Standing up to the UN shows America’s greatness

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By [Jonathan S. Tobin](https://nypost.com/author/jonathan-s-tobin/)

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It happened again last week. When the UN Security Council [voted to condemn Israel](https://nypost.com/2018/05/18/israel-vilified-at-un-for-gaza-killings-but-backed-by-us/) for what happened [along its border with Gaza](https://nypost.com/2018/05/14/more-than-a-dozen-palestinians-killed-during-mass-protests-on-gaza-border/) — without even mentioning Hamas, let alone acknowledging the terror group’s responsibility for the violence — not a single nation joined the United States in opposing the motion. When UN Ambassador Nikki Haley then put forward a separate measure condemning Hamas, the rest of the council either voted no or abstained.

That leaves Americans asking whether fears about having the rest of the world aligned against us are more important than pride in being willing to stand up and do the right thing, even if it means being alone.

This isn’t the only time the US has stood alone recently and it’s got the foreign-policy establishment as well as America’s European allies up in arms. The same thing happened when President Trump [recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital](https://nypost.com/2018/05/14/us-embassy-officially-opens-in-jerusalem/) and when he [pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal](https://nypost.com/2018/05/10/europe-scrambles-to-salvage-iran-nuclear-deal-after-us-withdraws/). His critics took the refusal of America’s Western European allies to agree as a sign that his administration’s foreign policy is doomed to fail.

By contrast, they point to the Obama administration’s popularity with the international community, which cheered as Barack Obama championed an effort to appease and end the isolation of the Islamist regime. They were pleased as Obama sought to put more “daylight” between the US and Israel and by his allowing the Security Council to condemn Israel. Much of the world also approved of Obama’s decision to punt responsibility for the slaughter in Syria and much else to Russia.

Obama’s love affair with international organizations like the UN was at the heart of his faith in multilateralism. While not every interaction during that time began with an apology for all of America’s alleged sins, there was little question that he wanted the world to know that the era when the US could impose its will or its values on other nations seemed to be over.

Such stands won US diplomats a friendlier reception at UN cocktail parties. But the real objective of any nation’s foreign policy is to advance its interests and values, not merely be liked. And by that standard, Obama was a dismal failure.

The Palestinians spurned US-led peace talks. Nor, despite his repeated overtures, did Obama cause Islamists to start loving America. His appeasement of Iran didn’t convince Tehran to change its dangerous behavior. It also scared America’s Arab allies as Russia and Iran became the “strong horses” other nations feared.

The Europeans may resent Trump’s position on Iran and are especially angry at the prospect of America enforcing sanctions against those who trade with Tehran. But that’s the only way to force the regime to give up a nuclear quest Obama ensured would eventually succeed with the nuclear deal or to get it to stop building missiles, funding terror or pushing for regional hegemony.

Trump’s stands on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have injected a much-needed dose of realism into the discussion and seek to hold the Palestinian Authority accountable for its support for terror while not giving Hamas a pass for its role in fomenting violence. He’s also reminded the world that America won’t let a friend like Israel be victimized and isolated.

Not every aspect of Trump’s unfortunately named “America First” policy is a good idea. His appetite for trade wars and tariffs is unnecessarily alienating some friendly nations and could undermine an otherwise booming US economy.

But on other issues, it’s the critics who are wrongheaded. Isolating Israel was a betrayal of US values. An America that is unafraid to stand up against UN bias is one other nations can’t ignore. The same is true on Iran, where Trump is defending the interests of the West against those who care only about profiting from trade with supporters of terrorism.

Being alone isn’t easy but sometimes it’s necessary. Far from abdicating America’s position on the world stage, on Israel and Iran, Trump is protecting the vital interests of the West and US security.

Moments like Haley’s stand at the UN should make Americans proud. They’re an example of US leadership, not weakness.