



Jerusalem 6:19
Toronto 7:28

ISRAEL NEWS

A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

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- A guy who did
NOT vote for Bibi
(IsraelNationalNews.com Mar
30)
The writer is a startup advisor,
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Commentary...

The Vaccines are Here Because of Bibi By Hillel Fuld

I've been sitting on this for so long. I can't hold it in anymore. I know I shouldn't, but I can't not.

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said in no uncertain terms that Israel had the vaccine as early as it did and in the quantities that it did because of... Bibi.

Period. Bibi brought them here. Bibi led this country to where it is in terms of the pandemic.

The country has opened up ahead of almost the entire world.

Were there thousands of deaths in Israel? Yes. Is that a horrible tragedy? Absolutely. Was it on Bibi's watch? Yep. Is it his fault? Um, no. It's called a global pandemic.

Bibi got us out of this because of his "Obsession" for saving lives. That's not what I'm saying. That's what the CEO said.

But the "Anti-Bibi camp" can't give him that. Why is it so difficult for people to say that they don't like the man but to give him credit where credit is due?

It's actually unbelievable to me that normal, intelligent people can actually carry out a rational conversation about why Bibi isn't responsible for getting us out of COVID!

It sort of reminds me of the leftist opinion on the conflict.

"The Palestinians want peace. We just have to give them what they want!"

"Um; show me one Palestinian leader who says Israel has a right to exist! One!"

Do you know what "From the river to the sea" means? It means no Israel!

"Weren't they offered a state in 1948 but rejected it because they don't want a state, they want no Israel?"

"No, they don't mean it. They really do want peace!"

"But they say they don't!"

"Don't listen to them. They don't know what they want."

"Ok, got it!"

...

"Bibi isn't responsible for Israel leading the world on the COVID vaccine."

"But he brought the vaccines here before anyone else got them."

"Nope. Not him."

"But the CEO said explicitly that he gave them to Israel because of Bibi!"

"6,000 people died!"

"Yes. It's horrible. And we got out of it before millions more died thanks to the vaccines that Bibi brought."

"Na, we are just guinea pigs testing out the vaccines."

"Um, the whole world is using it now. We just had it first and managed to vaccinate the whole country before other countries even got started."

"Yea, but Bibi has indictments. He needs to go."

"Ever hear of innocent until proven guilty? You know? That rule of a democracy, the thing you mention every chance you get?"

"He's been in power too long."

"Fine. So who can replace him? Gantz who can't get the name of a news reporter right or Lapid who didn't finish high school but lied about it?"

"Anyone but Bibi" and I'm going to go protest to get him out of office even though he got more votes than any other candidate by far! Yes, I'm gonna go yell and shout in the streets while condemning the ultra orthodox for going to a funeral. As long as Bibi goes home."

"Got it. Solid argument."

This is so tiring already. Give it a rest and be grateful that we are getting back to life thanks to our obsessive prime minister.

The Iran-China Deal is Cause for Israeli Concern

By Dan Schueftan

While Israel was busy with the domestic political imbroglio surrounding last week's Knesset elections, a strategic threat that could threaten the country's very existence was developing. If the Iranian-Chinese alliance reaches its full potential, the Middle East could once again be dragged into a new cold war between superpowers.

Soviet support for the late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's radical policies ensured him regional hegemony that threatened Israel for more than a decade. The American attempt to placate the Egyptian leader only made things worse.

Now, massive Chinese assistance to the radical regime in Tehran could provide Iran support in its attempts to impose its hegemony on the region within the framework of another kind of cold war now developing between Washington and Beijing. Such Chinese support, along with U.S. President Joe Biden's conciliatory tone, could pose the kind of strategic threat Israel has not seen since the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

In recent years, Israel has faced an escalating war with Iran in an attempt to prevent it from attaining the kind of power that would allow it to construct massive military infrastructure around its borders. Iran understands that only Israel can thwart its aspirations for hegemony. It has tried to deter Israel by threatening its population centers.

Most Arab regimes have also come to understand that only Israel is strong and determined enough to stop the ayatollahs. While the United States is more important, it is less

reliable and determined. These Arab states were appalled by former U.S. President Barack Obama's approach, but temporarily encouraged by that of his successor, Donald Trump.

