



**B'NAI B'RITH  
INTERNATIONAL**



January 21, 2022

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to you on behalf of B'nai B'rith International and Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America – two of the oldest and best-known Jewish organizations, both with accredited NGO status at the United Nations – to urge the Administration to take action against a discriminatory anti-Israel initiative at the UN. The United Nations Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) biased Commission of Inquiry threatens to exacerbate anti-Israel hatred at the UN by conducting a tendentious review of events surrounding the most recent conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Iranian-funded Palestinian terrorist organization.

When you announced in February the United States government's intention to return to the UNHRC, you rightly denounced the Council's Israel obsession, saying, "We urge the Human Rights Council to look at how it conducts its business. That includes its disproportionate focus on Israel." This commission is the very embodiment of that pernicious and ongoing problem. It was created by a resolution that peremptorily assigned Israel blame and ignored Hamas even before the sham "investigation" was to begin. The resolution also decided that the commission should be permanent, the first and only such investigative body in the UN system. The UNHRC then chose former High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay – who has shown her animus against Israel on numerous occasions – as chair, and named others known for their anti-Israel views to fill out the rest of the commission.

The UN General Assembly last month ratified the existence of this commission by approving a budget. We appreciate the action at the General Assembly of the US, along with Israel and a handful of other like-minded countries, to seek to defund the commission. Sadly, not enough countries were willing to stand up against the UN's latest attempt to create a permanent bureaucracy dedicated to attacking Israel.

We urge the Administration, now that the UN has made a final decision on the funding, to do as previous Administrations of both parties have done, and withhold from dues to the United Nations Regular Budget an amount commensurate to the U.S. share of funding for the commission. UN member states need to understand that the US will not willingly comply with attempts to use US taxpayer money to create permanent commissions at the UN whose sole purpose is to demonize and delegitimize the State of Israel. Such initiatives only further discredit the UN and do nothing to advance the peace process. Member states must be made aware that there are consequences of decisions that deepen the UN's disproportionate and obsessive focus on Israel over all other countries combined.

We look forward to working with Michèle Taylor, President Biden's nominee as Ambassador to the Council, when she is confirmed. We hope she will fight back against the bias that is so evident at the UNHRC – not only the commission, but also Agenda Item 7 and the blacklist of mostly Israeli companies. In the meantime, though, we urge the Administration to use its budgetary authority to withhold US taxpayer dues in proportion to the American share of this commission's budget. In doing so, the US can take a moral stand against those who would try to further instrumentalize the UN into carrying out farcical "investigations" of Israel alone at the expense of real human rights priorities.

Respectfully,



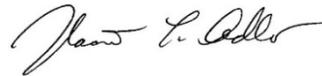
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cc: Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield