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### REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

#### THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

#### ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

#### ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

### REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION

#### Letter dated 16 January 1984 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my letters dated 16 August 1982 (A/37/392) and 12 October 1982 (A/37/542), I drew Your Excellency's urgent attention to the ominous upsurge of anti-Semitism at the United Nations in recent years.\*\*

Regrettably, the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly was characterized by a further intensification of this sinister phenomenon, thus converting the United Nations into one of the foremost arenas for the operation of international anti-Semitism.

In my letter of 8 December 1983 (A/38/713), I already drew Your Excellency's attention to the racist and religious incitement contained in the statement of the same day of the Permanent Representative of Libya, Mr. Treiki. In that statement, it will be recalled, the representative of Libya said, in reference to Israel and the Jewish people:

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\* Reissued for technical reasons.

\*\* The terms "anti-Semitism", "anti-Semite" and "anti-Semitic" are used throughout this letter within their commonly accepted meaning, denoting hostility to Jews (cf., The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English).

"The time has come for the United Nations to strive to save the peoples of the world from this racist entity. It is high time for the United Nations and the United States, in particular, to realize that the Jewish Zionists here in the United States attempt to destroy Americans. Look around New York. Who are the owners of pornographic film operations and houses? Is it not the Jews who are exploiting the American people and trying to debase them? If we succeed in eliminating that entity, we shall by the same token save the American and European peoples.

"We hope that the day will soon come when we can eradicate this affront, this aberration of history which we committed when we accepted within our Organization this band of criminals, mercenaries and terrorists" (A/38/PV.88, pp. 19 and 20).

On the same occasion, the representative of Libya also referred to the people of Israel as "the most vile people upon this earth" (*ibid.*, p. 19).

Unfortunately, the representative of Libya was not alone in such a display of rabid anti-Semitism. The Permanent Representative of Iran, Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, had already expressed, on 2 November 1983, with reference to Israel, his hope "that the Moslem countries in the area will soon consider the final solution" (A/38/PV.42, pp. 53-55). As is well known, "the final solution" was the Nazi code-name for the genocide perpetrated against the Jews of Europe during the Second World War.

Iranian representatives have also repeatedly referred to Israel as a "cancerous growth" (see, for example, the statement by the Foreign Minister of Iran, Mr. Velayati, of 30 September 1983: "There is no cure for the cancerous growth of Zionism but surgery" (A/38/PV.13, p. 41)), or "cancerous tumour" (see, for example, the statement of Mr. Hosein Latify of 19 December 1983: "The Zionist entity ... should be removed like a cancerous tumour" (A/38/PV.102, p. 47)).

When the representative of Iran, at the 102nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 19 December 1983, also used obscene language with regard to the representative of Israel ("the Zionist entity agent with the retarded mind and archaic logic and with a polluted reasoning ..." (A/38/PV.102, p. 47)), without being called to order by the Chair for this intolerable behaviour, the representative of the United States, Congressman Solarz, on a point of order, protested the use of this kind of abusive language (*ibid.*). Thereupon, the Permanent Representative of Syria, Mr. El-Fattal, on a point of order, interjected that: "We have a limited amount of time. There are attempts in this hall on the part of the United States representative to gain the Jewish vote ..." (*ibid.*).

Assaults on the Jewish people in an ostensibly more sophisticated but equally vicious form were also made in the course of the recent session of the General Assembly by certain Soviet-bloc representatives. Thus, for example, the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Mr. Ogurtsov, on 29 November 1983, at the 55th meeting of the Third Committee, referred in a derisive manner to the Bible (A/C.3/38/SR.55, p. 17), just as Soviet-bloc representatives routinely deride the Jewish people as "the chosen people".

These motifs, so characteristic of the notorious Tsarist anti-Semitic forgery known as the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and subsequently of the Nazi and Fascist propaganda of the 1930s and 1940s - and which feature prominently also in the contemporary anti-Semitic literature in the Soviet Union and elsewhere - found their echo and reflection also in some statements of Arab representatives. Thus, for example, the representative of Iraq, Mr. Haddawi, told the Third Committee, on 26 October 1983, that "the Jewish people ... called itself the chosen people and sometimes called others 'enemies'" (A/C.3/38/SR.21, p. 5).