Under Biden, they have begun to worry once again. That is the meaning of the Abraham Accords. In many ways, the old, familiar Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been replaced by an Arab-Israeli coalition that opposes Iran and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and is suspicious of the new U.S. administration.

Trump's determined stance offered a comprehensive response to the Iranian challenge. It did not relate merely to the nuclear threat.

A focused response in the form of the 2015 nuclear deal, which effectively bolstered Tehran's position, does not effectively meet the challenge. What is required is a zero-sum game that seeks to harm Iran, mainly in the economic arena, and deters it from conflict by ensuring U.S. support for Israel's military actions it.

When Iran engaged in numerous provocations against Saudi Arabia's oil industry, Trump responded by assassinating Qassem Soleimani, head of the elite Quds Force. Tehran didn't dare offer a suitable response to the painful and humiliating blow it was dealt. But the main tool was sanctions that hit Iran's economy to such an extent that, had they been in place for another four years, the ayatollah regime would have been unlikely to survive.

We are now witnessing something reminiscent of what we saw under the late U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower: deep economic and military involvement by a superpower competing with the U.S. and a conciliatory response from Washington.

China's foreign minister signed a 25-year strategic deal, first drawn up during Chinese President Xi Ji Ping's 2016 visit to Iran, aimed at increasing bilateral trade tenfold, to \$600 billion in 10 years. The deal will provide China with priority access to huge investments in Iranian infrastructure, banking and communications.

The agreement also allows for joint military exercises and military cooperation in the future. In return, China is set to provide

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Iran with vast amounts of oil and gas in the long-term at relatively low rates.

This kind of agreement serves to effectively neutralize U.S. economic pressure, seriously bolsters Iran's bargaining position and could herald a renewed Iranian effort toward regional hegemony. The rate of its realization and its characteristics depend crucially on U.S.-China ties. This is a very important Chinese bargaining chip in the international area—one that was suspended under Trump and pulled out once again under Biden, with significant repercussions for Israel. (Israel Hayom Mar 30)

Yet another Attempt to Sanitize Anti-Zionism By Ben Cohen

Another week, another solemn definition of what does and doesn't constitute anti-Semitism, another quixotic attempt to slow the growing adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of the "longest hatred" by governments, local authorities and civic bodies around the world.

In my last column, I responded to an alternative definition of anti-Semitism—one that attempts to be more forgiving of Israel-hatred—that is currently being touted by a group of progressive Jewish Americans. Any hopes I had of moving to a different subject this week were extinguished by a dear friend who emailed me yet another definition of anti-Semitism that has emerged in recent days, no less troubling than the "Nexus" definition I dealt with last time, and no less deserving of a rapid and critical answer.

On this occasion, the document under discussion is grandly titled the "Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism." As with the "Nexus" text, the preamble to this offering assures the reader that its goal is to properly "identify and confront" anti-Semitism. On closer reading—and again, as with the "Nexus" text—it turns out the true purpose of the "Jerusalem Declaration" is to carve out a space for anti-Zionists to advocate for the elimination of the Jewish state without being accused of anti-Semitism.

This latest attempt to redefine anti-Semitism is essentially composed of two parts. The first part consists of a series of platitudes and truisms about anti-Semitism in general—that anti-Semites see Jews as "linked to the forces of evil," that defacing a Jewish grave with a swastika is one example of an anti-Semitic act, that denying the Holocaust or using code words like "Rothschild" constitutes anti-Semitic speech, and so forth. Since the IHRA definition already deals with these matters quite adequately, what we have here is simply reinventing the wheel.

Divergence from the thrust of the IHRA definition appears only when the subjects of Zionism and Israel are introduced. It's in this second part that the real goal of the "Jerusalem Declaration" (so-called because it was assembled under the auspices of the liberal Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem) is unveiled. Included here are five examples of expressing opposition to Zionism that should not be considered anti-Semitic.

Supporting the "Palestinian demand for justice and the full grant of their political, national, civil and human rights, as encapsulated in international law"—the exact scope of those rights is not elaborated upon—is not considered anti-Semitic. Neither is "evidence-based" criticism of Israel, even when it concludes that the Jewish state is a "settler-colonial" entity and an illegal apartheid state, and nothing more. Nor does the so-called BDS movement that targets Israel alone represents a red flag for the authors of the "Jerusalem Declaration."

