

Durban 4 Disgrace

by: Rabbi Jeremy Rosen

The "World Conference against Racism Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance", was founded by the United Nations, after the Second World War and the Holocaust. Its mandate was to fund research on racism and to arrange international events organized through UNESCO to combat racist ideologies and behaviors. This generator of anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, and anti-Israelism is a disgrace, and it is meeting again this week in Manhattan.

The infamous 2001 conference was held in Durban, South Africa was presided over by Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. It turned into a primitive hate fest, singling out Israel as virtually the sole culprit for all racism in the world. A separate gathering at Durban of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was a well-organized and orchestrated, brutal attack on anyone trying to defend Israel or called for a sense of proportion and balance. Jewish human rights activists at Durban were physically intimidated and threatened, with mobs screaming at them: "You don't belong to the human race!"

On the first day of the conference, the former president of Iran Ahmadinejad, made a speech condemning Israel as "totally racist" and accusing the West of using the Holocaust as a "pretext" for aggression against the Palestinians as if there was only one version of the conflict. The distributed English version of the speech referred to the Holocaust as an "ambiguous and dubious question". At a Palestinian-led march with thousands of participants, one placard read "Hitler Should Have Finished the Job." Anti-Jewish tracts such as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" were on display. Arab Lawyers Union distributed caricatures of Jews with hooked noses, fangs dripping with blood, and clutching money.

Canada, the US, and Israel walked out of the conference in protest of a draft resolution that singled out Israel for criticism. The EU refused to comply with demands from Muslim states to condemn Israel's "racist practices". It was accepted in the free world that the 2001 conference was a disgrace and the participating NGOs had betrayed their true colors.

But when a Durban Review conference, Durban II, was called in Geneva in 2009, things were no better. The same anti-Semitic tropes dominated the proceedings. Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, and the USA boycotted the conference. The Czech Republic stopped attending after the first day, and 23 other countries from the EU sent only low-level delegations. The western countries were concerned that the conference would promote anti-Semitism and laws contrary to free speech (anti-blasphemy laws). The conference was also criticized by European countries for having a focus only on the West, neglecting racism and intolerance in developing countries. Nevertheless, donor NGOs were only too happy to waste millions of dollars on the event, which could have been better spent on humanitarian causes. The succeeding Durban III in New York was again boycotted by Australia, Canada,

Germany, and the US. But the prevailing hatred of Jews continued.

Once again, the UN General Assembly approved a World Conference on Racism which began yesterday, dubbed Durban IV, in New York adopted a "political declaration" calling for the "full and effective implementation" of the Durban Declaration. The UN also sponsors a parallel "NGO Forum" where non-governmental organizations have declared Israel to be a "racist apartheid state" guilty of "genocide." Strange that the arab population of Israel has grown exponentially. But then as Gobbels said, if you lie often enough everyone will believe you.

Over thirty governments refused to attend this year. But we know it has nothing to do with anti-Israelism or anti-Semitism. It is because the charge of colonialism that the Human Rights hypocrites tar Israel with, could equally be applied to them! And indeed it should apply to Muslim states too. But there are 193 states in the UN. Almost all of them irrationally hate Israel.

The General Assembly of the UN is so dominated by corruption and primitive hatreds that I'd rather trust the Mafia. But what disturbs me equally are the NGOs which include the full panoply of well-known major world charities that sell themselves and raise money on the basis of their non-political missions to simply aid the poor or heal the planet. But not one of them who participated has distanced itself from Durban. Most of them have a political agenda, and the overwhelming majority put almost as much energy into attacking Israel as they do into helping the poor and disadvantaged. Durban has proved that most NGOs are not too particular about drawing a distinction between Israel and Judaism despite their protestations to the contrary. We should not be giving charity to any organization that supports the Durban Declaration. And before you donate to any of them, ask what their position really is before you even think of giving them one cent.

When the United States withdrew from the Durban conference it said that "We stand with Israel and have always shared its concerns over the Durban process's anti-Israel sentiment, used as a forum for antisemitism, and freedom of expression issues." Given the current woke hatred of Israel, I had become so defensive, even neurotic. I was really worried that Alexandra Ocasio Cortez and her houris of the squad would seriously infect the whole of the Democratic party. They submitted a motion in Congress to stop American financial support for the Iron Dome which protected Israel during the orgy of Hamas violence. In doing so they were tacitly approving of Hamas and Hezbollah sending their rockets against Israeli civilians. But praise the Lord, the motion was defeated with cross-party support, by 420 votes to 9. We should never take American support for granted. But what this shows is that noise and publicity on the internet, for all its hate-filled denizens, is not the final word when it comes to the Democratic party or American policies.

Sukot is the festival of joy. And this has certainly increased mine.