

# THE DAILY GAZETTE

## It's Time to Leave the UN

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Earlier this week, Saudi Arabia was elected to the Commission on the Status of Women in a secret ballot, which, according to its website, “is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.” Saudi Arabia’s presence on this council, as well as their presence on the Human Rights Council, cannot be considered as anything less than a total disgrace. The Islamic theocracy bans the public practice of any other religion and still discriminates against minority Muslims. Women remain unable to obtain a passport, get married, or travel without a male guardian’s permission and are not even allowed to drive a car. They also have a myriad of other abuses including the arrests of peaceful dissidents calling for reform. Saudi Arabia is also one of the least free countries in the world and was ranked number 144 out of 159 on the Cato Institute’s Human Freedom Index of 2016. This election is the latest in a long line of embarrassments associated with the UN. Since its inception in 1945, the UN has made an incredible number of blunders and bad decisions. This includes several scandals, atrocious cases of inaction which have led to mass devastation, the inclusion of serial human rights abusers in decision making, and shocking bias against Israel, who is one of America’s closest allies. The latest inclusion of Saudi Arabia onto the Commission on the Status of Women signals that the United States is long overdue in finally deciding to leave the UN for good.

Saudi Arabia’s presence on the Human Rights Council is a travesty, but it is not the only questionable country which was recently added to it. Venezuela, Cuba, Qatar, Bangladesh, and others were also added to the council for 2017. Each one of these countries has a disgusting human rights record. Venezuela’s socialist policies have led to a starving population, and the government has been brutally suppressing protesters. Cuba has continually arrested political dissidents, and millions of Cubans have fled to the United States over the years to escape the island. Qatar has essentially been enslaving migrant workers for years now, and Bangladesh is growing increasingly more authoritarian, cracking down on its political opposition and unfriendly media. The Human Rights Council, like the UN as a whole, is filled with ambassadors from dictatorships and perpetual human rights abusers. Human rights is one of the main staples of the UN’s purpose, and the Human Rights Council’s member states truly demonstrate that the UN has very little credibility in the field of human rights. UN actions have reflected this notion, calling the ongoing legitimacy of the UN’s very existence into question.

Even the Security Council, whose resolutions are generally considered binding, has Russia present and making decisions dealing with world, and subsequently American, security. Russia is

an ally of Iran, the leading terror state of the world, and has helped prop up the Assad regime in Syria. Allowing some world organization, particularly one that contains so many anti-American states and Russia as members in its most important council, to have any sort of say over U.S. operations is foolish and against U.S. interests. Not to mention, the very existence of Russia in the Security Council undermines the role of the UN in protecting Ukraine and the Balkan states, as Russia can simply veto any resolution put against it, essentially allowing Russia to do whatever it pleases. So long as the UN is staffed with tyrants and human rights abusers, it could never possibly fulfill its purpose effectively, and preserve peace and human rights globally.

The UN website says the organization's purpose is partly "to maintain international peace and security" and that the organization has "diligently protected human rights through legal instruments and on-the-ground activities." This is asinine given the appalling lack of action from UN peacekeepers during situations where they were needed the most. The UN did basically nothing to stop genocides committed in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Cambodia. In fact, in Bosnia, it was NATO, led by the United States, that intervened to finally stop the genocide. The UN has also failed to do much of anything in regards to the massacres over the past several years in Syria committed by Bashar al-Assad on his own people. The UN failed entirely to stop the Soviet Union from violently cracking down on reformers in client states, such as Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and from committing its vast swath of human rights abuses. Apart from just failing to do its job, the UN has also been rocked by several scandals, including the sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers in Haiti and several other countries. It is highly questionable to say that the world is a better place because of the UN.

Despite all its other misgivings, the UN's negative influence has never manifested itself more than in its anti-Semitism and shocking bias against the state of Israel. Before even discussing the content of UN resolutions against Israel, it is important to highlight the "disproportionate number of resolutions, reports and committees against Israel," in the words of former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In fact, of the UN's first 103 resolutions, 56 criticized Israel. This means that in its first 103 resolutions, the UN criticized the world's only Jewish state more than the other 195 countries in the world combined. This utterly absurd trend has continued on today, as Israel was criticized with five resolutions in 2016, while North Korea, where countless dissidents have been imprisoned and tortured while the general population is brainwashed by an unstable communist dictator, and Syria, where Assad has used chemical weapons on his own people and caused a massive refugee crisis, have each only seen one resolution target them. In addition to the ludicrous obsession with Israel, the resolutions have sometimes been ridiculous and have bridged into anti-Semitism. For example, in 1975, the UN passed a resolution saying that "Zionism is a form of racism," which would later be revoked in 1991. Zionism is defined as the support for a Jewish state in the land of Israel, and the suggestion that this is somehow racist is purely an attempt to demonize the Jewish state. These resolutions have strong implications for legitimizing the anti-semitic BDS movement, which is a major problem for Israel. Israel is the lone beacon of freedom and democracy in the Middle East and, accordingly, is one of the closest allies of the United States, if not the closest. The United States should not give one more dollar to an organization which places such a blatant double standard on such an important strategic and moral ally.

The UN has entirely failed to do what it is was created to do: to preserve peace and global security and to protect human rights. It has been rocked by several disgusting scandals and has

stood by and watched as genocides, civil wars, and horrifying human rights abuses have taken place. This is unsurprising given the presence of serial human rights abusers in the UN leadership and human rights councils. The presence of Russia on the Security Council seriously undermines the potential effectiveness of the UN at all, and the U.S. should not continue to agree to allow such a body to be an important decision maker in global security. The UN's obsession with the lone Jewish state is reprehensible and is firmly against the interests of the United States, given its unbreakable alliance with Israel. The Trump administration has promised to partially defund the UN, and ambassador Nikki Haley has done an incredible job thus far condemning the UN for their actions. Words, however, can only go so far, and partially defunding the UN only delays the problem and serves more as a symbol than an actual vehicle for change. Senators Cruz and Graham introduced a bill to entirely defund the UN, and this is a good start. Trump should follow their lead but take this one step further. He needs to take the U.S. out of the UN entirely, so we can finally delegitimize an organization that has become a nauseating home of inefficiency, failure, and discriminatory activity against one of America's closest allies.