Comparison of Israeli policies with the Nazi extermination of 6 million Jews may be regarded as "excessive" or "contentious," but it is "not, in and of itself, anti-Semitic," the document explains. Nor is it anti-Semitic to advocate the ending of Israel as a Jewish, democratic state through political arrangements that, the document says, would "accord full equality to all inhabitants 'between the river and the sea,' whether in two states, a binational state, unitary democratic state, federal state or in whatever form."

It is on this last point that the "Jerusalem Declaration" is most objectionable. The wording here sanitizes the eliminationist ideology at the heart of Palestinian nationalism by depicting the Palestinian cause as a civil-rights struggle for social and national equality. But as much as the document's authors might wish this was true, the fact

remains that not a single Palestinian political party or armed group has ever expressed its goals in this manner. For the PLO and for Hamas, the "armed struggle" targeting Israeli military and civilian targets alike remains sacrosanct, while the founding documents of both organizations make clear that "Palestine" will be a state with an Arab and Islamic identity. If Middle Eastern history over the last century is any guide, then this would mean, at best, second-class status for formerly Israeli Jews living under a Palestinian government following the loss of their national sovereignty.

That a nightmare scenario for the majority of Jews—the dissolution of Israel as an independent Jewish state—is regarded by the authors of this declaration as a laudable outcome illustrates the enormous gulf between those of us who fight anti-Semitism in all of its forms and those who regard Jew-hatred as a problem only when it emanates from the extreme right. Above all, it tells us that those who seek to define "anti-Semitism" do not always do so out of the desire to stem its noxious influence. In the case of the "Jerusalem Declaration," the intended beneficiaries of its insights are not Jewish communities, but the phalanx of pro-Palestinian NGOs who wish to advance comparisons with the Nazis and similarly "contentious" attacks on the Jewish state without having their humanist, anti-racist credentials questioned in return.

As for the signatories of the "Jerusalem Declaration," some of those listed are best-known for either legitimizing anti-Semites or even engaging in anti-Semitic rhetoric themselves. For example, there is the Princeton University professor Richard Falk, whose woeful record includes blaming the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing on "American global domination" as well as "Tel Aviv," and who once published a blatantly anti-Semitic cartoon on his blog of a dog wearing a kippah urinating on a depiction of justice and devouring a bloodied skeleton. For good measure, Falk also endorsed a book by a formerly Israeli anti-Semite named Gilad Atzmon, in which the author asserted that "Hitler might have been right after all" and argued that Jews were "the only people who managed to maintain and sustain a racially orientated, expansionist and genocidal national identity that is not at all different from Nazi ethnic ideology."

Alongside Falk is David Feldman, a British academic who is principally known for his participation in a 2016 inquiry into anti-Semitism in the opposition Labour Party that carefully whitewashed Labour's then-leader, Jeremy Corbyn, and the cabal of anti-Zionist activists around him. Also among the signatories are academics Never Gordon and Mark LeVine, co-authors of an opinion piece for Inside Higher Ed which asserts that the main problem with the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism is that it "allows conservative and even moderate political forces to discipline, silence and marginalize progressive voices against racism, poverty, the climate crisis, war and predatory capitalism."

These are really the last people who should be giving advice on anti-Semitism—and make no mistake, the goal of this declaration is to displace the IHRA definition as the primary tool for educating elected politicians, teachers, police officers, judges and others about the nature of anti-Semitism. We have been warned. (JNS Mar 26)

Animosity cannot be Allowed to Defeat Rationale By Mati Tuchfeld

Over the weekend, the heads of Israel's so-called "pro-change" camp were working overtime, trying to get coalition talks started, even before one of them was tasked by President Reuven Rivlin to do so.

There is only one problem with this effort: It has no legs to stand on.

Unlike the right-wing bloc, headed by Likud and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the change-touting center-left is not really a "bloc." It may be bigger—61 Knesset seats to 59—but it has nothing really holding it together, other than a shared animosity towards Netanyahu.

It is very clear that once it achieves its goal of removing Netanyahu from power, the center-left bloc will disintegrate back into a group of parties with ideologies stretching from the conservative

right, through the liberal left, to Ra'am and the Joint Arab List—a group bonded by nothing tangible.

Yesh Atid head Yair Lapid, who understood that some voters are averse to him, made the choice not to take on Netanyahu head-on during the election campaign, but with the elections decided—or undecided—he no longer has a reason to hide.

