United Nations Apologists for Deadly Palestinian Violence

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On the same day as Palestinians torched a site containing Joseph’s Tomb in the Palestinian Authority-controlled West Bank city of Nablus, the United Nations Security Council held an “emergency” session to address the escalating violence in Jerusalem and the West Bank.  The October 16th meeting was called by Jordan, a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has expressed his willingness to meet with the Palestinian leadership and resume peace talks immediately without preconditions, in order to bring calm to the region. The Palestinian leadership’s response was to have Jordan act as their promoter-in-chief and call on the Security Council to hold the “emergency” meeting for the purpose essentially of condemning Israel and rationalizing the Palestinian killing spree.

Mr. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, briefed the Security Council on the latest developments. Although strongly condemning the attack on Joseph’s Tomb, Mr. Zerihoun tried to explain away the wave of Palestinian violence in general as stemming from the “persistence of the occupation and the diminishing prospects of achieving Palestinian aspirations for statehood.” He also threw in the “continued and expanding settlement activities” as contributing “to the anger and frustration driving the violence we are seeing today.” Finally, he added the widespread unfounded fears in the Muslim world that “Israel is aiming to change the status quo at the holy sites.”

There is no justification whatsoever for random stabbings of innocent civilians including children, women and the elderly. But that is exactly what Palestinian assailants have been doing while the so-called “international community” looks the other way. Israel has every right to use whatever means of restraint it deems necessary to protect its own civilians from such harm. Indeed, that is the first obligation of any responsible state – to defend its own citizens.  Yet vacuous phrases such as “collective punishment” and “violations of international law” are thrown at Israel for trying to contain the violence instigated by Palestinian thugs.

Mr. Zerihoun acknowledged the “impact of social media and irresponsible rhetoric” in playing “a dramatic role in escalation.” However, he failed to reference the incontrovertible evidence that the abuse of social media and irresponsible rhetoric to incite violence are coming almost exclusively from the Palestinian side, not the Israeli side. Instead, Mr. Zerihoun disgracefully indulged in the UN’s typical moral equivalence narrative, saying that “both sides have much to be blamed for.”

As just one example of the incitement to violence appearing on social media posted by Palestinians or their sympathizers, the following tweet was posted recently under the hashtag “The Intifada Has Started”: “There is no greater reward in Islam than the one given for jihad, and there is no greater reward than the one given for #Slaughtering\_the\_Jews… Kill them wherever you find them.” (Source: The Middle East Media Research Institute [MEMRI])

**Tutorials on how to most effectively stab Jews to death**

There are also tutorials on how to most effectively stab Jews to death. For instance, in a tweet posted from an individual in Gaza under the hashtag ” Poison The Knife Before You Stab,” the following ghastly advice was offered: “Dip [your] knife in an active poison before carrying out [a stabbing], so that even if the knife does not manage [to kill], the poison will do the job.” (Source: MEMRI)

Another gives elaborate instructions on how to stab a Jew, illustrated by a graphic anatomical diagram with protruding knives.

The issue used on social media to fire up the Palestinian assailants involves the false rumors about alleged Israeli plans to change the status quo at the Temple Mount or, as Muslims refer to it, Haram al-Sharif. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly stated that Israel is fully committed to maintaining the status quo at the compound. But that has not stopped exploitation of the false rumors by social media and by Palestinian leaders including Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Abbas’s lies and incitements to violence

Here is one recent example of the big lie propagated by Abbas, delivered in a speech on Palestinian TV on October 14th:

“These days Israel’s hostile attack on our Palestinian people, its soil and its holy sites is intensifying, and the savage racism in its ugly form adds hideousness and repulsiveness to the occupation. These pose a threat to peace and stability and herald the lighting of the fuse of a religious conflict that will spark an all-consuming conflagration not only in the [Middle East] region but in the entire world.”

