Report: Israel Asked UK to Vote in Favor of UN Gaza Resolution

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A British newspaper claimed Monday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu asked his UK counterpart to vote in favor of the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution on the Gaza conflict on Friday, which accused Israel of possible war crimes.

Netanyahu also reportedly asked German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other unnamed allies to back the UNHCR resolution, which maintained Israel and Palestinian terror groups may have violated international law during last summer’s 50-day conflict.

According to the Jewish Chronicle report, Jerusalem was concerned that if the resolution was shot down, a reformulated draft would be tougher on the Jewish state.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry all but denied the allegations Monday, saying it was opposed to the resolution, as stated in Jerusalem’s official response.

British Prime Minister David Cameron believed the request was “pure madness,” a source close to the prime minister said, but went along with it.

The [UNHCR resolution was passed on Friday](https://mail.hrvoices.org/OWA/redir.aspx?C=yXx1lSvc9UiBEjF2ZD5pHCZpXCZ-i9IIhVWq1wF6lS3v4m_DJ2kn0D_XCSFNrD4GTKy16KZafQc.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.timesofisrael.com%2funhrc-endorses-gaza-report-with-european-support%2f), with full European support. Forty-one of the 47 UNHRC council members voted in favor of the resolution, including the eight sitting European Union members: France, Germany, the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Latvia and Estonia. Only the US, which last week slammed the report as biased, voted against.

“Both the Israelis and the Brits will deny this,” the UK source told the Jewish Chronicle. “It sounds bonkers. But it’s true.”

The resolution was a softened version of a Palestinian draft, reportedly reworked after European officials raised concerns.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry said it opposed the resolution in a statement, but conceded that Jerusalem had asked its allies to ensure a harsher formulation was avoided.

“Israel announced to all the members of the Human Rights Council that it is strongly opposed to the resolution that was adopted, as was expressed in the State of Israel’s formal response,” it said. “At the same time, Israel asked the members of the council to ensure that the proposed text is not made harsher.”

The resolution made no mention of Hamas or of its role in the conflict, though it stressed that all those responsible for human rights violations must be held to account and effective remedies should be given to all victims, including reparations.

It also recommended the UN General Assembly take on the matter “until it is satisfied that appropriate action” is taken to implement the report’s recommendations.

The decision by the council has no binding effect, but adds to the pressure for war crimes prosecutions before the International Criminal Court.

Israel’s representative in Geneva, Eviatar Manor, on Friday called the resolution an “anti-Israeli manifesto,” and referenced a classic children’s tale by proclaiming that in the case of the UNHRC, “the emperor has no clothes.”

He said the resolution “distorts the intention of the authors of the report by completely ignoring alleged violations of [international law] committed by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups.”

European countries said they were disappointed the resolution didn’t explicitly mention rockets fired by Hamas toward civilian areas in Israel, but elected to back it nonetheless.