New Year’s resolution? Abolish the UN Human Rights Council

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At the turn of a new year, people traditionally make resolutions to improve themselves. So, what is the United Nations setting itself to do better in 2022?

Answer: Launching an onslaught against Israel even more malicious and far-reaching than the U.N.’s previous attempts to delegitimize and destroy it.

In the past week, the U.N. General Assembly approved an annual $5 million budget for a commission of inquiry, led by the former U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, which has unprecedented scope to demonize Israel.

The ostensible context for this inquiry, which was launched in a resolution passed by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in May, was the conflict that month when, under attack from thousands of rockets fired by Hamas from Gaza to kill Israeli civilians, Israel launched Operation Guardian of the Walls to defend itself.

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Of the 236 Gazans who were killed during that conflict, at least 114 were members of terrorist organizations and 21 were killed by fellow Gazans as a result of rocket misfire.

The inquiry, however, has been set up as a kangaroo court. It’s not just that the UNHRC resolution failed to mention the rocket onslaught against Israeli civilians by Hamas, or its use of Gazan civilians as human shields.

The inquiry has clearly been set up to find Israel guilty of the human rights crimes of which it is both innocent and the victim — and furthermore, to declare it guilty of such crimes not just in Gaza and the “West Bank” but within Israel itself.

Moreover, its remit includes “all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity.”

So, it’s poised to accuse Israel of the purported crime of its very existence going back to its creation in 1948, as well as libel it with the false charge of “apartheid” which has become the defining smear of Israel-bashing circles.

Worse still, its scope and reach are astonishing and unprecedented. As Anne Bayefsky points out in a devastating [article](https://jcpa.org/article/the-newest-anti-israel-un-action-must-be-challenged-now/) for the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, the commission will have 24 permanent staff members. This compares to 20 permanent staffers for the council’s branch covering all of Asia, Pacific and the Middle East, or more than 60 percent of the world’s population.

And its aim is to single out Israelis for criminal charges.

To that end, it will have four full-time lawyers, plus a “forensic expert” to “report on medico-legal issues,” and a “military adviser” to pronounce on “de jure command responsibility” and liaise with law enforcement officials.

This is designed to cripple Israel’s capacity to defend itself against murderous and existential attack. “In effect, the budget of this U.N. inquisition funds the creation of a law firm inside the U.N. dedicated to manufacturing charges and mounting a global chase to arrest and incarcerate Israeli Jews,” Bayefsky writes.

The UNHRC vote took place within weeks of a report by the Human Rights Watch NGO which accused Israel of “apartheid.”

This accusation is of course ludicrous. Israeli Arabs demonstrably enjoy equal civic and religious rights, while the Arabs living in the disputed territories aren’t Israeli citizens at all. Those who accuse Israel of apartheid not only defame Israel but belittle the real evil of apartheid in South Africa.

Yet with the three members of the commission each having a record of extreme hostility towards Israel, there are plausible fears that the inquiry is a stitch-up designed to produce a kind of Human Rights Watch report on steroids — and with the imprimatur of the U.N.

Moreover, the commission has no expiry date but is to issue reports in perpetuity. In other words, it’s an institutionalized engine of demonization and delegitimization of Israel.

There are particular fears that the inquiry’s criminal charge sheet may result in Israelis being hauled before the International Criminal Court (ICC), which has previously displayed bias against Israel. However, the ICC’s new prosecutor, the British lawyer Karim Khan QC, may not be the pushover that might be assumed from the court’s previous record.

At his first news conference in The Hague earlier this month, he said he would be reviewing his over-heavy caseload — which currently includes a deeply contentious investigation into accusations against Israel made by the “State of Palestine.”

More importantly, he added that he would only proceed in cases that had a “realistic prospect of conviction.” In other words, in contrast to his predecessors for whom this wasn’t a key consideration, he would only open an investigation on the basis of evidence that stood up to scrutiny.

So even if the Pillay commission’s toxic ball lands at Khan’s feet, it doesn’t follow that he will necessarily pick it up and run with it.

Nevertheless, the real menace of this inquiry lies in its potential to demonize Israel in the eyes of the world regardless of any court proceedings. Such delegitimization not only makes people indifferent to attempts by Israel’s enemies to wage war against it, but also causes leading nations to seek to thwart its attempts at self-defense.

Accordingly, the Pillay inquiry constitutes an existential attack against Israel — the latest product of an obscene and exterminatory UNHRC obsession.

The council and its predecessor body the Commission on Human Rights — whose members have included such human rights abusers as Saudi Arabia, China, Cuba, Pakistan and Russia — have passed [more](https://twitter.com/hillelneuer/status/1397979421395636224?lang=en) resolutions condemning Israel than every other country in the world combined, while [adopting](https://unwatch.org/database/problems/unhrc/) no resolutions on human rights abuses committed in China, Cuba and Russia.

In addition, Israel is the only country to which the council dedicates a standing agenda item, as if Israel — the only country in the Middle East which guarantees equal human rights protection to all its citizens — were the world’s leading abuser of human rights.

This surreal situation is the result of a deeply embedded Western fallacy. Human rights law and supra-national bodies such as the U.N. and ICC were created after the Holocaust out of a noble but flawed belief.

This was that the nation-state could no longer be relied upon to safeguard peace and justice, that it was by definition incapable of addressing crimes against humanity, and that therefore supra-national bodies and laws needed to be created to address those needs.

These visionaries failed to grasp that, since the world was dominated by states and regimes that were both repressive and deeply imbued with Jew-hatred and hostility to Israel, any world body or supra-national system of law would itself become an accomplice to tyranny and anti-Semitism.

That’s why “lawfare,” or the weaponization of international law to wage war with better PR, has become a prime weapon against Israel, singling out the Jewish people alone for such unhinged attack.

And it’s why the U.N., the world body set up to ensure that never again would crimes against humanity be repeated — a global aim which it has conspicuously failed to achieve — has itself turned into a weapon with which to commit them against the Jewish people once again.

In other words, the UNHRC has become an engine of evil. In January, the U.S. returns to the Council as a member. The Biden administration claims it will thus be able to stop its abuses. This is unlikely.

The U.N. is supposedly the world’s police force. But if a police force is in the pocket of a murderous and tyrannical cult, it turns into a protection racket where the innocent get gunned down and the guilty remain free to inflict yet more carnage.

This is not just Israel’s problem. As long as the West ignores the profound corruption of the UNHRC, it corrupts itself.

How to make the world a better place in 2022? Shut down the UNHRC.