Suit Against UN for Illegal Construction in Jerusalem

March 27, 2017

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Arutz Sheva

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/227371>

The NGO Regavim filed a petition against the United Nations to the Supreme Court Monday. The organization accused the UN of carrying out illegal construction in Jerusalem.

According to Regavim: "In recent years the UN has taken advantage of its immunity by carrying out a series of illegal construction projects in the compound on property which is State owned."

Among the illegal construction featured in the petition are the structural changes the UN illegally made to a historic building which dates back to the 1930s, the illegal construction of a multi-story building, the construction of an illegal storage facility, and the installation of an illegal petrol station for UN personnel usage.

The petition also targeted the Jerusalem Municipality and the Israel Lands Authority for allowing the UN to abuse its immunity in this fashion and demanded "the implementation of Section 212 of the Planning and Building Law, which permits the demolition of a building even if the party responsible for the violations is no longer living or has some form of immunity."

Meir Deutch Regavim's Director of Policy and Knesset Relations said today that "since the liberation of Jerusalem the UN has been given the privilege of using the allotted property as guests of the State of Israel. But the illegal work on the historic building, and the additional illegal building on State Land without the proper permits continues. The work in fact is causing environmental damage to surrounding areas."

Deutch added, "if the tenant [the UN] doesn't know how to behave it seems that the time has come for the government of the State of Israel to find a replacement tenant.' It's no secret the UN abuses Israel at every opportunity."