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**World Health Organization**

**WHA 76 – 24 May 2023**

**Committee B (18) – Explanation of Vote**

**Health conditions in the Palestinian territory and the Golan**

Ambassador Meirav Eilon Shahar

Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN in Geneva

It is extremely disappointing that year after year, states choose to turn away from logic and reality, and choose to support this resolution.

Year after year, you turn a blind eye to what is happening on the ground, and instead vote blindly on a politicized resolution that has not helped a single Palestinian for decades.

Year after year, you allow the Syrian regime, who has murdered hundreds of thousands of its own people, who has systematically bombed hospitals, who has targeted doctors who helped those fighting for freedom, who has tortured thousands in detention, who has used chemical weapons against its own people to whitewash their abhorrent crimes.

To present a resolution with them, and then say you care about health- now that is double standards. You see, the Syrian regime is not a partner in peace. The Syrian regime is not a partner in health. The Syria regime is a partner in death, desolation, and destruction, and today they have been given legitimation by many states here in this room.

Chair,

I would like to remind everyone here today that WHO did indeed visit the Golan in 2017, and found that Israel gives anyone living in the Israeli Golan Heights the same access to the same quality health care, as people living in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. This was noted in a report by WHO, a report that was sadly blocked by the Syrians from ever being published.

I want to thank the countries that saw this resolution for what it is and voted against it.

Chair,

Earlier, the Palestinian delegation spoke about non-politicization of the WHO. He spoke about non-politicization and then went on to accuse Israel of fascism. He went on to spread falsehoods and lies. This resolution has never been consensual, it has never been non-political. It has been a ritual by states since 1968. It is a decision that is stuck in time. It has been a tool, just like the Palestinians use in nearly every multilateral arena, to target Israel. It is presented under a separate item, under committee b, and is devoid of reality. This is a political decision. It always has been.

This resolution does not support WHOs program for the Palestinian people. It does nothing and has never done anything to improve health on the ground. Its sole aim is to attack my country.

This organization is about health. It is about promoting WHO works including the assistance they give to the Palestinian people and it is about discussing health emergencies that need our attention. Israel supports the vital work of this organization but the vote today remains a constant stain on its credibility.

I thank you.