



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*

Commentary...

Europe's About-Face on Israel By Melanie Phillips

A strange, startling, and deeply unfamiliar sound was heard this week. A Trump tweet imploding perhaps? Kim Jong-Un finally destroying his nuclear arsenal? A distant rumble from the Hawaii volcano?

No. It was the sound of the European Union and United Nations loudly supporting Israel against attack.

In the heaviest onslaught since 2014, southern Israel was attacked from Gaza this week by Islamic Jihad and Hamas forces launching dozens of rockets and mortars, as well as bursts of machine-gun fire. An Israeli kindergarten was hit, although no one was hurt. After Israel pummeled terrorist targets, Egypt brokered a truce.

What was striking is that the Israel-averse European Union, along with the United Nations, France, Italy, Germany, and Ireland criticized the Gaza attackers and expressed support for Israel.

France declared that its commitment to Israel's security was "unwavering." Germany said the targeting of Israeli civilians was "malicious" and it was "Israel's right to preserve its security, defend its borders, and respond proportionately to attacks."

Yet two weeks earlier, when Israel defended itself against the attempt by Hamas to storm the Gaza border and murder Israeli civilians, those same European nations and the UN grossly misrepresented what happened as the killing of unarmed civilians in "peaceful protests" — even though the vast majority of those killed were terrorists.

So what's changed?

Well, first of all, the situation on the ground.

When Hamas began its weekly riots at the Gaza border fence, some took this as the sign of an inevitable escalation to all-out war. Yet on May 14 — the day of the heaviest onslaught that provoked the EU criticism — Hamas abruptly called off its invasion. Whatever the reason, the decision was taken to cool it.

Then suddenly, Islamic Jihad launched its missile onslaught aided and abetted by Hamas. It was clear that this did not enjoy wide support. Russia didn't want it. Egypt didn't want it. The Gulf states will tolerate nothing that gets in the way of their tacit alliance with the United States and Israel against Iran. Even Hamas reportedly got cold feet over the scale of the attack.

So who wanted it? Step forward the Islamic Republic of Iran, backers of Hamas and patrons of Islamic Jihad. And why did Iran want it? Because the regime is distinctly rattled.

America's withdrawal from the nuclear deal has thrown it into disarray. The United States is threatening to impose further sanctions. The Iranian rial is in free-fall. The recent speech by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo extended US policy way beyond curtailing Iran's nuclear activities.

Iran, he said, must stop supporting Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad, support disarming Shi'ite militias in Iraq, and withdraw from Syria. The United States would work to counteract Iran's cyber activities, and track down its operatives and proxies and "crush" them.

Israel is also now destroying more and more Iranian assets in Syria with US backing.

Moreover, a wedge is being driven between Russia and Iran. Russia needs stability in the region to safeguard its interests. The last thing it wants is for Israel to be drawn further into Syria. So Russia is trying to keep Iranian forces away from Israel's northern border and has said the Islamic Republic should pull its forces out of Syria once a political settlement is reached.

Galvanized by the new US-led dynamic, the Iranian people are continuing to revolt. There's now a Twitter hashtag in Farsi calling for regime change, as well as another that reads, "Thank you Pompeo." If this escalates, the Iranian people could possibly bring down the regime.

In the space of a few months, therefore, Iran has gone from being an unstoppable regional force to scrabbling to survive. So in desperation, it is playing two of its remaining cards.

The first was using its proxies in Gaza to unleash the missile barrage

against southern Israel. The second is its urgent wooing of the European Union to persuade it to defy the American call to impose global sanctions.

At this moment, the European Union chose to back Israel against the Gaza missile barrage — the same European Union that all but ignored

the missile barrages that led to the 2014 Gaza war in which, of course, it denounced Israel for finally defending itself.

When it came to the Gaza border riots, however, the European Union was not united in its condemnation of Israel. The Czech Republic's Foreign Minister Martin Stropnický said that rushing the security fence should be regarded as a form of terrorism.

