Ban Ki-moon, We Have Lost Faith in the UN

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Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Welcome back to Israel, the island of democracy and stability in a region that has so challenged the United Nations during your tenure as its leader.

We hope that your visit will advance peace and security for us and our neighbors, yet we are forced to ask ourselves – what happened in the nine years you have led the United Nations? Has the UN fulfilled the goals of its charter? Is the UN ensuring the equal rights of Israel as a nation among nations large and small? Are the UN agencies engaged here promoting these goals?

Regrettably, we remain as alarmed today as we did when you yourself, speaking in Jerusalem in 2013, admitted that in the UN, Israel has been: “…criticized and [has] been suffering from this bias and sometimes discriminations.”

Your admission was widely reported and it gave Israelis hope that a Secretary General was finally taking corrective action to restore the UN’s lost credibility. Until your statement, the UN’s failure to engage the Israeli people led more than 70% of them to lose confidence in this august institution and its bodies.

The loss of confidence comes from UN actions such as:

* In the past decade the UNHRC has issued 128 condemnations against nations around the world – and more than half of these, 67, were aimed at a single country, Israel.
* The UNESCO resolution on Jerusalem that denied any Jewish connection to the Temple Mount holy site, while recognizing the Muslim holy site. The Brazilian foreign ministry called this “an error which makes the text partial and unbalanced.”
* The UN condemns Israel, a country with free speech, free elections and minority rights more often than all the world’s mass murdering dictatorships combined. In 2007, you said you were “disappointed” by the UNHRC singling out of Israel. Nine years later that exact same bias is still present. There has been no progress.
* UN schools in Gaza have been repeatedly used by Hamas to store weapons. You yourself said this was “turning schools into potential military targets.”
* Hamas rockets have caused three wars during your tenure. Hamas continues to reject peace and build rockets and tunnels to attack Israel. Despite your admission that Hamas-Fatah reconciliation is “critical” and peace cannot happen without “a single legitimate Palestinian authority,” the UN sits idly by and this “critical” step to achieving peace remains elusive in the face of the Palestinian leadership’s internal squabbles.

These few examples are just the tip of the UN’s iceberg of problems. Israelis see the bias and discrimination, yet at the same time we remind you that opinion polls consistently show the vast majority of Israelis support peace with our Palestinian neighbors.

Mr. Secretary General: We respectfully call on you to take advantage of your visit to reach out to the Israeli people and begin the process of regaining their confidence in the UN.

As you prepare to hand over the reins of the world body to your successor, we call for a new approach for the UN, one that is true to its Charter. We appeal to you to call the incoming Secretary General to engage with the Israeli people, set a timetable to eliminate the bias and discrimination that has poisoned the relationship and restore faith in this most valuable of international bodies.

Respectfully,

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