**Iran’s President to Speak During Durban III in New York City**

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While the United Nations is doing its best to legitimize the forthcoming Durban III “anti-racism” bash, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appears intent on blowing the U.N.’s cover. Each year for the past five years, Ahmadinejad has chosen to speak on the opening day of the General Assembly’s so-called general debate, when all the presidents, prime ministers, and foreign ministers annually descend on New York City. According to a U.N. schedule, however, this year the Iranian president will speak on a different day – the same day as Durban III. This one-day conference is the General Assembly’s 10th anniversary celebration of the hatefest held back in 2001 in South Africa, scheduled for New York City on September 22, 2011.

Americans are used to Ahmadinejad speaking at the U.N. – on their dime, since a quarter of the tab for the global platform is coming out of U.S. taxpayer pockets. They are also familiar with the content of his remarks – having heard his unadulterated hate speech every year since 2005. In 2010, he treated the audience to a speech claiming that 9/11 was an inside job “to save the Zionist regime.” In 2009, he complained that “a small minority dominates the politics, economy and culture of major parts of the world by its complicated networks.” But this year he will be able to dress up his brand of anti-Semitism as part and parcel of championing the Durban Declaration, a document which charges Israel – and only Israel, among 192 states – with racism.

Ahmadinejad was the sole world leader to show up for Durban II, a 2009 meeting which took place in Geneva. He was not going to let the opportunity provided by Durban III go to waste. His sense of entitlement is hardly surprising, given that the U.N. has elected Iran a vice president of the General Assembly starting in September.

Over the summer, the contours of Durban III have slowly emerged. The day will begin with a select group of speakers. They include Qatar, the president of the General Assembly. The head of Qatar’s delegation at Durban I stated that “all the Israeli heinous violations are justified as a means to bring back every Jew to a land that they raped from its legitimate owners…”

Opening speakers will also include South Africa – lead promoter and home turf of the Durban fiasco. And there will be U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, herself a native of Durban, whopromised the mayor, following her 2008 appointment, to rescue the city's good name.

In addition, one non-governmental organization “active in the field of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance” will be given an early speaking slot. From among the hundreds of thousands who might qualify, the U.N. has devised a selection plan – NGOs will be chosen by states on “a no-objection basis.” That means leaders in the U.N.’s anti-racism world, like Ahmadinejad, will hold a veto.

Other NGOs can still attend a series of subsequent “round tables.” But first, they have to nominate themselves by completing a questionnaire that asks, for instance, was your group “accredited” to Durban I? The vast majority of accredited Durban I NGOs were the same gang that participated in the Durban “NGO Forum” and who voted to declare that Zionism is racism and Israel is an apartheid state.

The NGO questionnaire also requires NGOs to specify “concrete activities” taken by their organization to implement the Durban Declaration. In other words, NGOs that have actively rejected the Declaration’s paragraph on Palestinian victims of Israeli racism need not apply.

Organizers have decided that all participants in the round tables, states and NGOs alike, are “invited to make brief remarks that do not exceed three minutes.” Most self-respecting heads of state take three minutes to settle in. Ahmadinejad has responded by simply signing up to speak for 30 minutes in the segment directly after the opening session in the General Assembly Hall.

This week the U.N. secretariat officially opened the sign-up sheet for wannabe round table speakers, which is being maintained in accordance with the official status of the speaker and “on a first-come, first-served basis.” Then, at 6 p.m., they will all reconvene to adopt a “political declaration” intended to crown the Durban Declaration with the global legitimacy that has so long eluded it.

That is, unless decent people and democracies finally figure out that a club to which Ahmadinejad pines to belong is not one they should want to join.