**UN chief orders report accusing Israel of ‘apartheid’ pulled from web**

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By: Times of Israel Staff

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http://www.timesofisrael.com/un-chief-requests-report-accusing-israel-of-apartheid-be-pulled-from-web/

UN  Secretary-General Antonio Guterres requested the removal of a report [accusing Israel of apartheid](http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-fumes-as-un-board-censures-apartheid-and-racial-domination/) from the website of the UN body that published it, Reuters reported Friday, citing an unnamed official in the international body.

Guterres had previously distanced himself from the report by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which is comprised of 18 Arab countries.

The report was still available online Friday morning US-time, but was later removed.

The United States on Wednesday had demanded that the report be withdrawn altogether.

“The United States is outraged by the report,” US Ambassador Nikki Haley said in a statement. “The United Nations secretariat was right to distance itself from this report, but it must go further and withdraw the report altogether.”

Based in Beirut, ESCWA lists the state of Palestine as a full member, and works to strengthen cooperation and promote development.

“That such anti-Israel propaganda would come from a body whose membership nearly universally does not recognize Israel is unsurprising,” said Haley.

Haley has accused the United Nations of being biased against Israel and has vowed as President Donald Trump’s envoy to staunchly defend Israel at the world body.

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric has said “the report as it stands does not reflect the views of the secretary-general” and was done without consultations with the UN secretariat.

Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon slammed the commission on Wednesday for releasing the report which accuses Israel of establishing “an apartheid regime that oppresses and dominates the Palestinian people as a whole.”

Danon said the “attempt to smear and falsely label the only true democracy in the Middle East by creating a false analogy is despicable and constitutes a blatant lie.”

“It comes as no surprise that an organization headed by an individual who has called for boycotts against Israel, and compared our democracy to the most terrible regimes of the twentieth century, would publish such a report. We call on the Secretary-General to disassociate the UN from this biased and deceitful report,” he said in reference to ESCWA Executive Secretary Rima Khalaf, a Jordanian national.

The report published Wednesday, [titled “Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid,”](https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/uploads/israeli-practices-palestinian-people-apartheid-occupation-executive-summary-english.pdf) says that “available evidence establishes beyond a reasonable doubt that Israel is guilty of policies and practices that constitute the crime of apartheid as legally defined in instruments of international law.”

The Beirut-based commission slammed Israel’s Law of Return, “conferring on Jews worldwide the right to enter Israel and obtain Israeli citizenship regardless of their countries of origin and whether or not they can show links to Israel-Palestine, while withholding any comparable right from Palestinians, including those with documented ancestral homes in the country,” as a policy of “demographic engineering” meant to uphold Israel’s status as the Jewish state.

The report further accuses Israel of “practices” that have fragmented Palestinians, arguing that it is the “principal method by which Israel imposes an apartheid regime.”

“This fragmentation operates to stabilize the Israeli regime of racial domination over the Palestinians and to weaken the will and capacity of the Palestinian people to mount a unified and effective resistance,” the report reads.

The report was compiled by Richard Falk, a Princeton professor emeritus with a long track record of vehemently anti-Israel rhetoric who previously was the UN’s Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Palestine, and by Virginia Tilley, an American political scientist who authored the book “The One-State Solution” in 2005.

Haley described Falk as “a man who has repeatedly made biased and deeply offensive comments about Israel and espoused ridiculous conspiracy theories.”