**Mexican Diplomat to be Honored for Challenging UNESCO on Anti-Israel Vote**

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The Mexican diplomat who was fired from his ambassador position for walking out an anti-Israel vote by a United Nations agency will be honored by the American Sephardic Federation.

Andres Roemer, who is Jewish, will be awarded the International Sephardic Leadership Award at a ceremony on May 21 at the Center for Jewish History in New York. The event will honor the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Jerusalem during the Six Day War.

“When confronted by the recent UNESCO resolution that sought to erase Jerusalem, Israel’s Jewish and Christian history, Ambassador Roemer knowingly risked his position to voice and vote his conscience,” read the federation’s announcement.

In October, the Latin American diplomat risked his position by walking out of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization vote at its headquarters in Paris — leaving his deputy to cast the country’s vote — in a personal protest against the UNESCO resolution denying Jewish ties to Jerusalem.

“While the resolution still passed, Ambassador Roemer did not forget Jerusalem and his moral courage convinced several countries, including his own, to seek to reverse the resolution’s ill-considered position against historical truth and the possibility of peace,” according to the announcement.

For not following the instructions he had received from the Mexican government, he was fired a few days later.

“For not having informed diligently and with meticulousness of the context in which the voting process occurred, for reporting to representatives of countries other than Mexico about the sense of his vote, and for making public documents and official correspondence subject to secrecy,” read the official statement released.

Before being fired, Roemer apparently contemplated resigning his post, but was urged not to by Israel’s ambassador Carmel Shama HaCohen, who wrote him a personal letter praising him as a friend of the Jewish state.

Mexico ended up changing its vote from “in favor” to abstain on the resolution, sponsored by several Arab countries, which referred to the Temple Mount and Western Wall — Judaism’s holiest sites — only by their Muslim names, and condemned Israel as “the occupying power” for various actions taken in both places.

A week after Roemer was fired, vandals broke glass windows, smashed furniture, and painted graffiti on the walls of Mexico City’s Agudas Ajim synagogue in two separate attacks after local Jewish leaders launched a public campaign against the UNESCO vote.

Mexican Consul General in New York, Diego Gomez-Pickering, is expected to attend Roemer’s award ceremony on May 21, according to the federation.