“We say explicitly and unequivocally that we will not agree to a change in the status quo in the blessed Al-Aqsa and we will not allow Israel to carry out any plot intended to damage its sanctity and its purely Islamic [character]. The right [over Al-Qasa] is our exclusive right – Palestinians and Muslims everywhere. We seek rights, justice and peace. We have attacked nobody and we will not agree to attacks on our people, our homeland and our holy sites.” (Source: MEMRI)

Abbas also lied in accusing Israel of “executing” in cold blood a 13 year old “child.” The Palestinian boy is in fact alive and being treated in an Israeli hospital. And he was no innocent victim caught in the crossfire. He had stabbed an Israeli boy his own age who was riding along on his bicycle.

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Abbas’s lies and incitements to violence are to be expected. That’s what Palestinian leaders do. However, even worse, the Palestinian leaders are getting cover for their lies from the so-called “international community” as represented at the United Nations. For example, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein blamed the escalating tension on various Israeli actions, including “the ongoing settlement expansion” and “recent restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on Palestinian worshippers wishing to access the Al-Aqsa compound.”

While other UN officials such as Deputy Secretary Tayé-Brook Zerihoun denounce the use of social media to incite or glorify violence, there is disturbing evidence that personnel working at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are guilty of doing just that.  UN Watch has issued a report, which it sent to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and UNRWA chief Pierre Krähenbühl, compiling examples of hate-filled social media posts by individuals claiming to work for UNRWA. Here is a sampling from the UN Watch report:

1. “Stab Zionist Dogs” - caption to a cartoon posted by self-describe d “Projects Support Assistant at UNRWA”
2. Video demonstrating use of guns, knives and Molotov cocktails – posted by individual who said he “works at UNRWA”
3. Video of “mosque sermon in which Sheikh Abu Rajab pulled out a knife and, with violent stabbing motions, exhorted Palestinians to murder Jews in the name of Islam” – posted by self-described “teacher at UNRWA”
4. “Mohammed Assaf, UNRWA’s ‘Youth Ambassador’ and most famous personality — an ‘Arab Idol’ winner who is a key fundraiser and face of the organization, appointed by UNRWA’s Commissioner-General — has been using his UN imprimatur to glorify violence throughout his Facebook timeline” including display of “three Palestinian youths who attacked Israeli Jews.” The Palestinians are referred to as “shahid,” which means martyrs.

### UNRWA might as well change its name to the Palestinian Propaganda Agency

UNRWA might as well change its name to the Palestinian Propaganda Agency. Originally established as a temporary relief agency for displaced Palestinians with the objective of resettling them in communities willing to receive them, UNRWA has morphed into a permanent Palestinian advocacy fixture. Its clientele today are some 5 million registered Palestine “refugees,” most of whom are descendants separated by several generations from the actual refugees who left their homes when Israel was created and who were supposed to have been resettled and integrated into their new communities. UNRWA intends to stay in business until as many of the 5 million so-called “refugees” as possible can return “home” from Jordan where they are already citizens of that Palestinian majority country and from Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. “Home” to UNRWA and its clientele is not limited to just a new state bordering Israel along essentially the pre-1967 lines. It also means the “refugees’” claimed “right of return” to lands encompassing pre-1967 Israel.

Against that backdrop, consider UNRWA’s rationalization for the recent spurt of Palestinian violence:

“The root causes of the conflict, among them the Israeli occupation, must be addressed. Across the occupied Palestinian territory there is a pervasive sense of hopelessness and despair resulting from the denial of rights and dignity… An entire generation of Palestinians is at risk.”

UNRWA officially condemned Israel’s response to the violence initiated by Palestinian assailants, who have been lionized by self-proclaimed UNRWA personnel in their social media postings. When Palestinian assailants die or are injured after Israeli security forces respond to quell the violence and take down the murderous aggressors, the Palestinians, we are told,  were simply acting on their understandable anger born of “hopelessness” and “frustration.” Israeli security forces are accused of using “excessive” force even as they themselves are attacked when trying to defend their own lives and the lives of innocent civilians.

Violence is not the Palestinians’ last resort, born of frustration after seeing that nothing else has worked. It is the Palestinians’ first reflexive action in dealing with their own self-inflicted plight. The Palestinians regularly lie to the world with their propaganda campaign aimed at exonerating themselves of all responsibility and at delegitimizing the Jewish State of Israel. The United Nations establishment serves as their apologist and enabler