Amb Danon Slams UN Security Council for Ignoring Terror in Israel

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Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN

http://embassies.gov.il/un/statements/security\_council/Pages/Danon-Security-Counil.aspx

Mr. President,

First, I would like to congratulate Uruguay for becoming a member of the Security Council, and for a successful month as Security Council president. This is no easy task, and you have performed it well.

Mr. Secretary General,

Mr. President,

As we begin this new year with a new Security Council, please allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate the new members. On behalf of the state of Israel, I wish you much success.

The challenges facing this new Council are vast and complex. The international community looks to this room, to this Council to confront the new and unprecedented threats to global order and stability. The lives and future of millions of people are at stake in this confrontation with the forces of anarchy and instability.

Nowhere is this more true than in the region I come from. Whether it is the crisis of failed states, the rise of radical terror groups, the Middle East is ground zero in the battle for the triumph of the civilized world.

As a small nation located in the heart of the Middle East, Israel is on the front lines. When Israelis, when my people, look around them, they see the brutal civil war in Syria, and ISIS in the Golan Heights and on the border with Egypt. They see Hezbollah strengthening its position to the north, and Hamas turning Gaza into a staging grounds of terror.

Hamas does not hide its intention to prepare for the next round of conflict, and continues to build up its terror infrastructure- above ground and below.

Its officials boast of rocket factories operating day and night. They are upgrading their arsenal with longer range missiles. Hamas is also rebuilding its network of terror tunnels. These tunnels are an underground expressway of terror, leading straight into the heart of Israeli towns and cities.

Israeli security forces only recently uncovered Hamas terror cells, which were planning to commit a wave of shootings, kidnappings, and suicide bombings.

Even as Hamas plans attacks against Israeli citizens, and despite the constant threat of rocket attacks, Israel is taking steps to improve the well-being of the people in Gaza. In the past year alone, we have invested millions of dollars to triple the capacity of the Gaza crossing, allowing a thousand trucks filled with building material and goods to enter the Gaza strip every day. However, as we all know, Hamas shamefully seizes supplies intended to help the people of Gaza, in order to rebuild its terror infrastructure. Let’s all of us face reality. The greatest opponent of the well-being of the people of Gaza is Hamas.

Mr. President,

While Israelis live under the shadow of threat from Hamas in the south, they also see the dark cloud of Hezbollah in the North. This terror group is committed to the destruction of Israel, and grows stronger and more sophisticated every day. As we speak, Hezbollah has over one hundred thousand rockets ready to be fired at Israeli cities. Hezbollah also has long-range missiles that can target any place in Israel, and has obtained advanced strategic weapons systems.

Hezbollah’s actions demonstrate their disregard for human life. Hezbollah has embedded most of its military infrastructure in the villages of south Lebanon, storing weapons in private homes and stationing missiles next to kindergartens. Take, for example, the village of Muhaybib in South Lebanon. It is a small town in South Lebanon. In this small town, Hezbollah has nine arms storage sites, five rocket-launching sites, four infantry positions, three underground tunnels three antitank positions, and a command post in the center of the village. Twenty five military sites in a town with only ninety houses.

Take another village. In the larger village of Shaqra with a population of about four thousand people the IDF has identified four hundred military sites. Hezbollah has transformed these villages into terror outposts. This is the true face of Hezbollah – a brutal organization which deliberately targets Israeli civilians, and uses Lebanese civilians as human shields. This is the definition of a double war crime.

Israel has repeatedly warned this Council about the threat of Hezbollah, and called for action. Let me say it clearly, once again: Hezbollah is preparing for another round of fighting. Hezbollah must be disarmed, and the government of Lebanon must fully abide by its international commitments, and fully implement Security Council Resolution 1701. Make no mistake. Israel has the means to defend itself. We will take all necessary measures to protect our people.

Mr. President,

The link between the threat of Hamas and the danger of Hezbollah is the Islamic Republic of Iran. Wherever there is terror, there is Iran. Iran is the primary destabilizing factor in the Middle East, funding instability and chaos throughout the region. Iran also has a proven track record of defying this Council’s resolutions. When it comes to Iran, the challenge for the Council at this critical time is to be vigilant and to be brave. Vigilant - to monitor all of Iran’s actions, and brave - to respond forcefully to each and every violation.

Mr. President,

For Israel, there is no greater challenge than the challenge of peace. The road to peace is long and difficult but Israel is committed to make every effort. Every difficult journey begins with a single step. Sitting down and talking is the first step to peace, but the Palestinians refuse to come to the table.

What does Israel want? Simple. We want peace with security. That is the only peace that will last. And the Palestinians? They demand concessions without negotiations. They want to be rewarded for their unilateral actions. Rewarding the Palestinian Authority will only push the Palestinians further from the negotiating table.

Prime Minister Netanyahu had called on President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority to resume negotiations, but they continue to refuse. Sadly, when the PA leadership is not negotiating, it is inciting.

