Israel Is Ready for a Reset at the U.N.

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In January, an important world leader will take office when António Guterres of Portugal replaces Ban Ki-moon as secretary general of the [United Nations](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/u/united_nations/index.html?inline=nyt-org). As he assumes his post, he should know that [Israel](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/israel/index.html?inline=nyt-geo) is ready to work together on repairing our fractious relationship with the United Nations and finally becoming a full partner in the world’s most important international forum.

There is good reason for skepticism about the prospects for such a change. The hostility toward Israel of an automatic majority in the General Assembly is well documented. In 2015 alone, the assembly passed some 20 resolutions condemning Israel — far more than any other country. Like all truly democratic countries, Israel has always been open to legitimate constructive criticism. Yet our critics in the General Assembly single out my country for unwarranted and excessive attention, while giving a pass to some of the world’s most brutal and despotic regimes like Syria and North Korea.

Despite these difficulties, Israelis have not despaired of the parliament of nations. Now there is a real opportunity to lay out practical steps that Israel and the new secretary general can take to reset this fraught history.

For Israel, the expectation from the United Nations can be summarized in one word: equality. We want to be treated no different from its 192 other member states. In particular, hatred against the Jewish people should be treated like hatred against all other groups.

Recently, there has been an increase in anti-Semitic statements at the United Nations. Ambassadors have used its forums to accuse Israel of everything from [harvesting the organs](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-un-idUSKCN0ST32420151104) of slain terrorists to committing a “[final solution](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/67226/venezuelan-un-ambassador-accuses-israel-carrying-final-solution-palestinians/#t6r1m7Dv47lwY2js.97)” against the [Palestinian](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/p/palestinians/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) people. In one case, a United Nations under secretary general [has made coded comparisons](http://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-un-envoy-pans-diplomat-for-nazi-comparison/?fb_comment_id=1440563996184768_207287) of Israel’s actions to those of the Nazis during the Holocaust (a common anti-Semitic trope).

The silence that met these incidents has been deafening. In the name of a false impartiality, no real action was taken against such hate. The new secretary general should pursue a different path, putting officials on notice that bias and hate will not be tolerated, and warning ambassadors who spread modern-day blood libels that they will be shunned at the United Nations.

Equality also means ending unfair support for one side in one of the world’s oldest conflicts. The Palestinian cause receives disproportionate attention and budget appropriations at the United Nations. To be sure, Palestinian people deserve whatever aid and assistance they need from the United Nations. But there is a superfluity of bodies, and agencies too often depart from their humanitarian mission to fuel a cycle of violence by inciting hatred.

Here, too, Mr. Guterres can act, by taking a long, hard look at these bodies and their budgets. Where there are cuts to be made, they should be — including to jobs that do nothing to further the principles of the United Nations but simply malign one member state. Where the secretary general’s powers do not extend to budgets, he should use his bully pulpit to end Turtle Bay bureaucracies that are dedicated to advocacy against Israel.

Equality for Israel also involves a positive agenda. Last June, my election to chairman of the General Assembly’s legal committee — as the [first Israeli](http://www.timesofisrael.com/in-first-israel-elected-to-head-a-permanent-un-committee/) to head one of its permanent committees — turned into a protracted political battle. Candidates for such positions from every other member state are adopted by consensus. Not Israel. Instead, we had to individually lobby each country to win the 109 votes that enabled my election.

It is within Mr. Guterres’s power to fix this if he is willing to see Israel as a potential full partner at the United Nations. To do so, he must eliminate efforts to classify Israel as a second-class member, directing all bodies to remove the de facto bylaws that deny Israel equal access to participation in the United Nations.

Once it is treated as an equal, Israel wants nothing more than to build on the successful areas of cooperation it has established at the United Nations. Over the past two years, the United Nations [has doubled](http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-doubles-sale-of-goods-services-to-un-institutions/) its purchase of goods and services from my country — a sign of growing recognition among the international community of the value of Israeli companies and service providers. When it comes to humanitarian efforts, Israel was proud to be the [largest contributor](https://www.algemeiner.com/2014/12/18/un-identifies-israel-as-leading-state-in-fight-against-ebola-video/) (per capita of population) toward the international efforts to eradicate the [Ebola](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/e/ebola/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) outbreak in West Africa.

More than this, Israel stands ready to contribute to the core areas of United Nations operations: peace and security.

The United Nations’ World Health Organization [recently ranked](http://www.timesofisrael.com/un-ranks-idf-emergency-medical-team-as-no-1-in-the-world/) the Israel Defense Forces’ field hospital as the best in the world. These brave Israelis serve in disaster zones around the world, providing lifesaving care. We look forward to a day when even more lives can be saved if Israel’s capabilities are incorporated regularly into United Nations missions.

Our security forces, too, are global leaders by many metrics, from safeguarding civilian lives to female participation in combat units. We know that our personnel, technology and experience would be much-needed additions to the United Nations “blue helmets.” Mr. Guterres can help make this happen.

Israel was the first country in the world whose establishment was directly linked to a United Nations decision. We want nothing more than to play a full part in helping this august body live up to its [founding charter](http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/): “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and “to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security.” If Mr. Guterres is ready to implement these just and overdue changes, then Israel is ready to meet the challenge.