The UN is rationalizing the slaughter of Jews

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Where does it come from? That’s the question many people are asking about the shocking refusal on the part of so many academics, artists and other members of the chattering classes to unreservedly condemn the Hamas terrorist organization and the horrifying crimes that it committed on Oct. 7. The willingness of so many to speak as if the actions of the perpetrators were in some way understandable doesn’t make sense. The appalling actions suffered by Israelis—1,400 men, women and children murdered, thousands wounded and more than 200 dragged into captivity in the Gaza Strip, along with the horrific acts of rape, torture and the mutilation of corpses—boggles the mind. Who anywhere deserves this? How can anyone ask for this?

At the heart of all of the answers to these questions is antisemitism, a virus that has proved itself capable of assuming many guises and adapting itself to multiple circumstances over the course of the last century.

But it’s not good enough to simply ascribe this to Jew-hatred. We need to understand why people who don’t think themselves to be antisemitic are doing this. Self-identified progressives believe that their views are, by definition, antithetical to an ideology of hatred. Yet they are nonetheless espousing a point of view that either implicitly or explicitly countenances or otherwise rationalizes a global attitude that enables Hamas.

At the root of the problem is an institution that most people in Israel and the United States tend to ignore: the United Nations.

The world body may be a talking shop that is detached from the realities of the Middle East as well as virtually every other problem facing the planet. However, its leaders and constituent agencies play an outsize role in establishing norms when it comes to international affairs. And if you want to know why progressive thought—as expressed not just in academic settings or in the speeches of members of the left-wing congressional “Squad,” but on the pages of mainstream publications like *The New York Times* or on broadcast outlets like *MSNB*C—generally assumes the validity of a narrative that views Israel as an oppressor state and the Palestinians as their hapless victims, then the hatred that is routinely spewed out at the United Nations helps explain why this distressing trend has become so widespread.

**Guterres spews lies**

The most recent example of this came this week when UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres [sought to rationalize](https://www.jns.org/israel-slams-un-chief-for-saying-hamas-attack-did-not-occur-in-vacuum/) the Hamas atrocities as the result of the alleged mistreatment of Palestinian Arabs. He said: “It is important to also recognize the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum.” Guterres had told the U.N. Security Council this on Tuesday, claiming that “the Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation. “They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced; and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing,” he added.

He tried to walk this back by tweeting that “the grievances of the Palestinian people cannot justify the horrific attacks by Hamas. Those horrendous attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.” So even when subsequently condemning the Hamas massacres, he compounded the problem by doubling down on the assumption of a moral equivalence between the complaints of the Palestinians and the acts of sheer barbarism committed by Hamas, which, by the way, was [designated](https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/) a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States on Oct. 8, 1997.

Unpacking the falsehoods in Guterres’s statement isn’t hard.

Hamas-ruled Gaza isn’t occupied. The last Jew left in 2005, and since 2007, it’s operated as an independent Palestinian state in all but name. The stifling of the Palestinian economy in both Gaza, as well as Judea and Samaria (the “West Bank”), which is ruled autonomously by the Palestinian Authority, is due entirely to the corruption and tyranny of Hamas and P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas’s Fatah Party. Palestinians haven’t been displaced since they fled in 1948 when Israel became an independent state. At the same time, an even greater number of Jews were forced to flee from their homes in the Arab and Muslim world. If hopes for a political solution have been vanishing, it is because Palestinian leaders have refused multiple offers of independence and statehood dating back to 1947 since that would have also required them to live in peace with the Jewish nation.

Hamas terrorists aren’t seeking a two-state solution or aim to adjust Israel’s policies or borders. They aim for its destruction and the genocide of its Jewish population. Yet Gutteres and the many otherwise respectable people in the West who echo his falsehoods to excuse their refusal to condemn Hamas and back Israel act as if the last 75 years of history didn’t happen or doesn’t matter.

Moreover, is it not “collective punishment” for a sovereign state to seek to destroy a terror movement that has complete control of a territory by acts like the cutting off of supplies and electricity that enable it to function. To insist that Israel must enable its enemies to continue to function effectively is to deny it the right to defend itself—a right no one would think of denying any other country.