Recently, after another brutal attack against Israelis, Jibril Rajoub, Deputy Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee, declared: And I quote, “Whoever carried out individual acts of heroism, we in the Fatah movement bless and encourage them. We consider them heroes and a crown on the head of every Palestinian.” Unquote. Who are these “heroes”? They are the Palestinian who stabs a young woman walking down the street, and who runs over an old man with a car. These are their heroes.

Instead of working to improve the lives of the Palestinians, the PA encourages terror by providing stipends for terrorists and their families. The more horrific the attack, the higher the reward. The payments can be up to three thousand five hundred dollars per month. This in a place where the average salary is just over six hundred dollars.

Numerous terrorists have admitted to committing heinous acts of terror in order to qualify for a lifetime stipend “awarded” only to those who spent at least five years in Israeli Prison. For the Palestinians terror pays and it is their leadership that rewards the taking of innocent life with dollars and cents.

Even toys are used as tools to poison children’s minds and inflame their hearts. Israel recently stopped a shipment of thousands of dolls dressed as terrorists, with stones in hand, destined for children in the West Bank. The ‘educational purpose’ of these terror dolls is clear- to serve as role models for young Palestinians. Such incitement is at the root of the wave of terror Israel is facing.

The challenge for this Council is to ask the difficult questions- Why does the Palestinian Authority refuse to condemn acts of terror against Israelis? Why do they refuse to sit down to negotiate?

Most importantly, what do the Palestinians really want? If you believe that the answer is peace. Call on them to condemn terror attacks. Demand that they stop incitement. Stop giving them incentives to avoid a real dialogue. And insist that they return to the negotiating table.

Mr. President,

The greatest challenge facing the world today is the plague of international terrorism and violent extremism. From Paris to Jakarta, and from the Sinai to San Bernardino, the peace and security of the civilized world is under threat.

Every day, the cruel hand of terrorism strikes somewhere in the world, killing more innocents, destroying more families, and undermining more communities. As this new Council assumes the grave responsibility for maintaining global peace and security, it must present a united front against terror.

In this spirit, the Council adopted Resolution 2249 in the aftermath of the terror attacks in Paris.

The resolution declares, and I quote: “Any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed” I repeat, “whenever and by whomsoever committed”

Yet, the international community has made one, only one exception. There is one place in the world that this absolute ban on terrorism can be ignored. Once again, the state of Israel is singled out, and treated differently from all other nations in the world.

During the past four months, Israelis have been stabbed in their homes, shot at in the streets, and run over by terrorists using cars as weapons. Over the course of this wave of violence, thirty people have been killed, and hundreds have been injured.

During this period of time, the Council has adopted twelve resolutions, twelve, against terrorism, and condemned terrorist attacks in France, Sinai, Lebanon, Mali, Tunisia, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Somalia, and Sudan.

Not once were the lives of Israelis murdered by terrorists recognized by this Council. No condemnation, no expression of solidarity, not even a statement of concern. The facts don’t lie. The Security Council has been hypocritical when it comes to Israel.

I would like to take a moment to tell you about one of the many Israeli victims whom this Council has not seen fit to even mention. Daphna Meir was a thirty-eight year old Israeli woman murdered by a Palestinian terrorist. Let me tell you a little about the kind of person Dafna was. She was a dedicated mother of six children; including two brothers aged four and six that she and her husband adopted. Dafna was a nurse in Soroka hospital in Beer Sheva where she treated Jewish and Arab patients.

A few days before the horrific attack, Dafna composed a prayer asking god to give her strength to help people. Let me read a few words to you: "May it be Your Will to grant me the ability to give medications to Your people and to the members of other nations who are in the devoted care of your faithful messengers who continue their holy work day and night"

Last week, a terrorist attacked Dafna with a knife at the entrance to her home. In order to protect her children inside, Dafna heroically fought the terrorist until he fled. Tragically, Dafna Meir died of the knife wounds, in front of the children she fought to protect.

The Council’s decision to ignore the murder of Dafna Meir, and the other Israeli victims of terror is no simple oversight. It is the direct result of allowing cynical political considerations by some to take priority over the lives of people.

The challenge for this Council is to chart a new course. No more business as usual when it comes to terror against Israelis. The fear is the same fear; the pain is the same pain. The response must be the same response. Terror is terror is terror.

Mr. President,

If we wish to succeed in these immense challenges, we must stop the hypocrisy, and stop the double standards. This Council must condemn Palestinian incitement against Israelis. These words of incitement lead directly to bloodshed, and the death of innocent people. We must take a firm stand against all acts of cruelty and terror, without asking where they took place, or who the victims are.

Mr. President,

This is a challenging and critical year for the Council, for the region, and for Israel. The terrorists seek to undermine our values, and to dictate how we live our lives. These extremists stand against everything we believe in, but if we stand together, they will fail. For the future of the region, and the future of the free world, we must join together to defeat the forces of evil and intolerance.

Thank you Mr. President