U.S. utilizes new U.N. strategy that puts Israel on offensive

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By [Michael Wilner](https://www.jpost.com/Author/Michael-Wilner)

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When the Trump administration demanded a UN Security Council vote on Friday that was meant to counteract a Kuwaiti resolution condemning Israel, Jerusalem saw the birth of a new diplomatic strategy that it hopes will become the norm.

Under the plan, Israel would no longer face hostile votes in the council without the US counter-punching, demanding a vote on language that calls out “the hypocrisy of the council,” Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon told The Jerusalem Post on Friday.

“This is changing the rules of the game – we are now on the offense,” Danon said.

“It’s the beginning of a new strategy and of new rules.”

The US vetoed Kuwait’s resolution, in the works for weeks, in a Friday afternoon vote – alongside abstentions from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Poland and Ethiopia. Israel was pleased with the extent of opposition to the measure and considers the tally a mark of progress, although Israeli officials expressed concern with France’s vote in favor.

“The final text is certainly not perfect. We would have liked it to establish clearly Hamas’s responsibility, and condemn the rocket launches against Israel,” said France’s envoy, Francois Delattre.

“But the deep consultations in recent weeks led to significant improvements.”

The Kuwaiti proposal called for “international protection” for Palestinians in Gaza, and declined to mention the role of Hamas in governing the coastal strip.

The US measure would have condemned Hamas as a terrorist organization and for its recent firing of more than 70 rockets into Israeli territory, but it also failed, receiving only one vote – from the US itself – in its favor.

“When the United Nations sides with terrorists over Israel, as the Kuwait resolution does, it only makes a peaceful resolution to this conflict harder to reach,” US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said, explaining the US veto. “It is resolutions like this one that undermine the UN’s credibility in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

Haley said she was offering members an alternative in the form of a resolution that explicitly condemns Hamas for its “grip” on Gaza.

“There is an alternative,” she said. “This resolution rightly brings responsibility where it belongs.”

It is that alternative which has sparked hope in the Israeli team that a new strategy has taken shape.

“From now on, whenever there’s going to be a resolution like this condemning Israel, it won’t be just a US veto that follows,” Danon said. “There will be a proactive effort to expose the hypocrisy of the council.”