The U.N.’s eroded legitimacy

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At first glance, the recent G-77 gathering seemed like a Saturday Night Live parody of the UN’ s largest bloc. The G-77 is a coalition of 134 developing nations, created to promote the economic interests of its members and create a significant negotiating and voting bloc within the United Nations. The new chairman, with rehearsed political correctness to smiles and applause, called on “all states” (except his) to end the “epidemic” of terrorism and “work with us to put an end to this scourge.”   
  
The speaker was Palestinian Authority President and PLO chairman Mahmoud Abbas – infamous inciter and propagator of violence and terrorism against the sovereign State of Israel, and bank-roller of Palestinian terrorism to the tune of more than $138 million to terrorist prisoners and ex-convicts in 2018 alone. This PA program is commonly known as “pay for slay.” Through this program, Palestinians who commit acts of terrorism against Israelis and Americans are rewarded with lifetime financial benefits. Should the perpetrator die in the commission of his or her act of terror, their family then receives financial compensation.

Abbas’s chairmanship, which violates G-77 principles and the UN Charter, is the latest blight on the UN’s eroded legitimacy and credibility. Created to safeguard world peace, security, human rights, and the sovereign equality of states by peaceful dispute resolution, the UN has been hijacked by an antisemitic, terror-tainted political agenda – discrediting itself by violating its own charter. Mahmoud Abbas is himself a terrorist who openly calls for the destruction of Israel and the United States. While Abbas is serving as the chairman of the G-77, the Palestinians will be able to cosponsor proposals and amendments, make statements and raise procedural motions, and use every opportunity to punish Israel for some manufactured grievance. With Abbas at the helm there will be no peace with Israel. “Peace-building,” he says, “is treason.”     
  
How did this sorry state of affairs develop? And what can be done by those states which are committed to the UN’s ethical, democratic founding principles?   
  
Antisemitism at the UN did not begin randomly, but as a deliberate strategy. Some historians believe it started after Israel won the Six Day War in June 1967, damaging Russian prestige at home and abroad. The Soviets, enraged by Israel’s defeat of its proxies Egypt and Syria, retaliated, aiming its Cold War weapons of propaganda and disinformation against the Jewish state by a state-sponsored vilification campaign against Israel and Jews. It then did the same at the UN, where it forged a political alliance with Arab and Third World states. Starting in 1969, the General Assembly produced multiple resolutions affirming the “inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.”   
  
RUSSIA USES language for totalitarian social control, said historian Joel Fishman. Following the Six Day War, the selected vocabulary was published in the Communist Party newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda in October 1967: “Zionism is dedicated to genocide, racism, treachery, aggression and annexation... attributes of fascists.” In 1975, the Soviet-Arab bloc passed GA Resolution 3379, “Zionism is Racism.”  
  
But historian Joel Fishman said Resolution 3379 was brewing in 1964 – before the Six Day War. In March of that year, the US proposed that the UN recognize antisemitism as a form of racism along with apartheid and Nazism. The Soviets stonewalled because they were, after all, antisemites who persecuted Soviet Jews, Fishman said. They threatened the US to drop the proposal or face a Russian amendment condemning Zionism and Nazism – thus equating the two.

In October 1965, the US pushed an amendment to the final draft that condemned antisemitism, but the Soviets insisted on adding “Zionism” to the forms of racism to condemn. After a bitter debate, a compromise struck all references to racism except apartheid. Thus, the Soviets succeeded in excluding antisemitism as racist without leaving behind a voting record – which could augur future charges against its own state-sponsored antisemitism.  
  
The 1965 debates critically impacted evolving world opinion and international law on Israel and Zionism. “From then on, it was almost impossible to raise antisemitism as a human rights issue,” Fishman said. Thus, Soviet political propaganda became a bridge to today’s global outbreak.  
  
For the Soviets, the Cold War never really ended. Recent revelations of their digital disinformation and propaganda campaigns are well-publicized.  
  
But neither has the UN been a passive instrument of Soviet manipulation. Israeli Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror recalled how UN secretary-general U Thant endorsed Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser’s request to withdraw UN forces from the Sinai. Nasser replaced them with Egyptian military divisions, helping to spark the Six Day War. And that’s just one example of UN complicity against Israel.  
  
Israel’s concerted relationship-building with individual nations, and delegations of visiting UN ambassadors to see and experience the “real” Israel firsthand, are part of the solution to return to the UN Charter principle of friendly relations between nations. Likewise, while keeping an eye on Russia, Western democracies should continue to strengthen democratic blocs of nations to defend against the real “scourge.”   
  
At all costs, the truth must be published. What does Israel or the US gain from “dialogue” in a tilted UN that could be better served by bilateral or Western-bloc diplomacy?