Earlier, Hungary, Romania, and the Czech Republic blocked an EU statement condemning the US embassy move while other countries, including Slovakia, Greece, and Poland reportedly also expressed reservations. On Monday, European foreign ministers discussed Gaza at their monthly meeting but failed to issue a statement, a sign that they couldn't reach a consensus.

But the real reason for the EU's surprising change of tone is surely that the presence of Donald Trump has changed everything.

America backed Israel strongly over the Gaza riots. While eight EU members lined up at the United Nations to call on Israel to refrain from using "excessive force" against "peaceful protests," US Ambassador Nikki Haley said the violence came from those who rejected the existence of the State of Israel. "Such a motivation — the destruction of a United Nations member state — is so illegitimate as to not be worth our time in the Security Council, other than the time it takes to denounce it," she said.

Donald Trump has changed the EU's relations with the US. Meanwhile, Italy is politically imploding and threatening the whole EU project. The financier George Soros has said that the European Union is now facing an existential crisis.

Is the EU going to choose this moment to get up America's nose still further? Hardly. In my opinion, it was presumably anxious to demonstrate to Trump that, despite its earlier sanitizing of Hamas as "unarmed protesters," it was really against Hamas after all.

If so, such declarations won't cut it. For the world has reached a tipping point and Iran is key. To avoid a truly terrible conflagration, the Iranian regime must be brought down.

Israel, the United States, the Gulf states, and the Iranian people are behind such a strategy. Astoundingly, Britain and the European Union stand with the regime against them. They must now decide if they will join the attempt to defeat the forces of evil or else suffer the consequences. (Algemeiner June 3)

Palestinians: "Burn the Jews!" By Bassam Tawil

The Palestinians, who have been sending flaming kites from the Gaza Strip into Israel the past few weeks, say that their real goal is to "burn the Jews" and destroy Israel. They see the kites as a new weapon to achieve their goal. They are disappointed, they say, that no Jew has been hurt yet as a result of the fires triggered by the flaming kites.

The kites have ignited dozens of fires in Israeli fields and forests adjacent to the border with the Gaza Strip, much to the satisfaction of the Palestinians and their supporters in the Arab and Islamic countries, who took to various social media platforms to celebrate the "success" of the Palestinian terror kites.

Firefighters and soldiers attempt to extinguish a fire in a wheat field in Nahal Oz, Israel, after it was set alight by Palestinians who sent firebombs attached to kites across the border from Gaza, on May 15, 2018. (Photo by Lior Mizrahi/Getty Images)

The same Palestinians who are openly stating that the flaming kites are aimed at "burning the Jews" and eliminating Israel are also arguing that this new form of terrorism is in the context a "peaceful and nonviolent protest" by the residents of the Gaza Strip.

The international community, together with mainstream media in the West, appears to have fallen for this deception by the Palestinians and keep endorsing the bogus claim that the residents of the Gaza Strip are engaging in a peaceful and popular "resistance" against Israel.

All that the foreign journalists and governments around the world need to do to understand the true intentions of the Palestinians behind this latest wave of terrorism is to listen carefully to what is being said in the Gaza

Strip, even if it does not fit in with their “narrative.”

There are two important factors that the international community needs to notice regarding the flaming kites that the Palestinians are sending to Israel from the Gaza Strip. First: those who are launching the kites are making it clear that their ultimate goal is to kill as many Jews as possible and bring about the obliteration of Israel. Second: the Palestinians see all Jews living in Israel as “settlers.”

The reports in various Palestinian media outlets on the fires in Israel refer to Israeli towns as “settlements.” Even media outlets that are affiliated with the “moderate” Palestinian Authority, which has ostensibly recognized Israel’s right to exist, are referring to the Israeli communities near the border with the Gaza Strip as “settlements.” Even two Israeli agricultural communities, such as Sderot, which have been targeted by the flaming kites, are described as “settlements.”

What does this show? The Palestinians do not distinguish between a Jew living in the West Bank and a Jew living in Israel proper. For the Palestinians, all Jews are “settlers.” It does not matter whether they live in a settlement in the West Bank, or in Tel Aviv, Haifa or Jerusalem. For the Palestinians, there is no difference between a Jewish settlement in the West Bank and any city in Israel, including Tel Aviv.