Despite his party's mediocre performances in the polls, Lapid is now trying to make the most of the poor showing by everyone else in the center-left bloc, including New Hope leader Gideon Sa'ar on the left, to cement his position as the leader of the bloc and the one who will receive the mandate to form a coalition on its behalf.

Lapid heads into these talks with a clear advantage, as (with the exception of Yamina leader Naftali Bennett, who has yet to decide where his allegiances lie) the other parties in the center-left bloc—Labor, Meretz, Blue and White, Yisrael Beiteinu, New Hope, the Joint Arab List and Ra'am—are obligated to endorse him as the next prime minister.

This only underscores Sa'ar's crushing defeat, as the would-be kingmaker has been reduced to tagging along behind Lapid, all because he pledged not to join a government led by Netanyahu.

Lapid, Sa'ar and Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avigdor Lieberman know that the Israeli public deserves better than the kind of government the current makeup of the center-left bloc will produce. It is their hatred for Netanyahu that has replaced any rationale, especially when you consider that if Lapid fails to form a coalition, they will dig in their heels and refuse to join Netanyahu, dragging Israel into its fifth elections in two years.

This much is also true of Bennett. Does anyone think that those who voted for Yesh Atid, Yisrael Beiteinu, the Joint Arab List, Labor or Meretz imagined a government headed by the leader of the right-wing Yamina party?

When Sa'ar broke away from Likud, he never said that he despises Netanyahu personally—only that after leading Israel to four election campaigns, the prime minister was perpetuating political instability. This suggests that there is a way for Sa'ar to walk back his election campaign without completely losing face.

It would therefore be very strange if Sa'ar is the one whose actions result in yet another election, when all along he had the option to join a government that reflects his political beliefs. (Israel Hayom Mar 29)

Time is on Tehran's Side By Oded Granot

Iran announced this week that the severe economic sanctions imposed by former U.S. President Donald Trump will force it to close the long-running Bushehr nuclear power plant, which produces electricity. The official explanation noted U.S. banking restrictions, which have made it difficult for Iran to transfer money and procure necessary equipment from Russian suppliers.

Under normal circumstances, this announcement, which is essentially Tehran's first public admission of the efficacy of U.S. sanctions, should have made officials in Washington happy. Indeed, if the Iranians are at the point of admitting their struggles, it shouldn't be long before they return to the negotiating table to sign a new and improved nuclear deal.

The truth, however, is the opposite. Although the past three years have been the most economically difficult since the war with Iraq in the 1980s, contrary to most of the expectations in the West, the Iranian economy hasn't completely collapsed under the weight of sanctions and Tehran has not waved a white flag.

It seems the Iranians have found ways to bypass the sanctions and since the beginning of the year have even shown impressive signs of expanding oil exports due to China's direct and indirect purchases of crude oil. China, as we learned this week, has also signed a long-term strategic deal with Tehran.

The result: Instead of rushing to grab U.S. President Joe Biden's proposals with two hands, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is now signaling that Iran is in absolutely no hurry. "There are times that the risks outweigh the benefits," he said, adding, "When we signed the nuclear deal we acted hastily. Now we have patience. If the United States accepts our conditions, that's good, and if not, we can hold on."

The issue is that Biden, too, who is under competing pressures from senior administration officials about how to handle the Iranians and is troubled by even bigger domestic problems, is not projecting a sense of urgency or willingness to meet Tehran's demands and remove the sanctions first. Iran must first stop violating the nuclear deal, "and then we'll see," he has said.

Both sides hunkering down in their own positions has led to a dead end. At present, they haven't even agreed to a preliminary sit-down. The main problem is that time is mostly on Iran's side, which lowers the odds for a resolution.

First, because Iran is continuing, in the meantime, to brazenly violate the nuclear deal. It is enriching uranium to 20 percent purity and hasn't stopped testing its new and faster centrifuges.

Second, because in less than two months the deal between Iran and the International Energy Agency will expire, which prevents Iran from restricting IAEA inspectors' freedom of movement and access to nuclear sites. Third, because in three months Iran will hold presidential elections, which appear increasingly likely to produce a winner from the hardline camp that opposed the nuclear deal from the outset and will likely oppose any more compromises with the West.

Fourth, because the ongoing stalemate brings Iran closer to the expiration date of the original deal signed in 2015, after which it can enrich uranium to its heart's content and build a nuclear bomb unimpeded.

