the human rights situations in China, Russia, Saudi Arabia,

Venezuela, Turkey, Pakistan, Cuba, or on 175 other countries.

Since 2015 to date, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has voted 112 times against Israel. Of those 112 times, the UK voted as follows:

- For Israel - 3 resolutions
- Against Israel - 82 resolutions
- Abstentions - 27 resolutions



The UK's voting record at the UNGA makes it complicit in discriminating against Israel. Instead of acting to expose the hypocrisy of these resolutions, as the statistics show, the UK government aligns itself with dictatorships and serial human rights violators as it repeatedly betrays a fellow democratic nation and acknowledged important ally.



By voting for many of these resolutions which single out and condemn Israel, the UK goes against the equality principle enshrined in the UN Charter and the values of universality, impartiality, objectivity, and non-selectivity set out in the Human Rights Council's founding document, UNGA Resolution 60/251.

It is therefore incumbent upon the UK to uphold the UN's founding principles by taking decisive and consistent action to end support for the UN's obsessive bias against Israel, the world's only Jewish state.

A constructive starting point would be for the UK to end its support for biased and arguably anti-Israel

UNGA resolutions that do absolutely nothing to bring the prospect of peace between Israel and the Palestinians closer.



Not even trying to appear impartial, then UNGA president Peter Thomson wore a scarf of the Palestinian flag around his neck as he addressed a gathering to mark the UN's "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People" in 2016.

How the UK targeted Israel at the Nov-Dec 2020 UNGA

UNGA RESOLUTION TITLE	THE BIAS
Assistance to Palestine refugees	Resolution serves Arab states that seek to preserve Palestinians as pawns
Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Perpetuates anomaly whereby Palestinians are the only people not served by UNHCR but instead by special agency (UNRWA).
Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues	One-sided resolution ignores claims of 900,000 Jewish refugees displaced from Arab lands and prejudges negotiations.
Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan	Adopts Palestinian position on issues that Oslo Accords left to negotiations, such as settlements and borders.
Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem	Ignores terror attacks against Israeli civilians within Israel and seeks to strip Israel of its inherent right to self-defence by classifying every defensive measure as a violation of international law.
The occupied Syrian Golan	Ignores historical Syrian hostilities, the existence of the Syrian Civil War and its security implications for Israel and the civilians of the Golan Heights.
Oil slick on Lebanese Shores	One-sided resolution completely ignores Hezbollah's role in firing 4,000 rockets and burning 500,000 trees in Northern Israel.
Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources	One-sided resolution denies Israel's right to self-defence by describing every preventative measure as conspiracy against Palestinian resources.
Assistance to the Palestinian people	No other occupied or disputed territory throughout the world receives an annual resolution of this type
The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination	Redundantly asserts a principle that Israel has already recognised. Out of hundreds of self-determination claims worldwide, resolution singles out one: the claim against Israel.
Special information program on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat	The program eschews a balanced approach by overtly choosing the Palestinian over Israeli narrative, ignoring terrorism against Israeli men, women and children.
Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine	Blames Israel only for lack of peace. Text is redundant to several other resolutions and serves no effect other than demonisation.

The UN, Antisemitism and the Jewish State: a New York perspective

The reputation of the United Nations (UN) regarding the State of Israel and the fight against Antisemitism is troubling, not only in Geneva with the Human Rights Council and its agenda item 7, but also in New York with its yearly disproportionate array of anti-Israel UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions; in addition to the 1975 infamous resolution condemning Zionism as a form of a racism, repealed in 1991 but still casting a shadow on the international organisation.

But there are opportunities for the UN to change for the better. In the UNGA a simple majority was reached in favour of Israel in various recent votes, e.g. condemning Hamas in 2018; since 2012 adopting positive yearly UNGA resolutions on entrepreneurship sponsored by Israel (UNGA resolutions 67/202 & 68/209); and more in the UN Security Council (UNSC). Since the 1960s, UN members have organised themselves in regional groups and

for many years Israel was the only state left outside this framework. Israel finally became a member of the WEOG (Western European and Others Group) in New York in 2000 (and in Geneva in 2013), and, since 2016, has eventually obtained the chairmanship of UNGA committees, and vice-presidency of the UNGA itself.

One recent positive reform at the United Nations happened in December 2015 when then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon implemented UNGA resolution 69/250 resulting from a process initiated by the Forum for Cultural Diplomacy with the Permanent Mission of Israel asking for the recognition of Yom Kippur as a UN official holiday, putting an end to the holding of important meetings, such as UNSC meetings on the Middle East, on the holiest day in the Hebrew calendar.

Innumerable contributions from Jewish culture to humanity illustrate how this became part of many national identities. In fact,



FCD co-founders Grégory Lafitte and Tomas Sandell with Rabbi Elie Abadie, Ambassador Danny Danon, and UN Secretary-General António Guterres



FCD co-founder Grégory Lafitte, UN Secretary-General António Guterres and Ambassador Danny Danon participating in the Tashlikh ceremony at the UN

its cultural rebirth was part of the process which led to the rebirth of a nation, people, language and city. Recognition of this contribution as a means of fighting Antisemitism and better including the State of Israel in the family of nations has been a principal focus of the Forum's cultural diplomacy at the UN, holding regular events celebrating Jewish holidays, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur or Chanukah, with participation by 70 to 120 Permanent Missions to the UN at ambassadorial or ministerial level.

As the world is witnessing an alarming rise of Antisemitism, the UN has a responsibility to do its utmost to curb the outbreak of this global scourge. UN Secretary-General António Guterres promised to act against this rising global tide and the Forum sees the appointment of a UN Focal Point to monitor Antisemitism and enhance

a system-wide response, for which it had been calling, as an important first step.

Remarkably for an international organisation founded on the ashes of the Holocaust, the first ever informal meeting of the UNGA on Antisemitism only took place very recently, in January 2015. It is high time the UN, and its constituting Member States, commit to combatting Antisemitism, acknowledging along with UNSG Guterres that the denial of the right of the State of Israel to exist is one of its modern forms, bringing the security question inferred by Antisemitism to the UNSC and recognising, exploring and learning from the contributions to humanity of distinctive Jewish culture.

For more information on the Forum for Cultural Diplomacy, please contact: info@f4cd.org



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www.unwatch.org and www.unwatch.org/database/

For further information on the Forum for Cultural Diplomacy:

www.ec4i.org/forum-for-cultural-diplomacy/