Israel actually evacuated all Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip in 2005 and withdrew totally to the international border. No Jews live inside the Gaza Strip. There are no “settlements” inside the Gaza Strip. Prior to the Israeli unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip, the Palestinians used to launch almost daily terror attacks on the Jews living inside the Gaza Strip. In 2005, the Palestinians got what they wanted: Israel left the entire Gaza Strip after often forcibly evacuating more than 8,000 Jews from their homes and lands.

The events of the past few weeks along the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel show that the Palestinians’ true goal is not to “liberate” the Gaza Strip, but to eliminate Israel and replace it with an Islamic state. Until 13 years ago, the Palestinians told everyone that all they wanted was to drive the Jewish settlers out of the Gaza Strip. All the settlers did leave the Gaza Strip. Now, the Palestinians are telling us that they want to drive the “remaining settlers” out of Israel. To them, all Jews in the area are legitimate targets, no matter where they live.

The Palestinians are now also telling us that the terror kites they are sending to Israel accord with what the Quran orders Muslims to do in the fight against the “infidels.” They apparently see the flaming kites as part of the jihad (holy war) against the enemies of Allah and Islam. To back up their argument, the Palestinians are quoting the verse from the Quran that states: “And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.” (Al-Anfaal Sura, 8:60).

The jubilant reactions of Palestinians and other Arabs and Muslims to the reports about the kite fires that have destroyed thousands of acres of fields and agricultural lands in Israel also leave no doubt that this tactic is a violent jihad waged with the goal of destroying Israel and killing Jews. Each time a report about another blaze surfaces, many Palestinians take to Facebook and Twitter to shout the Islamic battle cry “Allahu Akbar!” [“Allah is Greatest”], echoing calls from ISIS, Al-Qaeda and other jihadi terror groups when they launch terror attacks against non-Muslims. The Arabs and Muslims are now referring to the kite launchers as “mujahideen” (warriors) – a sign that these terrorists are soldiers of Islam engaged in a jihad against the infidels, including, of course, the Jews.

In case anyone had doubts as to why the flaming kites are being sent to Israel, here is what one of the terrorists, Abu Al-Majd, had to say: “We are sending these kites because we want to tell the world that we are determined to return to the homes we lost 70 years ago.” In other words, what Abu Al-Majd is saying is, “We want to set fire to Israel so that the Jews will be burned or forced to leave their country.”

The jihad of the Palestinians against Israel is the same jihad that ISIS, the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamic jihadi groups have also been waging on the “infidels” and “enemies of Islam” in the US, EU and other non-Muslim countries. Jihad is a religious duty imposed on Muslims to spread their religion by waging war. The word “jihad” is mentioned several times in the Qur’an, where Muslims are told that they must do their utmost to spread Islam and fight the non-Muslims.

Consider, for example, this reference to jihad in the Quran (Al-Mumtahanah S 60:1): “O you who believe! Do not take My enemy and your enemy for close friends, offering them love while they disbelieve what has come to you of the truth, [and] give out the Messenger and yourself because you believe in Allah – your Lord – if you have gone forth waging jihad in My name and seeing My pleasure.”

Or another verse from the Quran (Al-Maidah Sura 5:54): “O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people whom He loves and who love Him; who are humble toward the believers, are proud toward the disbelievers, do jihad in the way of Allah, and do not fear the blame of any blamer.”

When talking about this latest attempt to set Israel on fire and burn Jews, we are not talking about children who are playing with kites. We are witnessing a well-organized campaign of terror orchestrated by terrorists and activists belonging to Hamas and other Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip. The terrorists have even attached explosive devices to some of the kites. They have also formed a terror cell called the Kites Unit, similar to the gangs that fire mortars and rockets at Israel every now and then. This is the real jihad where the Palestinians are fulfilling their duty as Muslims to wage war on Jews.

