A Look Back at the 10 Worst Actions Taken by the UN in 2015

January 4, 2016

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PJ Media

<https://pjmedia.com/blog/a-look-back-at-the-10-worst-actions-taken-by-the-un-in-2015/?singlepage=true>

The siren’s call of UN-led multilateralism beckons for the year ahead. Before succumbing yet again to the UN Charter’s endearing promise “to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace,” a look back at the devastating record of 2015 is in order.

Number One: **In 2015 the world’s nuclear non-proliferation regime was emasculated.**

The Security Council had adopted four sanctions resolutions against Iran over almost a decade, resolutions that constituted binding international law. Iran refused to comply with all of them. In response, in July, the Council chose to “terminate” the laws, rather than insist on their implementation.

Successive Security Council resolutions demanded Iran “suspend…all enrichment-related and [reprocessing activities.”](https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/unsc_res1737-2006.pdf) Iran never did. In response, the Council approved the Iran deal and granted Iran a right to enrich.

The International Atomic Energy Agency [confirmed in](https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/2631873/IAEA-document.pdf) December that Iran had engaged in “activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device” and had taken specific steps to conceal them. In response, the IAEA decided not to insist on full disclosure but to [close the books](https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov-2015-72-derestricted.pdf).

A 2010 Security Council resolution states: “Iran shall not undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons.” In mid-October Iran tested medium-range missiles capable of delivering a [nuclear weapon.](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1929%282010%29) In response the UN did nothing. So in early December Iran did it again.

No state interested in acquiring nuclear weapons will henceforth take the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, the IAEA or Security Council resolutions on the subject seriously.

Number Two: **In 2015 the UN made a mockery of its central tenet of the “equal rights of nations large and small.”**

The General Assembly adopted 19 times more resolutions condemning Israel than any other of the 192 UN member states. With just seven other countries criticized by a single resolution each, 75% of all the country-specific condemnations of any UN state were directed to Israel alone.

Number Three: **In 2015 the UN turned its back on crimes against humanity.**

Another 12,000 civilian deaths were documented in Syria, over 4 million people are refugees and close to another 8 million are internally displaced after being forced to flee their homes.

In response, the Security Council [adopted a resolution](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2254%282015%29) in December that further entrenches President Assad. There is no call for his departure – he is never even mentioned. Instead it insists on “entrenching continuity of government institutions” that Assad controls.

Farcically, it plans for a political transition to start with the drafting of a new constitution and free and fair elections within the next 18 months – despite half the population being on the road.

Number Four: **In 2015 the UN could still not manage to define terrorism.**

The General Assembly failed to finalize a comprehensive convention on terrorism after 15 years of negotiation. The stumbling block remains the Organization of Islamic Cooperation that continues to insist on exempting preferred targets under the [mantra of “resistance.”](https://www.humanrightsvoices.org/assets/attachments/documents/10.12.2015.saudi.arabia.terrorism.pdf)

Number Five: **In 2015 the UN encouraged child soldiers.**

For the past four months Palestinian youth have been repeatedly attacking Israeli Jews of all ages. The UN responded by hosting a photo exhibit on aggrieved Palestinian children at UN headquarters. It was opened by Palestinian representative Riyad Mansour on November 23, 2015, with these words: "We are so proud that in this popular uprising that has started almost two months ago, that the backbone of this uprising are the youth of Palestine."

Number Six: **In 2015 the UN served as a stumbling block to defeating Islamist terrorism.**

On September 29, 2015, the secretary-general laid out the UN’s “five keys to success” to “countering ISIL and [violent extremism.”](http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9058) Not one of them entailed defeating the enemy on the battlefield. He did, however, have plenty to say about arts, music, sport, alienation, and terrorists’ “grievances.”

Number Seven: **In 2015 the UN flinched after the invasion of a UN member and the ouster of its government.**

Iran engineered the overthrow of the government of Yemen by Houthi rebels in February 2015. The UN responded with three Security Council resolutions on Yemen that never mentioned Iran.

Number Eight: **In 2015 the UN’s top human rights body welcomed more anti-human rights members.**

Elected to the UN “Human Rights” Council were countries having among the world’s worst human rights records: Burundi, Ethiopia, and the [United Arab Emirates.](http://www.un.org/en/ga/70/meetings/elections/hrc.shtml) They join a rogues gallery of UN human rights decision-makers already on the Council, including: Algeria, China, Congo, Cuba, Qatar, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Number Nine: **In 2015 the UN created a platform to promote the destruction of a UN member state.**

On October 28, 2015, the UN Human Rights Council convened an extraordinary meeting to hear one speaker question the existence of the UN member state of Israel 67 years ago.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said: “Ladies and gentlemen, haven't you wondered for how long will this protracted Israeli occupation of our land last? After 67 years for how long do you think it is possible for it to continue? ... Seventy years of suffering, injustice, oppression and deprivation and the perpetuation of the longest occupation known to mankind in [modern history..."](http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/human-rights-council/watch/special-meeting-of-the-human-rights-council-28.10.2015/4583004734001)

Number Ten: **In 2015 UN “peacekeepers” continued to make war on women, with impunity.**

In 2015, the horror-stories of sexual violence by UN “peacekeepers” emerged from the Central African Republic (CAR).

2015 was the year every major tenet of the UN enterprise was subverted. The 2016 solution? Stop bankrolling a multilateral organization that doesn’t work and create a multilateral organization run by democracies that can work.