
UN Human Rights Council
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High-Level Segment

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February 12th 2020 marked a new low in the bias and discrimination against Israel that is brewed in Geneva. On this date, the High Commissioner published an unprecedented discriminatory blacklist of companies, based on a resolution that was born in sin in this very chamber of the Human Rights Council, a body that is tainted with anti-Israel discrimination at its very core.

This decision introduced, for the first time, Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions-BDS- into the Human Rights Council. The list was an outcome of the automatic majority of States who do not care about human rights, but prefer to use this arena to delegitimize the State of Israel. It was also a testament to the deterioration of the credibility and impartiality of the Council and the High Commissioner.

Despite attempts by the High Commissioner herself to minimize the severity of the list, saying it is NOT a judicial or quasi- judicial process of any kind," in fact, by releasing the list, her office has acted as the jury, judge and executioner all in one, without any procedural safeguards, without due process and without the competence to do so.

It is clear that by producing this blacklist, the High Commissioner has given the seal of approval to the BDS movement and has sent out an implicit invitation to take action against these companies.

By surrendering to political pressures, the High Commissioner missed an opportunity to send to the Council a strong message of her independence, credibility and impartiality.

If the High Commissioner actually cared about the human rights of the Palestinians, she would have had to consider whether these companies, which provide crucial services such as banking, communications, water, consumer goods, actually violate any of their human rights. She would have considered the harm that this list will do to the thousands of Palestinians and Israelis that might lose their livelihood because of it. Economic co-existence is the most promising bridge for peace and stability, and should not become hostage to the OHCHR's political interests.

This decision is yet another example of the institutional bias and moral bankruptcy of the Council, and of the continued abuse of the funds and resources made available to the OHCHR in order to advance one sided, anti-Israel initiatives.

While Israel sees the promotion of Human Rights as a high priority, we will not be able to continue our engagement with the High Commissioner and the Council, and this step will have serious implications for our relations, including severing of contacts.

The publication of the blacklist reminds us of the infamous UN resolution 3379, that equated Zionism to Racism. We hope that this Council will correct this shameful mistake as the UN did in 1991, and erase it from its agenda for good. Israel will continue in the search of compromise and peace with our Palestinian neighbors, in spite of those who would like to undermine these efforts.

Before I leave this room, we call on our friends around the world to speak out against this shameful initiative which reminds us of dark periods in our history.