The flaming kites should be seen in the context of the ongoing Palestinian terror campaign that began decades ago and the goal of which is to kill Jews and eliminate Israel. There is no difference between the kites and rockets and mortars. There is no difference between the kites, suicide bombings, stabbing and car-ramming attacks. There is no difference between the kites and drive-by shootings. There is no difference between the kites and the slaughtering of a Jewish family during a meal. The techniques may vary, but the goal remains one: to see Israel wiped off the face of the earth.

The flaming kites flying from the Gaza Strip are another act of war, another phase of the jihad launched by Palestinians and their Arab and Muslim brothers against Israel and Jews on two fronts. While the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are trying to set all of Israel on fire, the Palestinian Authority and its president, Mahmoud Abbas, are continuing to wage another type of war on Israel: that one in international forums to delegitimize Israel and demonize Jews. (Gatestone June 7)

Poverty and Despair do not Cause Terrorism By Akiva Bigman

One of the most repeated arguments for the reasons behind the recent wave of violence on the Gaza Strip border is the dire situation and the despair of the oppressed population in the Hamas-ruled enclave.

Setting aside the question of who is responsible for the situation in Gaza and how to improve it, we should focus instead on one question: Is terrorism truly a result of poverty and despair?

The recurring claim that terrorism is caused by public despair is as old as Palestinian terrorism itself and goes back far before the recent humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Palestinian terrorism has existed consistently throughout the years, including during the period of dramatic socio-economic growth in the 1980s, peace talks in the 1990s, and through the 2000s, when the situation worsened in Gaza after Hamas rose to power.

Vast quantities of research and data on terrorism and its motivations in recent years refute the claim that there is a causal relationship between poverty and oppression with terrorism. The identities of past Palestinian terrorists highlight this point very well.

Pakistani relief worker Nasra Hassan wrote in *The New Yorker* magazine in 2001, during the Second Intifada: “None of the suicide bombers – they ranged in age from 18 to 38 – conformed to the typical profile of the suicidal personality. None of them were uneducated, desperately poor, simple-minded, or depressed. Many were middle class and ... held paying jobs ... Two were the sons of millionaires.”

Nothing has changed since, as was observed during the so-called “knife intifada” of 2015 to 2016. In October 2015, Palestinian scholar Bassam Tawil visited the home of terrorists and reported on their living conditions: “None of the young Palestinians involved in the recent terrorist attacks lived in a mud house, a tent or even a rented apartment. They all lived in houses owned by their families and had unlimited access to the internet. They all carried smartphones that allowed them to share their views on Facebook and Twitter and, among other things, to engage in wanton incitement against Israel and Jews.”

Comprehensive statistical research in research years supports this. Professor Alberto Abadie of Harvard University gathered data from around the world on the prevalence of terrorism and its correlation with economic circumstances in 2004. He concluded that he had failed “to find a significant association between terrorism and economic variables.”

Another research paper that investigated the connection between unemployment and terrorism in Iraq and the Philippines arrived at a surprising conclusion: “Unemployment predicts less violence.” The paper suggested rethinking the international policy of pumping in aid money to decrease the motivation for terrorism.

Yet another research paper, on the Israeli-Palestinian experience, came to a similar conclusion, saying it is impossible to prove that “reducing poverty or improving education will succeed, in and of themselves, in reducing terrorism.”

The researchers cited a poll of Palestinians during the Second Intifada that proved the rate of support for terrorist acts against Israeli civilians was the same regardless of status, income or occupation.

A study on the Islamic State jihadi group’s recruitment methods in the West concluded: “Our results suggest that the flow of foreign fighters to ISIS is driven not by economic or political conditions but rather by ideology.”

The bottom line is clear: Terrorism does not come from poverty and

oppression. Radical ideologies, national aspirations and political agendas are the main motivators of terrorism. Educated people have the means to internalize and act on these ideas and find the resources needed for subversive activities. It is no coincidence that the leaders of subversive movements usually come from a population's educated class. Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was born into an elite Saudi family and held a business management degree, while Yasser Arafat held a civil engineering degree from Cairo University.

