



Press release - 6 December 2012

UN General Assembly vote on Palestine promotes hatred, not peace

The UN General Assembly's vote last week to grant non-member observer status to Palestine may look like a vote in favour of human rights, but it in fact rewards hatred and violence. In our view it will only deepen the conflict and lead to more suffering.

The voting in the General Assembly (138 nations in favour, 9 against and 41 abstentions) shows yet again that the nations of the world do not understand the nature of this conflict. In their desire to appease the demands of the enemies of Israel, they seem willing to sacrifice the right of the Jewish people to live in peace and security. This applies as much to those states which abstained from voting as those which voted for the resolution.

Andrew Tucker (Executive Director, Christians for Israel International): "Israel is not perfect. The Jews are not perfect. But they have a basic right to exist as a nation in Palestine in peace and security. It is time for the nations of this world to wake up to the fact that the Palestinian leadership and their Islamic allies in the region do not even acknowledge the legitimate existence of the Jews. They are not interested in a two-state solution at all, but have another agenda: the destruction of the Jewish state of Israel. The tragedy is that it is the Palestinian people themselves – both Jews and non-Jews – who will be the victims in the long run."

Harald Eckert (Chairman, Christians for Israel International): "Christians worldwide should be very concerned about this latest development. In their blind determination to achieve a two-state solution, the vast majority of nations have adopted a resolution which threatens the very existence of the Jewish nation. That is unacceptable. We must pray for the peace of Jerusalem. This means we should pray for the restoration of the nation of Israel, for the rebuilding of the fallen tent of David. Equally it means praying for the Arab Palestinians, for the nations of Syria and Egypt and all of Israel's neighbours, for Israel's enemies, and for all the nations of the Middle East. It means praying for our own nations, the leaders of our nations, and the church. Most importantly, it means praying ever more earnestly for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace."

IN OUR VIEW THERE ARE TWO ALARMING ASPECTS OF THE UN RESOLUTION:

The Palestinians' real agenda

First, the UN resolution goes out of its way to reaffirm the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as the representative of the Palestinian people. The PLO was established, and continues to exist, for the sole purpose of destroying the Jewish state, not living in peaceful co-existence. The simple fact is that a two-state solution (in which the Palestinians accept the existence of the Jewish state of Israel) is anathema to the PLO. This is proof that the purpose of the resolution was not to promote the scenario of two states living side by side in peace, but to undermine it.

The PLO's constitution, the Palestinian National Charter, denies the validity of the Jewish state of Israel, refutes any historical connection between the Jewish people and the land, and advocates the use of violence to "liberate" all of Palestine – including current Israel – from its Jewish identity. In short, the very existence of a Jewish state is total anathema to the PLO which will thus do all in its power to destroy it.

Granting statehood to a people which is filled with hatred of all things Jewish and Christian is tantamount to giving them free reign to put that hatred into action. That may appease the demands of Israel's Arab neighbours, but it is hardly a recipe for peace.

Mr. Abbas and the current Palestinian leadership repeatedly refuse to condemn terrorism aimed at Israel. In his speech to the UN, Mr. Abbas even dared to claim that Israel had no right to take action to prevent the constant terrorist attacks from Gaza, but that Israel was the "horrific and barbaric" aggressor. He has consistently refused to recognize the existence of the Jewish state of Israel. Mr. Abbas has NEVER publicly acknowledged the legitimate existence of Israel as a Jewish state.

The Palestinians could have been living in peace with the Jews long ago. The only reason they are not is because their leaders, together with the Arab nations of the Middle East, have consistently rejected proposals for a two-state solution which involves their acceptance of a Jewish state. They rejected the UN's Partition Plan in 1947. They attacked the new-born Jewish state of Israel in May 1948, the war that created the refugee problem. They attacked Israel in 1967, and again in 1973. They rejected the generous offers made by Israel's Prime Ministers Barak in 2000 and Olmert in 2007. And they continue to support the terrorist activities of Hezbollah and Hamas, and the firing of rockets on innocent civilians in Israel.

It is time for the nations of this world to wake up to the real agenda of the Palestinian leadership: the destruction of the Jewish state of Israel.

Ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem

The second alarming aspect of the resolution concerns Jerusalem. The resolution reaffirms the international community's refusal to recognize Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem, and its insistence on imposing the 1967 lines as the borders between Israel and a new Palestinian state. These lines have never been accepted as boundaries under international law. Most importantly, the 1967 lines would grant the Palestinians control over the Old City of Jerusalem.

The Old City of Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish faith. It has been the focus of Jewish dreams and aspirations for more than 2000 years. It was the source of their hope during this period of persecution and genocide in the diaspora. The Palestinians know this only too well. That is why they are so determined to have control over it.

During the 1400 years that Jerusalem was under Islamic control, the Palestinians showed no interest in Jerusalem whatsoever. It was only once the Jews started to restore Jerusalem in the 20th century that the Arabs suddenly became interested in the city. When Jordan (no friend of the Palestinians) illegally occupied the West Bank between 1948 and 1967, the Palestinians made no claim to Jerusalem. Why not? Because the Jews did not control it.

Mr. Abbas has repeatedly stated that all of the new Palestinian state, including so-called East Jerusalem (ie. the Old City), will be ethnically cleansed of Jews. During a victory ceremony in Ramallah following the UN vote last Sunday, Mahmoud Abbas shouted from the podium: “Raise your hands high, because you are Palestinians! You have proof that you are strong than the occupation [sic]!” UN recognition of Palestine is not the end of the road, Abbas vowed. “One day, a young Palestinian will raise the Palestinian flag over Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the state of Palestine,” he declared.

The PLO has declared they will remove all Jews from the State of Palestine, including the Old City of Jerusalem. In all likelihood, the Old City will return to the *status quo* when it was occupied by Jordan from 1948-1967. Under Jordanian rule, all Jews were expelled from the Old City, and Jewish buildings, including over 30 synagogues, were destroyed and desecrated. Under Palestinian control, there is no guarantee whatsoever that Christian and Jewish holy places will continue to receive the protection they have received for the last 40 years under Jewish sovereignty.

How should Christians respond?

Why should Christians care about all of this? Because we should stand up for the truth and oppose hatred in all its forms. Because we should be concerned about the peace of Jerusalem.

God has promised to restore the Jewish people to Jerusalem. He has promised that Jesus will return to Jerusalem, and that the Messiah will reign on the throne of David in the midst of the descendants of Jacob (ie. Israel). This is not because God doesn't like the Palestinians, but because that is the path He has chosen to establish His kingdom on earth.

As Christians, we are called to love and respect all peoples, just as God does. There is no contradiction between our love (and His love) for the Jewish people, and our love (and His love) for all peoples.

Christians should not support Israel and the Jewish people because they are better than others. We do not hate or oppose the Palestinians. On the contrary, we want nothing more than that all peoples in the region – Jews and Arabs – live in peace and mutual respect.

Israel is not perfect. The Jews are not perfect. We do not condone everything that the state of Israel says or does. But true peace in the region will only come, and the Palestinian people will only live in dignity and peace, if and when the Jewish people are allowed to do the same. As long as the Palestinians and Israel's neighbours continue to hate the Jews – in words and deeds – there will be no peace.

God's ways are mysterious. His plan for redemption of this world is counter-intuitive in our human eyes. Yet He has promised that ALL nations will be truly blessed when Israel has been restored and re-established in the land. We may not always like it, and it may seem strange, but that is the way He has declared it. At the end of the day, we face a choice – either to accept God's path for the blessing of the nations, or to try to achieve it through our own man-made plans.

We urge all Christians to continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. This means praying for the restoration of the nation of Israel, for the rebuilding of the fallen tent of David. Equally it means praying for the Arab Palestinians, for the nations of Syria and Egypt and all of Israel's neighbours, for

Israel's enemies, and for all the nations of the Middle East. It means praying for our own nations, the leaders of our nations, and the church. Most importantly, it means praying ever more earnestly for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Christians for Israel International

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Christians for Israel is an international, non-denominational Christian ministry representing hundreds of thousands of Christians on all continents.

Our mission is to bring biblical understanding in the church and among the nations concerning God's purposes for Israel, and to promote comfort of Israel through prayer and action.

Christians for Israel has affiliates, partners and representatives in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia and Former Soviet Union, Rwanda, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Switzerland, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Zambia.

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