And fifth, because every day that passes allows the Iranians to advance and improve their ballistic missile program and simultaneously intensify their regional subversion, from supplying precision weapons to Hezbollah to aiding the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

In this context, it is important to note the expansion of the Israeli-Iranian shadow war to the maritime front and the recent attacks on two Israeli-owned cargo vessels attributed to Iran. Recent satellite photos have revealed that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is building three new warships, perhaps to compensate for their obvious inferiority at sea.

Among Biden's advisers are those who believe that instead of bickering over who makes the first move, and to unlock the stalemate, Washington should propose that Iran only cease enriching uranium in exchange for the partial removal of sanctions. If the Iranians refuse, the nuclear hourglass will continue running out. (Israel Hayom Mar 31)

PA Financial Support for Terrorism Circumvents US and Israeli Law By Yoni Ben Menachem

The struggle between Israel and the Palestinians over the Palestinian Authority's payment of grants to some 12,000 terrorists and families of shahids ("martyrs") entered a new phase last week following the PA's decision to distribute the funds through postal banks to circumvent Israeli law.

Amendment 67 of the military order issued by the commander of the IDF Central Command Maj. Gen. Nadav Padan stipulates that banks through which these salaries are transferred are in violation of Israel's anti-terrorism laws. The order warned bank managers operating in the PA that they and their employees will be considered criminal accomplices if they continue to manage the accounts of Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel because doing so "supports, promotes, funds or rewards" terrorism, punishable with up to 10 years in prison.

The law set a deadline of Dec. 31 for Palestinian banks to shut the relevant accounts, resulting in the PA being forced to pay three months in advance at the end of last year.

Last week, the PA's chairman of the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, Qadri Abu Bakr, declared that the March salaries of the security prisoners would be paid early in April through the post offices in the West Bank until automated teller machines (ATMs) are established from which the salaries can be withdrawn via a "smart" card. The Palestinian Ministry of Communications and Technology has already begun to install a network of ATMs in branches of the postal bank in the West Bank.

The PA's postal banks are not considered "banking institutions."

Abu Bakr also said 7,500 released terrorists would receive salaries for official jobs in the PA's civilian and security institutions and would receive the wages in the same manner as government officials. Dozens of released terrorists demonstrated in Ramallah last week in front of Palestinian government buildings demanding faster hiring into PA institutions so that they could receive their salaries.

Last year, Israel began deducting PA tax revenues in accordance with the "offset law" approved by the Knesset and following the comparable American "Taylor Force Act" passed by Congress. PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said last week that Israel had deducted 52 million shekels (\$15.6 million) each month from the tax revenues it collects for the PA to offset the terrorists' salaries paid by the PA.

The PA initially considered establishing an independent bank to transfer the grants to terrorists and their families but eventually dropped the idea. Instead, in the latest maneuver in its ongoing game of cat-and-mouse with Israel, it decided to make the payments through the postal bank branches.

Israel is obligated to transfer the tax dollars to the PA under the 1994 Paris Protocol. Moreover, Israel does not seek the PA's collapse and wants tens of thousands of PA officials to continue to receive salaries. The PA takes shameless advantage and uses the money it receives from Israel to pay terrorists and their families.

PA head Mahmoud Abbas knows Israel is not interested in the collapse of the PA or in Hamas taking control of the West Bank after the May 2021 Palestinian elections. He is confident Israel will continue to transfer the funds, and so continues this confrontation with Israel with impunity, presenting himself as a "national hero" who cares about the rights of the Palestinian "fighters." He claims that the PA's financial support for terrorists and their families is a "red line" he will never cross.

An ironic postscript: In December 2020, PA civilian and security employees protested to European donors that the PA finance minister had suspended their salaries because they supported the election of opponents to the Abbas regime.
(Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs Mar 31)

Why is Biden Indifferent to a UN Celebration of Anti-Semitism?

By Anne Bayefsky

At the U.N. Human Rights Council last Friday, Americans learned something important about the Biden administration's views on combating racism and xenophobia. Paradoxically, equality for the many is to be built on the inequality of the Jewish few. Abandoning 20 years of strong bipartisan concern about anti-Semitism, President Joe Biden's State Department took the lead in embracing the U.N. hate-fest held in 2001 in Durban, South Africa.