But as much as Gutteres deserves to be blasted for this, his comments are just the tip of the U.N. iceberg when it comes to discrimination against the Jewish state, and the way it validates the vile notion that what happened on Oct. 7 was the natural consequence of Israeli misdeeds.

The open support and even joyful celebration for the worst mass slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust by much of the Arab and Muslim community in Europe and the United States doesn’t entirely draw its inspiration from these U.N. institutions or the likes of Guterres.

However, the inability of so many thought leaders and influencers, as well as members of the educational establishment, to react to Hamas’s crimes in the way one might have thought any decent person would is causing a lot of Jews and non-Jews to openly wonder what has happened to modern-day society.

There are many heartening examples of celebrities and politicians condemning the atrocities and supporting Israel’s right to take action to eliminate the threat that Hamas and its supporters pose to civilization and Jews. But there are so many other examples of those rationalizing the terrorists or [staying silent](https://www.jns.org/public-neutrality-about-hamas-and-israel-is-complicity/) when they normally express opinions about any tragedy that befalls humanity that it’s enough to make one wonder how it is that hostility to Israel and indifference to Jewish suffering have become so widespread.

**The intersectionality connection to the UN**

The rise of intersectionality and critical race theory (CRT) — that promote division of the world into two immutable warring racial camps of victims and oppressors — has resulted in the acceptance in mainstream American discussions of lies about Israel being a state of “white privilege” and guilty of mistreating Palestinian “people of color.” Such distinctions are irrelevant to the Middle East where Jews are as likely to be “people of color since the majority of Israeli Jews trace their origins to the Middle East or North Africa as Arabs. Moreover, it is the Jews who are the “indigenous” people of the country.

In the moral panic that followed the death of George Floyd in May 2020, even legacy Jewish organizations like the Anti-Defamation League (whose job is to oppose antisemitism) endorsed the Black Lives Matter movement that was itself steeped in anti-Jewish thinking. Desperate to remain in sync with their left-wing allies and fashionable opinion, such groups ignored the consequences that the widespread acceptance that these toxic theories received was bound to create.

Once a movement and ideology that accepted the specious notion that the Palestinian war to destroy Israel was in some way connected to the struggle for civil rights in the United States became accepted by liberal opinion as valid, the next step was inevitable. It was only a matter of time before a considerable portion of elite American opinion was going to start treating Hamas terrorism as nothing more than the Jews getting their comeuppance.

More than three years later, it’s both sad and easy to see how lies about Israel have become so commonplace that no one need wonder why so many, especially young people, take it as a given that the war launched against Israel is in some way its own fault.

Yet the ability of the intersectional left to smear Israel and have its accusations considered credible can also be traced back to the way that the United Nations has legitimized these lies on the international stage.

Both it and the so-called “human rights” organizations it has spawned are the source material for the smearing of Israel by intersectional advocates dating back to the 2001 Durban Conference on Racism when, only days before the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States, the event in South Africa became ground zero for international antisemitism.

The United Nations, its misnamed Human Rights Council that targets Israel and its kangaroo court [Commission of Inquiry](https://www.jns.org/lies-and-unapologetic-antisemitism-from-the-un-commission-of-inquiry/) (COI) devoted to demonizing the Jewish state and ignoring Palestinian terrorism have provided an otherwise obscure toxic set of beliefs with the sort of official imprimatur that has allowed it to spread and essentially go unchallenged in mainstream venues. In particular, the COI and its South African leader, Navi Pillay, have become a constant source of antisemitic invective and discrimination against Israel.

At the root of this moral rot that has been on display since Oct. 7 is the way the international community has validated antisemitic lies about Israel. It’s time to stop ignoring the role that the United Nations plays in fomenting and legitimizing not just antisemitism but indifference to Jewish suffering. Both the way its agencies and American leftist ideologues have mainstreamed false assumptions about Zionism being a form of racism rather than the liberation movement of the Jewish people can no longer be ignored. It is directly connected to the ability of critical race theory advocates to gain credibility for their toxic ideas about Israel and the Jews.

So what to do now? The vast majority of Americans who reject these lies must demand that Congress defund the United Nations and its agencies, which have provided the foundation not just for antisemitism but support for the mass slaughter of Jews in 2023.