In the same vein of deriding the Jewish people, the representative of Syria, Mr. Adhami, told the Fourth Committee, at its meeting of 14 October 1981, "what he called a 'Jewish story' of a man who went to his rabbi to enter the birthdate of his son. The man asked which date he should give, last year or this year. Why not give the true date? the rabbi asked the man. 'I didn't think of that', the father answered. The Syrian delegate said the story portrayed the 'Jewish mentality of the Zionist delegate'". (United Nations Press Release GA/T/2350 of 14 October 1981, p. 8; the passage does not appear in the summary record of the meeting in question (A/C.4/36/SR.8).)

Throughout all these years, the State of Israel and the Jewish people have been under no illusions with regard to the true intent and purpose of the "anti-Zionist" and "anti-Israel" outbursts at the United Nations and elsewhere. It has been well understood by decent people everywhere that behind the "anti-Zionist" and "anti-Israel" tirades there lurks anti-Semitism, pure and simple, and that "anti-Israel" and "anti-Zionist" slogans are being used by closet and crypto-anti-Semites to disguise their true intentions. As the various samples referred to above, as well as others, abundantly demonstrate, the mask has now finally fallen and the ugly face of anti-Semitism - one of the oldest and vilest manifestations of racism and religious intolerance - has been clearly revealed. It has thus become evident again that the alleged distinction between "anti-Zionism" (and "anti-Israelism") on the one hand, and anti-Semitism, on the other, has no basis in reality. Israel has repeatedly warned that this distinction - which has been asserted by Israel's enemies at the United Nations - is in fact merely a crude attempt to disguise their enmity against the Jewish people behind a smokescreen of antagonism to Zionism, which is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people.

That the phenomenon of open anti-Semitism has reached such alarming proportions at the United Nations has to be ascribed to a large degree to the shocking complacency displayed in this regard in recent years. The absence of reaction to the numerous anti-Semitic outbursts at the United Nations has been construed by many an anti-Semite as indifference amounting to acquiescence at best.

In my letter of 21 December 1978 to the Secretary-General (A/33/545), I had already warned against this degradation of the United Nations and of the ideals for which it stands. Referring specifically to the virulently anti-Semitic exhibit which the terrorist PLO had been permitted to mount under United Nations auspices on United Nations premises, I stated on that occasion that:

"It is absolutely unacceptable that little more than three decades after the victory of the United Nations over the Nazis, an exhibition, reminiscent of the worst kind of Nazi incitement against the Jewish people, should have been entertained in the Headquarters of the United Nations."

Less than three months later, on 16 March 1979, the then Permanent Representative of Jordan, Mr. Nuseibeh, told the Security Council:

"Has the world been polarized into an omnipotent race and subservient Gentiles born into this world to serve the aims of the 'master race'? We, the Gentiles, are several billion human souls, and yet how much weight, I wonder, do we carry in the councils of some of the mighty?" (S/PV.2128, p. 63).

Speaking in the General Assembly, on 8 December 1980, the same speaker claimed that there is a Jewish cabal "which controls, manipulates and exploits the rest of humanity by controlling the money and wealth of the world" (A/35/PV.86, pp. 38-40).

In the same diatribe, Mr. Nuseibeh stated:

"People like Lord Rothschild every day, in iron-clad secrecy, decide and flash round the world how high the price of gold should be on each particular day .... The United States ... has a national income of upwards of \$2,000 billion per annum, and, while millions of hard-working, God-fearing Americans are unemployed, the Zionists own a lion's share of that great abundance" (*ibid.*).

When these and similar odious charges were made, Israel repeatedly warned that they were nothing but out-and-out anti-Semitism of the worst and most virulent kind. Israel also stated that by a curious paradox, representatives at the United Nations enjoy an immunity to spread anti-Semitic invective with an openness and in a way which would not be tolerated in any decent society. (See, for example, A/35/PV.89, pp. 53-57.)

Regrettably, Israel's repeated warnings, both from the rostrum of the General Assembly and through a series of letters addressed to the Secretary-General in recent years, have gone unheeded.