Terrorism has no connection to poverty; rather the opposite. Experience teaches us that the more resources are in Hamas' hands, the more the organization uses them to find more advanced means to advance its main goals: killing Jews and attempting to destroy the State of Israel. The state of the Gazans is dire, but the full responsibility for this situation is on Hamas. (Israel Hayom Jun 7)

Terrorism has no Place in Sports By Haim Shine

Palestinian Football Association chief Jibril Rajoub is one of the main reasons Argentina's national soccer team decided to cancel its final World Cup warm-up match against Israel. The assistant to late PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas suggested that Palestinians burn pictures and shirts of star striker Lionel Messi, organized protests outside Argentina's representative office in Ramallah, and turned a soccer game into a political event.

There can be no doubt he succeeded in bringing terrorism into the world of sports. Only in Ramallah can a man whose only sports-related expertise is throwing a grenade be appointed a senior sports official.

It was embarrassing and disturbing to see Rajoub, Joint Arab List MK Hanin Zoabi, Zionist Union leader Avi Gabbay, Yesh Atid party leader Yair Lapid, and, of course, Zionist Union MK Zouheir Bahloul – who serves as a mediator between the Zionist Union and the Joint Arab List – rejoice at the news of the cancellation. In their shared joy, the members of this strange coalition demonstrated why recent polls show the Zionist Union winning fewer mandates than the Joint Arab List and Yesh Atid losing support among voters.

The Israeli public can easily differentiate between opposition to the government and opposition to the state. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and not one humanitarian organization has risen to avenge their deaths.

A Jewish state that is an enlightened and flourishing democracy and world power contradicts 2,000 years of dogma. A world that has always seen the Jews as eternal victims is now incapable of internalizing that the Jews have returned to history big time. For Israel's detractors, it makes no difference whether the Right or the Left is in power or where the game was to be held. Claims that the game was canceled because it was moved to Jerusalem from Haifa are fictitious propaganda and nothing but a weak excuse.

It is precisely at this time that one would expect the leaders of the Israeli Left to unite against the waves of hatred instead of settling petty political scores. Only a fool would believe those that threatened Messi did so because the match was moved from Haifa to Jerusalem.

And even if the change in location was the cause of the cancellation, one would expect any and every Zionist political party to reject outright such a boycott of Jerusalem. The acceptance of the Israeli Left, led by Lapid and Gabbay, of the boycott of Jerusalem and the threats to soccer players are a strong tailwind to all those interested in preventing Israel's capital from hosting other international events, including next year's Eurovision song contest. (Israel Hayom Jun 7)

Holding Everyone Else Responsible By Reuven Berko

There is no blockade on the Gaza Strip. Goods that are turned into tools of destruction enter from Israel unhindered. The people responsible for sabotaging the supply routes are members of Hamas. That is how the polyethylene for greenhouses is used to build incendiary kites, and cement and electricity are used to build tunnels and missiles. Had they wanted to, the "poor, unfortunate souls" who smuggle bombs and drones into Gaza could just as easily have brought in antibiotics and medicines.

And on this side of the border, the merciful compete to offer suggestions to provide relief for Gaza's residents, as if doing so would bring any change to the violent agenda promoted by Hamas. And the much-discussed "hudna" (truce) will only serve as a catalyst to bolster the terrorist organization's standing.

In our yearning for peace and placation, we strengthen Hamas. And as we send them food and aid, they burn our wheat fields. As the saying goes, those who are kind to the cruel will ultimately be cruel to the kind.

This is a vengeful society that carries out honor killings, persecutes the LGBT community, fires guns at weddings, drives recklessly, burns tractors, fields and forests, allows bigamous marriage and establishes crime syndicates, in short, this is a society that shirks responsibility and blames others for its problems.

