**UN Human Rights Council Says Israel Moral Equal of Hamas**

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Arrest Benjamin Netanyahu and any other “suspected” Israeli war criminals wherever and whenever you can get your hands on them. That is the shocking bottom line of a scandalous report released today from the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva.

The report emanates from a board of inquiry the Council created in the midst of the 2014 Gaza war. In legalese, the call to arrest Israelis either for trial before the International Criminal Court (ICC), or before any court in any country that the U.N. labels “fair,” reads like this:

The board “calls upon the international community … to support actively the work of the International Criminal Court in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory; to exercise universal jurisdiction to try international crimes in national courts; and to comply with extradition requests pertaining to suspects of such crimes to countries where they would face a fair trial.”

To be fair, the U.N. report says this could apply to both parties. In other words, the democratic state of Israel, with a moral and legal obligation to defend its citizens, and the Palestinian attackers bent on genocide are moral equals. Throughout the 183-page tome, the U.N. council “experts” play the old “cycle of violence” trick, otherwise known as “it all started when you hit me back.”

An infamous photo from the Third Reich shows eminent Jewish lawyer Michael Siegel, beaten and bloodied after going to police headquarters on behalf of a Jewish client who had been sent to Dachau, forced to walk through the streets of Munich with a sign around his neck saying: “I am a Jew, but I will never again complain to the police.”

The similarity with today’s U.N. authorities is painfully clear. When Israel responds to Palestinian rocket fire – 750 rockets in 2014 alone prior to the war’s start – or Palestinian terrorists emerging from tunnels into Israel bent on carnage, it is Israel who is accused of war crimes. The only acceptable response, apparently, is to hang their heads or make a U.N. speech.

In part, the war criminal charge is just one more U.N. slander. U.N. meetings routinely consist of wild allegations of Israel committing genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid and crimes against humanity, and frequently analogizing Israelis to Nazis. The anti-Semitic dimension of these attacks is palpable, with constant references to the offense of “Judaization” – the criminalization of the presence of Jews in what is supposed to be Judenrein Arab territory, or what is in practice apartheid Palestine.

While the point of all this hate speech is to demonize and delegitimize Israel, the war crimes label takes the campaign one step further. It deliberately ravages Israel’s right of self-defense.

Self-defense is the essence of sovereignty. In the words of the U.N. Charter: “Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of … self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations …” The United Nations was not intended to be a suicide pact.

But incredibly, the U.N. council report purports to address legal responsibility for casualties in Gaza without once mentioning “self-defense.”

It was exactly the outcome that the council had planned. The Council gave the board of inquiry its marching orders on July 23, 2014, just 16 days into the war. It named June 13, 2014, as the starting line because Palestinian terrorists kidnapped three Israeli teenagers on June 12. It said the Council “condemns … the violations … arising from the Israeli military operations.”Guilty before proven innocent is how it all began.

The board’s first chair, William Schabas, was forced to resign after it was revealed he had been a paid legal adviser to the Palestinian Authority. On his way out the door in February, Schabas admitted the “fact-gathering” was “largely completed,” and yet the U.N. denied the obvious conclusion that the result was irrevocably tainted. Consequently, a Palestinian legal adviser chaired the inquiry for more than half of its 10-month existence.

Impartiality was equally alien to American Mary McGowan Davis, who took over from Schabas. She had already chaired a Council committee about the 2008/09 Gaza war, and she declared in a March 2011 report that Israel's legal system did not meet standards of independence or impartiality, or make “accountability” possible. Those criteria are both the pre-conditions for the ICC’s ability to throw Israelis in prison and the subject matter of her 2014 job.

In short, the Council gave the same person the same assignment on almost the same fact situation … and surprise! Israel is guilty as charged.

In 2011, McGowan Davis described the misogynist, homophobic, anti-free speech, "de facto authorities in Gaza" (i.e. Hamas) – infamous for throwing political opponents off tall buildings – as "generally tolerant of local human rights organizations."

A U.N. “human rights” expert par excellence.

Little wonder that the report is riddled with lies and libels. It claims Israel was “directing attacks against civilians,” and acted “in utter disregard of…the civilian population…”  [It omits that Hamas rejected or violated a total of 11 cease-fires that would have reduced Palestinian casualties by](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/15/world/middleeast/toll-israel-gaza-conflict.html?_r=0) 90 percent. It says the intent of “Palestinian armed groups” in constructing and using tunnels cannot be “conclusively determined” – photographic evidence of weapons caches and terrorists emerging from openings terrifyingly close to Israeli villages to the contrary.

It even goes so far as to lament that Palestinian “armed groups” don’t have more room for their criminal enterprise: “…the obligation to avoid locating military objectives within densely populated areas is not absolute. The small size of Gaza and its population density make it difficult for armed groups to always comply with this requirement.”

The U.N. has reached a new low. The United States should start by resigning from the Human Rights Council effective immediately.