Israel's UN envoy accuses New York Times of 'overt anti-Israel bias'

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<https://www.jpost.com/international/article-732415>

Israel's Ambassador to the [United Nations Gilad Erdan](https://www.jpost.com/international/article-732209) on Wednesday sent a letter to *The New York Times'* executive editor in which he sharply condemned the newspaper's ‘overt anti-Israel bias.’

Addressed to Joseph Kahn, [Erdan](https://www.jpost.com/business-and-innovation/article-706641) called asymmetry in*The Times'* coverage of Israel, from opinion columns to news stories, ‘libelous narratives’ and demanded the reporting be rectified.

The ambassador cited a study conducted by Bar-Ilan University over the course of 2022 which found there were 361 articles focusing on Israel, most of which disparage Israel and brand it a human right's violator. The study, included in the letter, also shows that the number of opinion columns condemning Israel was almost double the number of columns condemning Iran, despite the fact that in the past year, the Ayatollah regime murdered innocent protestors in the street, oppressed women, and accelerated its nuclear program.

Erdan accused *The Times*, which has won 132 Pulitzer Prizes, the most of any newspaper, of omitting details and distorting reality. Nicknamed ‘The Newspaper of record,’ *The Times* serves the largest urban Jewish community in the world.

‘The cornerstones of journalism ethics are truth, accuracy, and objectivity – values that, when it comes to Israel, *The Times* deliberately refuses to uphold,’ he wrote. ‘When *The New York Times* chooses to demonize Israel, the very least professional journalism demands is that the reader is exposed to the whole story in order to formulate an unbiased opinion. Yet when *The Times* reports Israel’s actions with nearly non-existent context, it actively contributes to warping the truth.’

‘Due to your whitewashing of Palestinian terror and the propagation of half-truths, your readers are hardly aware of these Jihadist organizations’ existence, let alone the constant threat they pose to Israel. In the future, if Israel is again forced to defend itself against indiscriminate Palestinian rocket fire on our homefront, whether from Gaza or Lebanon, your readership will unknowingly infer that Israel is the aggressor, despite the exact opposite being true. Through this deceitful coverage, *The Times* not only twists the truth but also incentivizes terrorism.’

 ’As you are aware, antisemitism is rising at a terrifying rate,’ Erdan continued.  ‘Much of today’s violent Jew-hatred takes the form of Israel-hatred. And part of the blame for this growing bigotry lays on your shoulders. The New York Times’ libelous narratives are actively contributing to the growing hatred of my country, and as a result, your publication plays a role in endangering Jews around the globe.’

**The Gray Lady was already under fire for 'pushing antisemitic tropes'**

The head of the Anti-Defamation League told Fox News earlier this month that The New York Times' months of [coverage of New York City’s Orthodox Jewish community](https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-717284) pushed antisemitic tropes and fed stereotypes.

‘We have the right to voice our outrage at this coverage,’ said Jonathan Greenblatt, the CEO of ADL, which was founded in 1913 to combat antisemitism and defamation of Jews in America. ‘We have an obligation to a community that is under siege to state clearly and consistently that this is not acceptable.’

Beginning in September, *the Times* published a series of investigative stories about New York City’s Orthodox Jewish community’s boys' schools, also known as yeshivas. The reporting singled out schools run by the Hasidic community.

Greenblatt said the articles included antisemitic tropes regarding Jewish power, money and its communal nature. He believes these tropes could stir up antisemitic behavior.

‘It is not just disappointing, it’s irresponsible that *The New York Times* took an issue that merits investigation, that necessitates serious exploration and framed it in such a way, which I think, again, isn’t just unhelpful, it can encourage more antisemitism,’ he said.

Over several articles, *the Times* pointed out failing standardized test scores, lack of secular education and the amount of public funding the schools take. The reporting also featured interviews with former members of the community who alleged they were forced to keep their children in the yeshivas because of the power employed by community leaders and claimed the local government turns a blind eye away from corruption because of the community’s influence. The education at yeshivot, the report went on, deprives students of the means to make a living, leaving the hassidic community impoverished.

According to Greenblatt, the ADL warned *the Times* to consider the impact of their reporting before the articles ran. He said top executives heard but did not listen.

New York Assemblyman Simcha Eichenstein challenged the metrics in *the Times* report by claiming the exam results from New York yeshivot don’t match *the Times’* reporting. Tablet’s Liel Leibovitz exposed other flaws in *the Times’* accusations, noting that while the yeshiva education is different, that doesn’t mean it’s automatically worse.

Rabbi Avi Shafran, director of public affairs for Agudath Israel of America, a national Orthodox Jewish organization, wrote in a Religious News Service opinion piece: ‘*The Times* let a disgruntled minority speak for an entire system. Its reporters relied on interviews with ex-hassidim, some of whom remained anonymous. Why did the article’s writers not speak with any of the vast majority of hassidic parents or former students who cherish the education offered by their yeshivas? The writers say members of the hassidic community wouldn’t speak with them. That’s unsurprising, considering *the Times’* record of negativity toward haredim. But a reporter’s job is still to work to find the necessary interviewees to present all sides of an issue.’

125% increase in NYC antisemitic hate crimes in November

[Antisemitic hate crimes across New York City's five boroughs](https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-724156) more than doubled in November 2022 from the same month a year ago, New York Police Department (NYPD) data revealed. There were 45 hate crimes motivated by antisemitism in November 2022 versus 20 in November 2021, according to the NYPD data.