Czech FM: We changed our UN vote on Jerusalem to say no to antisemitism

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[The Czech Republic](https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/bennett-speaks-with-austrian-chancellor-czech-pm-about-covid-687410) took a stand against antisemitism when it changed its voting pattern and for the first time rejected the United Nations General Assembly’s Jerusalem resolution, the country’s Foreign Minister Jakub Kulhánek told The Jerusalem Post.

“There is a rising tide of antisemitism around the world,” said Kulhánek, who, during his seven months in office, has been a staunch ally of the Jewish state.

He was one of a small number of European foreign ministers who made a solidarity trip to Israel during the [Gaza war in May](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/seven-idf-reservists-who-refused-orders-during-gaza-operation-discharged-688001).

Last week at the UN he took another important step in Israel’s defense when it came to the Jerusalem resolution, which refers to the Temple Mount solely by its Muslim name of al-Haram al-Sharif.

Already back in 2016, Kulhánek said, “The EU foreign ministers agreed on using both terms when referring to the holy sites in Jerusalem.”

This includes the Temple Mount, which, as the location of the ancient Jewish Temple, is the most holy site in Judaism. As the place from where Muhammad ascended to heaven on his night journey, it is the third holiest site in Islam.

The holy site should be referred in UN documents as “Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif,” Kulhánek explained. The EU has attempted to push for the site to be referenced this way, but “needless to say, we have not been very successful,” Kulhánek said.

In 2018, the Czech Republic, along with the entire 28-member European Union bloc, supported the UNGA text, which was approved 148-11 with 14 abstentions.

But this time around when the text passed 129-11, with 31 abstentions, 10 EU countries abstained. Two, the Czech Republic and Hungary, rejected the text all together.

The 10 abstaining EU countries were Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The United Kingdom, which since 2018 had exited the EU, also abstained.

The Czech Republic had spoken with EU members about the need for a “unified position” on the text, but failed to win them over, Kulhánek explained.

Still, he said, its important to note that “more and more states have reservations about the language used in the resolution.”

Kulhánek said he wanted to make a clear statement on the matter that left no room for misinterpretation.

“I decided to have our Czech delegation vote against the resolution,” he said.

Kulhánek explained that his country had said all along that the resolution needed to use “more inclusive language” and that its absence was a “red line.”

“I saw it [the Jerusalem resolution] as quite biased. So in that sense, I think it was important to say the buck stops here and we should have a more balanced language,” Kulhánek said.

Kulhánek added that he was proud of coming from a county that historically has been a friend of Israel. It’s a feeling, he said, that cuts across all the political parties in the Czech Republic.

“That is something that is unique,” he said. “While in office I have been very supportive of Israel, and the Czech Republic has been very supportive of Israel.

“At the end of the day, voting against the resolution, was a nice way of taking a stance in support of Israel,” Kulhánek said.