The UN’s horrid Holocaust hypocrisy

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Thirteen years ago, the United Nations General Assembly designated Jan. 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, an occasion for its member nations to commemorate Nazi Germany’s murder of 6 million Jews and millions of others. The UN also urged nations to use the occasion to educate their citizens about the horrors of the Holocaust to help prevent future acts of genocide.

Yet in the intervening years, across Europe and worldwide, we have seen the rise of extremist politics, from the National Front Party in France to extremist electoral gains in Austria, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands, much of it fueled by anti-immigration rhetoric and intolerance, but also by neo-Nazism and the very same anti-Semitic language and tropes that gave rise to Nazi Germany and the Holocaust.

During the French elections last year, for example, National Front leader and presidential candidate Marine Le Pen denied France was responsible for the infamous 1942 roundup and deportation of 13,000 French Jews, reopening old wounds. In Venezuela President Nicolás Maduro, who is increasingly allying with Iran, said that “Israel doesn’t kill in error, it kills in horror.”

Meanwhile, the European Forum on Anti-Semitism, a watchdog group founded in 2008, reported 767 anti-Semitic incidents across the continent in the first half of 2017, a 30% rise from the previous year and the highest number it has since recorded . In Caracas, Venezuela, Foreign Policy magazine reported increasing instances of graffiti with phrases like “be patriotic: kill a Jew.”

Many have raised their voices about this threat — but not the UN. The organization I founded 35 years ago, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, has seen first-hand the impact of a resurgence in anti-Semitism.

Since late 2014, the fellowship has helped nearly 12,000 Jews from 26 nations — from Europe to Latin America — immigrate to Israel, some simply out of fear that they can no longer live safely in their native lands. We also provided more than $3.6 million in 2017 alone in security grants to help protect Jewish schools, synagogues and community centers in 30 Jewish communities worldwide against growing violence.

Millions of our Christian friends of Israel and the Jewish people have been more than happy to help us protect and save endangered Jews based on the idea that we not only remember, but we act. But on issues of rising anti-Semitism and extremism, the UN — the very international body that annually calls on its members to do more to prevent another Holocaust — does nothing.

In fact, the UN General Assembly has become a forum for singling out and targeting Israel — the Jewish state created so that Jews would never again be defenseless. In 2017, the General Assembly passed at least 18 resolutions against Israel, while the UN’s Education, Science and Cultural Organization passed a resolution ignoring Christian and Jewish historic ties to holy sites in Jerusalem.

So on the one hand the UN pays lip service to commemorating the Holocaust, but on the other has allowed itself to become a politicized weapon against the Jewish state and has done nothing to combat the global rise in anti-Semitism. But now, ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we at The Fellowship call on the UN to truly live up to the ideals of this day — that the best way to remember the Holocaust is to act and seek to prevent this evil from recurring.

First, we urge Congress to enact a 2017 bill by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fl.) and co-sponsored by three other senators, the Countering Anti-Semitism and Anti-Israel Activities at the United Nations Act, to stop anti-Semitism in the UN. That act would leverage funding by the single largest sponsor of the UN — the U.S., at 22% — to force the UN to put a halt to a wide range of anti-Semitic activities.

Second, the UN must put real meaning behind International Holocaust Remembrance Day by enacting a special committee to address the global rise in contemporary anti-Semitism and to recommend measures from education to public policy to mitigate this global danger.

The UN that today continually seeks to undermine the very Jewish state that was designed to help defend the Jewish people from destruction, while supposedly commemorating the Holocaust, is a world forum for hypocrisy and double standards. It must clean up its own act to make its annual Holocaust commemoration truly meaningful.