



Mission permanente d'Israël
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies
et des Organisations Internationales à Genève

משלחת ישראל
ליד משרד האומות המאוחדות
והארגונים הבינלאומיים בג'נבה

Speech by Ambassador Itzhak Levanon
Permanent Representative of Israel
Before the Special Session of the Human Rights
Council
5 July 2006

Mr. President,

The request to convene this special session of the Council and at this particular juncture has been deliberately made for political reasons. This request planned and premeditated beforehand forms part of the Arab plan to politicize the Council and to further attempt to put Israel in the dock.

I, of course, reject the allegations we have just heard and whose sole purpose is to vilify my country.

When listening to the inflammatory statements of certain speakers who preceded me, I wonder if this is not simply a repetition of what we have previously heard, a situation of déjà-vu. Are we not back to the former Commission, which everyone keenly wanted to be abolished?

I note that, regrettably, it only took two weeks for the Arab and Islamic groups of countries to bring all of you back to the faults committed by the Commission. All these great speeches and grandiloquent statements that they uttered to no avail and intended for a Council aspiring and obliged to be transparent, equitable and non-selective, have finally turned out to be a dead letter.

Mr. President,

Allow me to remind our august Council that the current crisis on which we are meeting today was not initially provoked by the Israeli incursion into Gaza. It was triggered by the attack on our sovereign territory by Palestinian terrorist groups with the aim of sewing death. These terrorists dug a tunnel under the benevolent eye of the Palestinian authorities to achieve their goal.

It is not Israel which daily showers dozens of Kassam rockets aimed at our cities and targeted at killing our civilian population. It is certainly Palestinian terrorists who abducted Corporal Shalit from sovereign Israeli territory, and who abducted and murdered the teenager Eliyahu Asheri.

Since the establishment of the Hamas government six months ago, cities in Southern Israel have been incessantly under the fire of Palestinian Kassam rockets, while Israel withdrew from the entire Gaza strip giving up control to the Palestinian Authority. The children of the city of Sderot, exposed to continued bombardments, no longer sleep quietly. Parents fear sending their children to school in case they are injured by rockets. These rockets are expressly praised by the Palestinian terrorists who rejoice at their crimes in front of their television screens.

We find ourselves in an absurd situation in which the Human Right Council convened into urgent session ignores the rights of one side and holds a special meeting to defend the rights of the other side.

Mr. President,

Are we not following double standards? Would it not be more relevant to hold this meeting to discuss the most basic right, which is the right to life for everyone and of which the Palestinian terrorists are bent at any price of depriving my people?

Mr. President,

One person and two governments carry the entire responsibility for the current crisis. That person is the incarnation of hatred and is the one who planned the attack and abduction of Corporal Shalit, namely Khaled Mashaal of Hamas. The two governments are the Syrian government which provides refuge to terrorists such as Mashaal and who allows him to foment these lethal attacks. The other is the Hamas government, which in endorsing the responsibility for this attack has taken sides with the terrorists.

We are operating in a measured manner and care to minimize risks posed to the civilian population. In fact Palestinian hardship is the direct result of the terrorist actions in which they do not hesitate to act in the midst of populated areas, making their citizens into human shields.

Mr. President,

The solution is simple. The freeing of the abducted soldier unharmed will put an end to the current crisis. Having left Gaza last summer of our own volition, we do not intend to return this summer. If the Council wants to act fairly and justly, if it wishes to avoid past errors and if it does not want to fall into disrepute and stop this farce, it must condemn the Palestinian terrorist

actions. It should also demand the immediate freeing of the Israeli soldier and insist on the complete and final cessation of the firing of Kassam rockets against the Israeli civilian population.

To those who have brought about the current crisis,
To those for whom human life on one side does not have the same value as human life on the other, to those who give vent to ceaseless diatribes of hatred and call for the destruction of Israel, I say "he who sews the wind will surely reap the storm".

Thank you.