UN police detain Israeli ambassador

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U.N. police temporarily detained Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Gilad Erdan after the diplomat held a photo up during a talk on the floor by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on Tuesday.

Video footage was provided to JNS, which was told that Erdan was released with the assistance of Israel’s security and diplomatic teams.

‘While the butcher of Tehran is speaking at the U.N. and is being respected by the international community, hundreds of Iranians are protesting outside, shouting and calling on the international community to wake up and help them,’ Erdan stated. ‘It is a disgrace that member states stay to listen to a mass murderer.’

‘It should not be possible for a murderer with blood on his hands to receive a platform here at the U.N.,’ he added. ‘I left the speech to make it clear that the State of Israel stands by the Iranian people. I call on the international community to stop the madness and prevent murderers and antisemites from coming and speaking here at the U.N.’

Erdan waved a photograph of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman who was imprisoned for not properly covering her hair and then killed in custody a year ago. Her death ignited a wave of protests in the Islamic Republic.

Although the Israeli delegation told JNS that the ambassador was detained, and the video showed police holding onto Erdan’s arm firmly, Stéphane Dujarric, spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres, described the incident differently to JNS.

‘There was indeed an incident when a permanent representative of Israel walked down the aisle and unfurled a photo during the speech by the president of Iran in the General Assembly,’ Dujarric said. ‘At no time was the ambassador detained in any way, shape or form. As far as we are concerned, the incident is closed.’

During his remarks, Raisi quoted frequently from the Koran, denounced Islamophobia, stressed the sanctity of family and frequently attacked Israel. He also referred to decades of Israeli ‘occupation,’ accusing Israel of murdering civilians and calling for the creation of a state of Palestine.

He also claimed that Iran does not support any wars and that the United States ‘trampled’ on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran. ‘It has committed egregious and unilateral crimes,’ he said.

Iran seeks ‘peaceful nuclear energy’ and not nuclear weapons, Raisi claimed.