UN’s Human Rights Council reeks of hypocrisy; US was right to leave

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The Human Rights Council’s recent vote to investigate Israel for its response to “protests” on its Gaza border highlights everything that’s wrong with this hypocritical body, and why the United States was right to leave it.

First, the vote reflects the council’s longstanding obsession with Israel, which has far more to do with its status as the world’s only Jewish state than with any serious council concerns about the world’s biggest human rights problems.

The United Nations created the council in 2006 to replace its Human Rights Commission, which by then had become an object of derision due to its anti-Israel bias.
In 2002, Professor and dogged UN watcher Anne Bayefsky reported that over the previous 30 years, the commission spent 15 percent of its time on Israel and made it the subject of a third of its country-specific resolutions.

The commission’s successor, however, has only proved worse.  The council has made Israel its only permanent agenda item, which means that it discusses the Jewish state at each of its three meetings a year —  but it doesn’t necessarily discuss such true humanitarian horrors as North Korea, Syria and Venezuela, nor such regular human rights abusers as China, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Cuba.

Moreover, through the council’s first decade — that is, through June of 2016 — UN Watch reported that 65 or nearly half of its 135 resolutions criticizing countries over human rights focused on Israel.

Second, consider the nature of the council’s vote over Gaza. On May 18, it voted 29-2 with only the United States and Australia opposed to send an “independent, international commission” to investigate “alleged human rights violations in the occupied territories, East Jerusalem and particularly in Gaza.

“Independent?”  Hardly.  The council has already made up its mind about Gaza, for it sought the investigation “in the context of the military assaults on the large-scale civil protests” in Gaza and “condemned” Israel’s “disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force… particularly in the Gaza Strip.”

The investigative effort is Orwellian to begin with.  Rather than launch “military assaults,” Israel is protecting itself from efforts, spearheaded by the genocidal terrorist group Hamas, to either break through the border or create mayhem along it — all in the service of killing Israelis or destroying their property.

Hamas’ leaders and activists have admitted that the protests aren’t “peaceful,” acknowledged that most of the Palestinians killed were Hamas members, showcased members of its Fence-Cutting Unit on Al-Aqsa TV with wire cutters in their hands, positioned women and children in harm’s way at the border, posted maps of Israel on social media and suggested routes to key towns and kibbutzim, and encouraged infiltrators to, as one Gazan put it, “murder, slaughter, and burn.”

Protestors have placed bombs along the border; tossed Molotov cocktails, rocks and burning tires into Israel; and flown burning kites, adorned with swastikas, to ignite fires on Israeli farms.

Third, consider the council’s 47 members, who include some of the world’s worst human rights abusers.

In its annual “Freedom in the World” report, Freedom House ranks countries as “free,” “partly free,” or “not free” based on political rights and civil liberties.  Thus, at the Human Rights Council, “not free” Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, China, Cuba, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela are among those lambasting “free” Israel over human rights.

Membership provides legitimacy, never more so than when the world’s most powerful nation joins a global body.

After President George W. Bush kept the United States off the council over its anti-Israel bias, President Obama reversed course in hopes of reforming it from within.

With that effort a clear failure, the United States was right to leave and wash its hands of this apparently unredeemable institution.