*Unofficial Transcript by Human Rights Voices*

May 19, 2016

**Opening of the exhibit entitled “Israel Matters” (organized by the Permanent Mission of Israel)**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

AMBASSADOR DANNY DANON: Shalom, welcome to the UN. I’m very happy to see a group of friends, usually when I see a gathering of a lot of people here at the UN it’s not a good sign for us. Tonight is a different occasion. I would like to thank Shahar Azani and Avi Posnick from Stand With Us for bringing this exhibition to the halls of the UN. It is not the first exhibition here at the UN but I don’t know why, whenever we initiate something at the UN it becomes an issue. The exhibition that you’re seeing here tonight, it took us a lot of efforts, a lot of work. The Mission, my deputies, David Roet who’s here with us, worked tirelessly in order to allow this exhibition to be presented here.

For some people, the concepts of the exhibition were offensive. I invite you to look by yourself at the pictures to see the diversity, the innovation, technology, the connection of the Jewish people to Jerusalem and to understand there is nothing to argue about with this exhibition. So those who tried to stop us failed and we are very happy to be here tonight to officially open this famous exhibition. Even today, we received a few letters from many so-called organizations about this exhibition, and I am proud that we successfully are officially opening tonight, and I can promise you that we will continue to show the real face of Israel in the halls of the UN, we will continue to show the diversity, the democracy, the innovation, the technology, for the member states here at the UN.

I want to conclude with the story of another ambassador who was in my position 30 years ago, it was our Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He was the ambassador here at the UN, he went to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Brooklyn. The Lubavitcher Rebbe told him this place is a house of darkness, he should light one candle. People would see the light from afar. Shahar, what we are doing tonight, we are lighting the candle, we are showing the Jewish faith, the light of the Jewish people, the light of the State of Israel. I want to thank all of you for supporting and coming here tonight.