**Israel Asks UN to Condemn Iran Holocaust Cartoon Contest**

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Israel called on United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and on UN member countries to condemn an international cartoon contest on Holocaust denial hosted by Iran which is set to take place in two months

“The contest legitimizes Holocaust denial and encourages those who deny the Shoah to continue with their incitement,” Israeli ambassador to the UN, Ron Prosor, wrote in a letter released Saturday.

The competition is organized by Iranian organizations that have said it comes in response to the controversial depictions of the Prophet Muhammad in the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo last month.

Iran’s House of Cartoon and the Sarcheshmeh Cultural Complex are organizing The Second International Holocaust Cartoons Contest, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabaii, the contest’s secretary, announced in a press conference earlier this month, [according to the Tehran Times](http://www.tehrantimes.com/arts-and-culture/121284-iranian-institutions-to-hold-cartoon-contest-on-the-holocaust-).

Shojaei-Tabatabaii, who is also the director of Iran’s House of Cartoon, added that contestants will be asked to submit their drawings before April 1.

The winner will receive a cash prize of $12,000, with those in second and third place taking home $8,000 and $5,000, respectively.

The announcement marks the second time such a contest is being held.

After the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Postens caused controversy throughout the Muslim world in 2005 by publishing cartoons depicting the Prophet, the two organizers held a competition calling for contestants to draw cartoons denying the Holocaust or comparing it to the plight of the Palestinians.

According to the organizers, the contest was meant to challenge perceived Western double standards on free speech.

“Why is it acceptable in Western countries to draw any caricature of the Prophet Muhammad, yet as soon as there are any questions or doubts raised about the Holocaust, fines and jail sentences are handed down?” Shojaei-Tabatabaii said to the Observer in 2006.

The winner of the [previous contest](http://irancartoon.com/120/holocaust/index.htm), Abdellah Derkaoui of Morocco, drew an Israeli crane erecting a wall around the Dome of the Rock. The Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp is featured on the wall.

Top works from the upcoming competition will be displayed at the Palestine Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran and several other locations throughout the Iranian capital.