Needed: America’s veto at the UN. Can Israelis depend on it?

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Once again the United Nations Security Council will move the issue of Israel and its policies in Judea and Samaria to the front of the queue: it will soon debate whether to pass a resolution citing that the Jewish communities (i.e. the “settlements”) in Judea and Samaria are illegal under international law.

This resolution must not be allowed to pass. It needs a US veto, but can we depend on it? The director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, Anne Bayefsky, has outlined the key points that make this pending resolution a potential disaster for Israel.

If such a resolution (to reiterate: making the settlements illegal under international law) is passed by the Security Council:

• It cannot realistically ever be reversed because any attempts to reverse it, say by the next president or the US Congress, would encounter an immediate veto from Russia and/or China, both of whom are permanent members of the Security Council with veto power.

• Its passing would be contrary to all past agreements between Israel and the Arabs.

• It would pre-determine a major issue (i.e. the status of the settlements) that must be decided between the sides to the conflict and not by a third party.

• It would reverse the US’s fundamental policy that peace must only come through direct negotiations between the parties.

• It would legitimize BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) activity as it would give credence to their claim that the settlements are illegal in spite of the fact that BDS has been outlawed by many US States.

• It would be a direct message to the International Criminal Court of Justice that it is OK to proceed with a declaration that the establishment of Jewish “settlements” constitutes a war crime, thereby bringing Israel to trial for said “crimes.”

But the challenge ahead of us to prevent the passing of this resolution is daunting.

First of all, we do not have a good history at the UN at all. During the one-year tenure of current UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark, which ended on September 13, the General Assembly adopted 19 resolutions condemning Israel and just seven critical of human rights violations by the other entire 192 UN countries combined, if you can believe that. Action on Syria, where upwards of 400,000 people (and counting) have died, totaled just one resolution.

The UN’s egregious discrimination and demonization of the Jewish state is simply anti-Jewish hate and incitement.

Secondly, the vote will most likely come in the interregnum between the US presidential elections and the inauguration of the new president. During those 73 days president Obama remains in office but will clearly be unfettered by any political concerns. He does not have to worry about offending any constituency, least of all the Jews, as he is neither running for office nor supporting any candidate for office.

That makes him less dependable as a “vetoing ally” of Israel in the Security Council.

The severe and immediate US condemnation last week of Israel’s decision to add 300 housing units to an existing community in order to provide homes for those who presently live in the illegal outpost of Amona is indicative of the kind of pressure Israel will see in the waning days of the Obama administration.

Those of us who hold American citizenship must, indeed, do everything we can to ensure that President Obama exercises US veto power in order to prevent the adoption of this dangerous resolution.

We dare not put ourselves at risk by shirking our civic duty to let President Obama know how important his veto of this resolution is to all of us. All friends of Israel need to make their feelings known today so that the president fully understands the gravity of this situation.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said: “History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.”

Woe to all of us who join in the appalling silence of the good people.