All this has been made possible in our "police state," in which residents of Umm al-Fahm murder police officers in Jerusalem for motives of a "national-religious" nature, and public officials like Joint Arab List Chairman Ayman Odeh and MK Hanin Zoabi spit at Arab police officers, whom they call collaborators. It is only in Israel that one can call for nationalist Palestinian isolationism while denying Jewish nationalism, and at the same time, demand the government provide police services to Arab communities.

Under the auspices of "Palestinian equality," Arab nongovernmental organizations like the Mossawa Center work to negate the Jewish people in Israel. It is only here that the inciters, who are funded by our enemies, can claim they are persecuted by the police and intentionally neglected, block major intersections and throw tables and chairs at illegal rallies.

And it is only in Israel that among these inciters, the voices of the members of a despicable group of people can make themselves feel like members of the elite by acting against the state and its "ignorant" officials, supporting the Palestinian "right of return" and Israel's destruction, slandering Israeli soldiers and cooperating with the boycott movement. They do this, of course, "for our own good."

In a police state, the "universalist" Left and the Joint Arab List understand that we, the child murderers, are preventing the Palestinians from access to medication and imposing a blockade, that all the disasters that have befallen them are the result of the "occupation," and that the Arabs deserve better, including their own state with its capital in Jerusalem. What do the Jews have to do with Jerusalem? What is the Bible? A forgotten narrative.

Those who cry out that "the road from Gaza leads to Haifa" and demand an end to the blockade and would allow the smuggling of deadly weapons to be used against us through both maritime and land border crossings would be wise to remember that the path from Haifa to Gaza remains open. (Israel Hayom Jun 6)

Giving Economic Aid to Gaza Will Not Reduce Terror and Violence

By Hillel Frisch

Palestinians prepare to fly a kite loaded with flammable material near the Israel-Gaza border, June 4, 2018. Photo: Reuters / Ibraheem Abu Mustafa.

Many experts claim that easing economic conditions in the Gaza Strip, particularly the granting of permission to Gazans to work in Israel, is the way to achieve political stability in a Gaza ruled by Hamas.

This is a fallacious argument.

To understand why this is so, one must revisit the Marshall Plan for Europe — the most successful example in history of how economic largesse can facilitate the transformation of a destructive foe into a staunch and healthy ally.

Under the Marshall Plan, West Germany became a linchpin in the security architecture of the Western alliance against the Warsaw Pact countries in the Soviet orbit.

No one can deny the success of the Marshall Plan, especially in contrast to the fallout from the destructive vindictiveness of Western allies against Germany after World War I. Indeed, that vindictiveness contributed to the rise of Nazi Germany and formed the historical justification for the Marshall Plan.

By the same token, one can hardly deny the even greater importance of two geostrategic factors at the time that made the Marshall Plan's economic largesse towards a former enemy worthwhile.

First, the total defeat of Nazi Germany, and its subsequent occupation and division by the victorious coalition, meant that the US and its allies could mold West Germany to their liking through de-Nazification and democratic rule — just as the Soviet Union created an East Germany in its own totalitarian image.

Second, West Germany was, like the rest of free Europe, beholden to the US for its security in the face of a menacing Soviet Union and its satellite states.

In the face of these two basic facts, the Marshall Plan can be seen as having facilitated and reinforced a process.

Benjamin Netanyahu's liberal economic policy towards the residents of Mahmoud Abbas's Palestinian Authority (PA), primarily the allowing of over 100,000 workers with or without permits to work in Israel, succeeded in part because it satisfied the two basic conditions that made the Marshall Plan successful.

At the height of the Second Intifada in 2002, Israel reconquered major towns in the PA that had become sanctuary areas for Fatah, PA-linked, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad terrorism. It has prevented the re-emergence of sanctuary areas ever since through preventive arrests throughout the West Bank that run into the thousands annually.

Like Germany, the PA was essentially defeated. And as was the case with West Germany and the US, Israel and the PA became allied against joint enemies — Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

If the PA ever had any doubts about who was more threatening to

Abbas' rule — Israel or Hamas — those doubts were put to rest after the Hamas takeover of Gaza in 2007. It was only after these two conditions were met that economic prosperity could play its facilitating role. And even then, the economic effects were limited compared to hard and fast political and military factors.