As already indicated, no less serious than these anti-Semitic outbursts in themselves has been the absence of any reaction to them on the part of the presiding officers and of virtually the entire membership of the organization. In particular, it is difficult to refrain from giving expression to a sense of profound dismay at the studious silence observed at the United Nations by those representatives whose countries in the 1930s and 1940s were directly involved in the anti-Jewish persecutions of the Nazi-Fascist era. Similarly, it is difficult to comprehend the silence of those representatives whose countries during that period either directly experienced or otherwise witnessed the pernicious effects of such anti-Semitic behaviour and who surely must know the terrible dangers to the very fabric of civilized society inherent in a permissive attitude towards such manifestations of racism and religious intolerance.

There can be little doubt that the escalation at the United Nations of anti-Semitic rhetoric in recent years - whether direct or in the form of "anti-Zionist" and "anti-Israel" campaigns and resolutions - has been largely responsible for the recrudescence of anti-Semitism world-wide and for the resulting numerous acts of anti-Jewish violence in recent years. Indeed, through the barrage of "anti-Israel" and "anti-Zionist" resolutions adopted at the United Nations in recent years - culminating in the obscene proposition contained in the infamous General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 that Zionism was a form of racism - the United Nations, to its lasting shame, has been converted into one of the foremost contemporary forums of international anti-Semitism. The endless broadsides of hate and vituperation launched against Israel and the Jewish people from platforms of the United Nations, or under its aegis, have found their echo and their mainstay in the official pronouncements of Governments and in the distortions of the media in many countries.

The grotesque character of this situation surely cannot escape the attention of those who still remember that this Organization is the product of the great wartime coalition that came into being to fight the forces of Nazism and Fascism. Those forces of evil and hatred had singled out the Jewish people as their prime target. It is a cruel and chilling irony of fate that less than four decades after Nazism and Fascism were defeated - with the participation of more than one and a half million Jews who fought in the ranks of the Allied armies to eradicate this scourge of mankind - the United Nations should have become the favourite arena for airing with impunity one of the main tenets of the genocidal Nazi-Fascist legacy.

What is at stake, Excellency, is the very ability of the United Nations to survive as the Organization envisaged by its founders and by the Charter of the United Nations. If anti-Semitism is permitted to continue to rear its ugly head at the United Nations, this certainly cannot augur well for the Organization. Countenancing by the United Nations of such behaviour and rhetoric must unavoidably expose the United Nations to the well-justified contempt and revulsion of decent people and civilized public opinion everywhere. If the United Nations is unable to put a stop to the spread of this vicious phenomenon, it will be used for the perpetration of the very evil it was designed to combat. It will then have irreparably betrayed its own *raison d'être*.

As the representative of Israel - the State in which the Jewish people has restored its sovereignty after 18 centuries of exile, persecution and martyrdom unparalleled in the annals of mankind - I earnestly urge Your Excellency, in the year after we marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to condemn unequivocally these vile manifestations of anti-Semitic racism and religious intolerance, alongside all manifestations of racism and religious discrimination and prejudice. I also emphatically appeal to Your Excellency to take all the necessary steps to ensure that such manifestations of bigotry do not recur at the United Nations and that, in its activities, the Organization ceases to violate the principles and ideals enshrined in its own Charter.

As the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states in its preamble, "wars begin in the minds of men". By the same token, racism, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, prejudice and bigotry also start in the minds of men. Consequently, racist verbal violence cannot and should not be dismissed as inconsequential; racist physical violence has invariably been preceded by racist verbal violence. It has been rightly observed that the terrible calamity that befell the Jewish people within the living memory of many of us had begun with defamation. It is therefore essential that the ugly and vicious anti-Semitic rhetoric at the United Nations be confronted without delay, in a firm and unambiguous manner. For, as we have all been admonished by Edmund Burke some two centuries ago: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing".

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under the items entitled: "Report of the Economic and Social Council", "The situation in the Middle East", "Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination", "Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance" and "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization".

(Signed) Yehuda Z. BLUM  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Israel  
to the United Nations

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