UNESCO’s Betrayal of Truth, History and Justice

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There is something severely wrong when an international organization that claims to be inclusive and humanitarian turns around and slaps a lone democracy in the face by denying its rightful claim to its capital city. As if the world needed more proof of the UN’s blatant and unabashed contempt for the Jewish state, UNESCO’s latest resolution denying Israel’s ties to Jerusalem is perhaps its most egregious declaration since the UN condemned Israel for its alleged occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

What’s even more outrageous is the concurrence by which the UNESCO resolution was met: never mind the 23 abstentions or the 10 oppositions, but 22 nations voted to disregard history, truth and basic theological study in order to attack the single democracy in the Middle East — a region that is little more than an abyss of hatred, intolerance and terrorism.

In stark contrast to Western ethics and values, the Middle East is an expanse of violence and oppression. Iran, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia have committed a myriad of crimes against humanity, yet Israel, the one free, democratic country surrounded by 40 of these virulent nations, is the only one singled out for condemnation. In fact, Israel isn’t even allowed to lay claim to its capital city without facing international outcry and delegitimization.

While the Jerusalem Post celebrated the decrease in votes against Israel compared to other UNESCO votes, one would be remiss in neglecting to mention the significance of this resolution as it pertains to history, and, even more so, the truth.

The crux of the new UNESCO resolution is the denial of Israel’s ties to Jerusalem; this is an abject rejection of Jewish history and religious belief. Jerusalem is the very essence of Jewish faith and spirituality (not counting Safed). Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, and Passover, the most sacred weeks of remembrance, each contain traditions in which Jewish observers chant, “L’shanah ha ba’ah b’Yerushalaim” — “Next year in Jerusalem.”

More to the point, Jerusalem is referenced hundreds of times in the five Books of Moses, and is explicitly mentioned many more times following the conquering under Joshua. It is repeatedly labeled as the land that God is going to show the Jews (that is, the city that was selected by God to be the capital city of the land He promised to Abraham). To deny the Jewish state’s claim to Jerusalem is tantamount to denying thousands of years of history.

UNESCO, an organization dedicated to culture and education, has blatantly rejected — and ridiculed — the principles that its charter claims to uphold. Its acronym stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, yet, in passing this resolution, this body has disregarded two thirds of its platform in just one motion. How does an organization that proclaims itself to be an international committee for education and culture expect to be taken seriously when it constantly acts in contravention to these values?

Furthermore, the timing of the latest resolution made the incident even more egregious. UNESCO passed its latest act of antisemitism May 2, 2017 — Israel’s Independence Day. The fact that UNESCO would choose this day out of the other 364 available days should be a signal of just how low the UN has sunk, and how far it has devolved.

At present, the UN and its subcommittees are nothing more than outlets for antisemitism and anti-Zionism. UNESCO should be ashamed of itself for perpetuating the unjustifiable odium aimed at the Jewish state, and every nation that voted in favor of this fallacious resolution is equally at fault for supporting such abhorrent policies. Once again, the UN has revealed itself to be a sham of an organization centered on hatred and spite, and a pox upon the peaceful and tolerant nations of the world who are actually working towards progress and prosperity.