



# ISRAEL MATTERS!

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## U.N. Human Rights Council Maintains Anti-Israel Bias with Five Resolutions

### Netanyahu Bans Cooperation with PA as Peace Talks Come to Abrupt Halt

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has banned government ministries from continuing civilian and economic cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, which had been ongoing for many years, following the breakdown of the U.S.-brokered peace talks and, in particular, Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas' submission of applications to join 15 international organizations and conventions.



At a recent Cabinet meeting, commenting on the PA's unilateral

move at the U.N., in violation of the peace process, Netanyahu warned that Israel would take "unilateral steps on our part," which could include sanctions on the PA. Cabinet members, government-ministry directors and other senior officials are no longer permitted to meet their Palestinian counterparts.

"According to Voice of Israel public radio, these measures include a suspension of high-level contacts between ministers and CEOs, and any contacts with the PA will now be led by the Coordinator of Government Activities in Judea and Samaria, Maj. Gen. Yoav Mordechai," Israel National News reported. "It was also decided to freeze the implementation of 3G cellular technology in PA-assigned areas and stop

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The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) recently voted in favor of five resolutions explicitly singling out Israel—the latest instance in a well-documented history of bias against the Jewish state.

Four of the five resolutions approved by the top international human rights body castigated Israel's treatment of Palestinians, and were approved by a 46-1 vote. The fifth resolution took aim at Israel's legal administration of the Golan Heights, which the Jewish state has maintained since 1981, as well as the "suffering of the Syrian citizens...due to the systematic and continuous violation of their fundamental and human rights by Israel." It received a 33-1 vote.

The United States was the only voting member to oppose all five resolutions.

None of the 42 resolutions that criticized individual countries—including those highlighting rights violations in Iran and Syria—received the same degree of support as those leveled against Israel.

Unequal treatment within the main U.N. human rights body has long been an issue of contention for the United States, particularly with respect to its "Agenda Item 7," which since enacted in 2007, requires thorough examinations of Israel at each convening. American officials took exception to the UNHRC's latest anti-Israel demonstration, citing detrimental ramifications for the current Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

"We are deeply troubled once again to be presented with a slate of one-sided resolutions that undermine efforts to make progress in the negotiations," said Paula Schriefer, the head of the U.S. Delegation to the UNHRC. "None of the world's worst human rights violators, some of whom are the object of resolutions at this session, have their own stand-alone agenda item at this Council," she added. "Only Israel, a vibrant and open democracy, receives such treatment," Schriefer said.

Perhaps most troubling for the United States was the overwhelming condemnation of Israel's treatment of Syrians in the Golan Heights, at a time when Syrian President Bashar Assad and his dictatorial leadership bear responsibility for the deaths of at least 150,000 people. "Especially disturbing is this council's complacency with the repeated introduction of a resolution focusing on the Golan Heights," said Schriefer.

"To consider such a resolution while the Syrian regime continues to slaughter its own citizens exemplifies the absurdity of this agenda item, and each of the other resolutions on Agenda Item 7," she added.

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the transfer into Gaza of communications equipment belonging to the PA cellular phone company Watania," INN added.

An all-night meeting between Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams failed to revive the peace talks.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry indirectly blamed Israel for the breakdown of peace talks. "Israel didn't release the Palestinian prisoners on the day they were supposed to be freed, and another day passed, and another day, and then another 700 settlement units were announced in Jerusalem, and 'poof'...that was sort of the moment," said Kerry. Israel had recently cancelled the release of a fourth batch of terrorists from prison due to a lack of concessions from Ramallah, most notably a refusal to recognize the Jewish state.

Kerry, for his part, had opposed Israel's demand that the PA recognize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish People as a pre-condition for negotiations. The U.S. "supports the notion of Israel being defined as a Jewish state," he stated last month. But "when it happens, and how it happens, has to be part of the negotiations. It's not going to happen in the beginning."

White House Spokesperson Jen Psaki denied that Kerry put the onus on Israel for the collapse of the peace talks. "Secretary Kerry was clear when he said that both sides took unhelpful steps, and at no point did he take part in the blame game," Psaki said. [UnitedWithIsrael]

## Israel Launches New Spy Satellite

Israel's Defense Ministry announced that it had successfully launched a new Israeli-made observation satellite, "Ofek 10," into orbit. The satellite has the capability to direct its imaging radar on a specific target, as opposed to other satellites that perform a general sweep of territory.

Israel is expected to use the satellite to keep tabs on Iran and the region. The Ofek 10 is a lightweight satellite that is expected to improve Israel's reconnaissance abilities by providing sharp images at any time of day, and in any weather condition. "The Ofek 10 satellite should improve Israel's intelligence capability and allow the defense establishment to better deal with threats near and far," said Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon in a statement. "We are continuing to strengthen our tremendous qualitative and technological advantage over our neighbors," Yaalon added.

Unlike other countries that launch satellites eastward in the direction of the earth's orbit, Israel launched the satellite westward, opposite the direction of the earth's orbit, to prevent debris following the launch to land in enemy countries east of Israel. [AP]

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Leadership from several major American Jewish organizations issued similar condemnations of the council's actions. "The passage of this anti-Israel resolution demonstrates that the UNHRC's single-minded focus on Israel and willingness to escalate attacks against the Jewish State is boundless," said Anti-Defamation League Director Abraham H. Foxman. Similarly, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) issued a statement decrying the one-sided nature of Agenda Item 7. "Once again, the primary human rights organ of the U.N. has sabotaged its promise of fairness, a vow central to the U.N. Charter itself, and to the resolution creating the Human Rights Council," said AJC Executive Director, David Harris.

Israeli Premier Netanyahu echoed criticism, UNHRC for Israel "at a slaughter in continuing, in-are being hung in the Middle East and human rights are being eroded." "This march of hypocrisy is continuing and we will continue to condemn it and expose it," the prime minister said.



Russia:	0
China:	0
Cuba:	0
Pakistan:	0
Venezuela:	0
Zimbabwe:	0
Iran:	1
North Korea:	1
Israel:	5

Prime Minister Netanyahu the American chastising the condemning time when the Syria is innocent people

Among the UNHRC member states voting in favor of the resolutions were several countries with historically favorable voting precedents and recent public displays of support for the Jewish state. The Czech Republic, which had been supportive towards Israel at the council, voted in favor of each resolution and abstained from the Golan Heights item. Many European states, including the so-called E3 (Germany, United Kingdom and France), similarly approved the resolutions despite recent public demonstrations of pro-Israel support. Italy, Romania, Austria, Estonia, and Ireland all voted in the same manner.

While such overwhelming condemnation of Israel at the UNHRC is no new phenomenon, the United States' lone rejections of the resolutions provide the latest example of American support for its foremost ally in the Middle East. Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, underscored this commitment in an April 2 testimony to the House Subcommittee on Appropriations for State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. "The United States will stand with Israel, we will defend it, and we will challenge every instance of unfair treatment throughout the U.N. system," she said.

Power and Schriever's comments, as well as those from the American Jewish community and Israeli leadership, reflect a collective call for Europe to change its long pattern of anti-Israel behavior at the international body.