Israel, US vote against UN funds for 'antisemitic' Durban Conference

January 2, 2021

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The Jerusalem Post

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/israel-us-vote-against-un-funds-for-antisemitic-durban-conference-653947>

Israel and the United States have both voted against the [United Nations](https://www.jpost.com/tags/united-nations) budget to protest the allocation of funds to the World Conference against Racism, known for its tolerance of virulent antisemitism during its first gathering two decades ago.

They were the only countries to do so, however, and the resolution passed 168-2 on Thursday. According to Israel's UN mission, it's the first time since 2007, that both the US and Israel have voted against the overall UN budget.

When the conference was first held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, participants sold copies of the antisemitic trope, Protocols of the Elders of Zion. At the time, both the US and Israel withdrew their delegations from the event.

Two other follow-up conferences have since been held, with the UN planning to convene a fourth gathering this fall on the sidelines of the opening of the UN General Assembly.

“Twenty years ago, the Durban conference convened with the worthy goal of combating racism. But, like many UN initiatives, it was promptly hijacked by organizations and member states that are interested in attacking Israel and delegitimizing its right to exist. They are not interested in human rights,” Ambassador to the UN Gilad Erdan told the assembly.

"Israel opposes any measure aimed at allocating a budget for this purpose,” Erdan said. “We all know that such funds will not be used to support human rights, but [rather] to spread even more antisemitism and hate towards Israel.”

The budget often passes by consensus, but this year the US asked for a roll vote.

“Today, this body is poised to adopt a budget that reflects such an accommodation that extends a shameful legacy of hate, antisemitism and anti-Israel bias,” US Ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft said. “The United States rejects this effort and called for this vote to make clear that we stand by our principles, stand up for what is right, and never accept consensus for consensus’ sake.”

She also took issue with the UN’s failure to recognize the Trump administration’s request to reimpose sanctions on Tehran, as laid out under the terms of the 2015 Iran deal.

“The US is deeply disappointed in the UN’s failure to implement the snapback of previously-lifted sanctions on Iran, as outlined in Security Council Resolution 2231,” Craft said.

“The United States made clear, both in statements and in a letter to the President of the Security Council, that these sanctions are now re-imposed,” she said.

“The Trump Administration could not be clearer on this matter,” she added. “The Islamic Republic of Iran is an enemy of peace and security – not only in the world but to its own citizens – and will employ the UN’s inaction to extend its violent influence, fuel additional discord, and inflict even more terror on vulnerable communities across the region.

“Decisions taken in this budget, by this body, have real-world consequences,” Craft said.

Separately Israel, the United States and Canada also opposed the financing of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), whose members are stationed at the border between Israel and Lebanon. That resolution passed 166-3, with zero abstentions.