Arabs Demand That UN Remove Jerusalem Panel From Israel Exhibit

May 20, 2016

By Edith M. Lederer, AP, and Times of Israel Staff

Times of Israel

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/arabs-demand-un-remove-jerusalem-panel-from-israel-exhibit/>

Arab and Islamic nations are demanding that the United Nations remove a panel from an Israeli exhibition that calls Jerusalem "the spiritual and physical capital of the Jewish people."

A letter from the Palestinian U.N. mission to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft circulated Thursday evening expressed "vehement rejection" at the description, echoing protests by Arab nations at the U.N. and the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The Palestinians want east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state.

The letter said any references "which purport to assert Israeli sovereignty on this land ... are legally, politically and morally incorrect and unacceptable."

Palestinian Charge d'Affaires Feda Abdelhady-Nasser said the "misleading and inappropriate depictions of Jerusalem ... negate the Palestinian existence in the city as well as its historical Arab, Muslim and Christian identity and heritage over the centuries."

She said the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly "have clearly rejected Israel's illegal annexation of east Jerusalem" and called on Ban and Lykketoft to take "the necessary measures for the removal of the ... panel."

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the Israeli mission followed the rules for mounting an exhibition.

While the U.N. tries to balance the wishes of the country wishing to exhibit without offending another country, he said, it "is not an exact science and ... is not always easy."

The exhibition, in a corridor near a popular cafe in the U.N. basement, includes panels on Israel's Arabs, its technology innovations and other aspects of Israeli life.