After all, even after workers from the West Bank were granted permission to commute to work in Israel — where they earn almost twice the wages of workers in the PA territories (after debiting commuting costs) — more than 250 Palestinians were motivated to commit murders in the wave of terrorism at the end of 2015-16.

The relative difference in the lethality of this last terrorist wave — in which only 45 were killed, compared to 800 in the second intifada by the same number of terrorists — was due not to a decrease in motivation but to the fact that they no longer had sanctuaries from which to organize elaborate suicide bombings or store large quantities of firearms.

In fact, by the time of the wave, the professional terrorist infrastructures of Hamas and Islamic Jihad had been thoroughly smashed.

In Gaza, neither of these conditions prevails. Gaza under Hamas rule remains a sanctuary area where Hamas can freely build up its military capabilities and launch a sophisticated campaign like the March of Return with little interference.

There is no common enemy that would render Hamas conciliatory, as was the case between the US and West Germany, or between Israel and the PA. Only a policy of toughness towards Hamas can induce it to assure stability and quiet in Gaza.

The three large-scale bouts of conflict between Israel and Hamas — in 2008-9, 2012, and 2014 — led the inhabitants of Gaza to demand that Hamas bring an end to the launching of missiles that led to those deaths. Further popular pressure after the failure of the March of Return campaign is likely to induce Hamas to stop campaigns of violence altogether.

Economic largesse at this point would only augment Hamas' resources, partly because it taxes incoming goods and aid. That money will be funneled back to its hardcore elements through campaigns such as the March of Return.

Gaza's inhabitants voted for Hamas in 2006. They have lived to regret it. It is now incumbent upon them to defang their government by making sure that it deals in butter not guns.

Only when Hamas envisions its territory as a future Singapore rather than a murderous labyrinth of fundamentalist terrorism will economic benefits accrue to Gaza. (Algemeiner Jun 7)

The writer is a professor of political studies at Bar-Ilan University.

The UN's Sordid Embrace of Antisemitism By Anne Bayefsky

The following is a speech delivered by Anne Bayefsky, Director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust and the President of Human Rights Voices, at the Special Forum on "Evolving Hatred: Antisemitism & BDS Today" convened by the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations, UN, May 30, 2018.

The United Nations is an institution built on the ashes of the Jewish people and the devastation wreaked by antisemitism upon all civilization.

And yet, the UN has never adopted a resolution or commissioned a report singularly devoted to exposing, denouncing, and eradicating antisemitism wherever it occurs. Just this month, the Security Council was asked and refused to issue a "firm and unequivocal rejection of antisemitism and Holocaust denial."

Why not? The answer is painfully clear: antisemitism itself. Right here in the United Nations.

Antisemitism at the UN does more than stymie opportunities for prevention. It creates occasions for promotion. The marketing strategy has three identifiable steps.

Step one: Deny. As a matter of routine, antisemites say they aren't antisemites.

Except they are.

Two weeks ago — in this very room — a two-day forum on the "Question of Palestine" was convened. Under UN auspices. With UN-invited speakers and UN-accredited participants.

Speakers deprecated "the idea of a chosen people" and railed against a "Jewish lobby." The Palestinian UN representative claimed Palestinian land was "exactly like" German-occupied France and Poland.

On May 18, 2018 at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, UN-accredited delegates (both states and NGOs) said: "The atrocities seen during the Second World War [are] happening again" and Palestinians are being "exterminated with a view to totally destroy the identity of a people."

Right down the hall from here a "Palestine" exhibit has been deliberately relocated next to the Holocaust exhibit. Tour guides don't stop at one without stopping at the other.

Belittling Jewish religious beliefs, invoking Jewish conspiracy theories, and analogizing Israelis to Nazis isn't subtle. It's antisemitism.