The "Durban Declaration," adopted three days before 9/11, encourages the hatred of Jews. It is the 21st-century reincarnation of the infamous 1975 U.N. General Assembly "Zionism is Racism" resolution. Israel is the only state mentioned in the entire global manifesto, which claims that Palestinians are "victims" of Israeli racism. Actually, it is Palestinian Arabs who reject peaceful cohabitation with Jews, insist on a state without Jews and officially reward Palestinians who kill Jews.

The racist "anti-racism" conference that produced the declaration featured disturbing scenes of overt, violent anti-Semitism. The American delegation, led by Hungarian Holocaust survivor and Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), walked out of the reprehensible governmental conference, together with Israel, fully supported by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

That was America's response to Jew-hatred in 2001, and it was repeated in the years following.

The United States and others boycotted successive attempts to resuscitate Durban: "Durban II" (the "Durban Review Conference") held in Geneva in 2009, and Durban III, a 10th-anniversary summit in New York in 2011. Both events "reaffirmed" the original Durban Declaration. At Durban II, the United Nations handed Holocaust-denier and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a microphone to open the conference. Which he did with these words: "The word Zionism personifies racism that falsely resorts to religion and abuses

religious sentiments to hide their hatred and ugly faces."

The U.N. juggernaut has rolled on, given Durban's centrality to the Palestinian program of demonizing and isolating the Jewish state ever since PLO chief Yasser Arafat took the podium at Durban I. And so, on Dec. 31, 2020, the U.N. General Assembly decided to hold a commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration. It will take place in New York in September of this year. World leaders, gathered for the General Assembly's opening, are now scheduled to adopt a "political declaration" calling for the "full and effective implementation" of the Durban Declaration, thereby pursuing the aim of isolating Israel as a racist pariah on the global stage.

Consistent with its rejection of every similar pro-Durban resolution since 2001, the United States voted against the plan to convene what is in effect a "Durban IV." In fact, it voted against the entire U.N. budget for 2021 because it contained funding for the Durban reprise and the concomitant spread of anti-Semitism.

But times have evidently changed. In late February, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken addressed the current session of the U.N. Human Rights Council and announced that the Biden administration intends to join the council, notwithstanding the body's entrenched anti-Israel and anti-Jewish bias. The election of the United States, to occur in the fall, will lend legitimacy to a U.N. "human rights" authority whose members include the likes of China, Cuba, Libya, Russia, Somalia and Venezuela.

A political desire to impress evidently overcame hitherto American antipathy to Durban. At the same council session on March 19, the U.S. representative delivered a statement on the subject of racism, boasting the support of "more than 150 states." The statement spoke of "recalling the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action" as part of an international commitment "to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance." It's a commitment that singles out Israel and paints a Jewish state as a racist state.

Obviously, Israel couldn't sign on to a form of political suicide. And just as obviously, the Biden administration didn't care. It did care, however, about garnering the signatures of repressive, intolerant, xenophobic regimes. Happily signing the Biden-Blinken initiative were the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan, Turkey and Zimbabwe. As did Pakistan, where in January, the Supreme Court ordered the acquittal of those involved in American journalist Daniel Pearl's murder and their move from prison "to a comfortable residential environment." Pearl's last words before being beheaded were: "My father is Jewish, my mother is Jewish, I am Jewish."

Prior to Biden and Blinken, no American administration would have paired a call to combat racism with "recalling the Durban Declaration" or marking a Durban "anniversary." Instead, the United States has steadfastly called on states to look forward and combat racism in other ways because Durban wrongly turns the fight against racism into a fight against Jews.

The Biden administration must now decide whether or not to attend Durban IV. They know that it will definitely end in a call for the Durban Declaration's "full implementation" in accordance with the General Assembly demand. That an "explanation of vote" or "disassociating" from an occasional paragraph will be buried, and that the headline will be American approval.

Even former President Barack Obama ensured that the United States boycotted Durban II and III, and refused to commemorate the 10th anniversary. The 20th anniversary is the anti-Semite's long game. America's long game, however, ought to be to stand against anti-Semitism, regardless of whether discriminating against Jews in the name of equality is a bargain that others are prepared to make.

In view of Friday's move, Durban IV needs to be publicly shunned immediately—not recalled, reaffirmed, celebrated, commemorated or fully implemented. Combating racism and xenophobia necessitates staying away. (JNS Mar 25)