At the May forum successive speakers also denounced any Jewish state. Broadcast by the UN, for instance: the "racist policies ... of Israel ... draw

from the Jewish character of the State of Israel." A "Jewish democracy" is "an oxymoron." And the Palestinian UN representative said, "President Truman, when they put a piece of paper for him, for the recognition of the Jewish State of Israel, he scratched the Jewish and he left it only as the State of Israel. This is only just to set the record straight."

Straight historical revisionism, that is. Actually, Truman crossed out the typewritten "Jewish state" and added with his own hand "State of Israel" solely in response to learning the country's new name and ensuring the US was first to recognize Israel 11 minutes after its proclamation.

It isn't complicated. Self-determination for everyone but the Jewish people is antisemitism.

Step two: Obfuscate. Religious bigots claim that the conflict with Israel is not about religious bigotry.

Except it is.

They now say it's about the 1967 borders and post-1967 settlements.

But a mere two weeks ago, right here, a UN-invited guest said Israel was "the only country in modern memory that uprooted its refugees, then ... massacred them and humiliated them for seven decades." Referring to Israel's birth in 1948, the Palestinian UN representative declared, "We are very, very eager in order to put an end to ... the misery of our people after 70 years of occupation."

Challenging Israel's existence for 70 years is antisemitism.

Step three: Attack. Charge Jews with participating in a cover-up and forbidding any criticism of Israel.

Except they don't.

Furthermore, UN meetings in New York and Geneva in the past two weeks, which are not atypical, have resounded with accusations that the "Israeli killing machine" has been engaged in "ethnic cleansing," "a culture of hate," "atrocities," "egregious cruelty," "genocide," "crimes against humanity," "savagery," "brutality," and "a moral depravity of the most evil kind." For starters.

No other country in the UN is subject to this kind of onslaught. This isn't criticism. It's a feeding frenzy. It's antisemitism.

Let's not forget that at the United Nations we've been down this path before.

Remember the alleged "massacre" of 500 people in the suicide-bomber capital of Jenin in 2002? Three months later, the UN admitted there had been no massacre and a total of about 20 Palestinian civilians had died, fewer than the number of Israeli casualties.

Remember the UN Goldstone report of 2009? It accused Israel of deliberately targeting civilians — until Goldstone himself recanted the libel.

And now comes the latest UN mission launched amid accusations of another Israeli massacre of civilians in Gaza. This one debunked by Hamas and Islamic Jihad themselves, who couldn't resist boasting that 85% of casualties were their own.

There is a pattern here. It's called antisemitism. Or as the Queen of Hearts would describe UN inquisitions, "Sentence first. Verdict afterwards."

Beyond the UN hyperbole, straight statistics tell the same story:

The UN Human Rights Council reserves one permanent agenda item for condemning Israel. All other 192 UN states are considered together.

The Council has adopted more resolutions condemning Israel than any other country on earth and nothing on almost 90% of the world's states.

There have been ten emergency special sessions of the General Assembly. Five are on Israel alone, including the tenth, now reconvened 17 times. 500,000 dead and seven million displaced in Syria have never resulted in a single emergency special session.

In 2017 the General Assembly adopted 21 resolutions condemning Israel and a single resolution each on a handful of other countries.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women annually condemns only one country on the planet for violating women's rights — Israel for violating the rights of Palestinian women.

This record of egregious discrimination is the antithesis of the UN Charter's promise of equality for all nations large and small. It's antisemitism.

A Palestinian illustrator recently depicted an Israeli soldier force-feeding poison to a Palestinian baby after a false accusation that Israel had killed a baby girl who in fact died of a congenital heart defect. Controversy surrounded a photograph of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas enjoying the publication. But at the UN, this was old news. Last November that same illustrator was feted here at a UN event organized by a UN committee. He was introduced by the Palestinian UN representative as "the pride of a nation" for his "contribution to humankind." At the time, his illustrations or "contributions" included a Jewish Star of David twisted to mimic Nazi barbed wire imprisoning Palestinians.

In short, today's UN acts as a force multiplier for antisemitism, glorifying its proponents and providing a global platform for its advocates. To which there is no response from inside the United Nations other than — for shame. (Algemeiner Jun 3)