



The 2011 UN Program to Undermine Israeli/Palestinian Peace Efforts

On January 21, 2011 the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) convened its first meeting of the year and adopted its program for 2011. Though CEIRPP is a UN entity, created and funded by the UN General Assembly, it is in many respects the mouthpiece of the “Observer Mission of Palestine” to the UN and can be assumed to reflect the outlook of Mahmoud Abbas and his close collaborators.

CEIRPP’s program for 2011 and the statements made at the CEIRPP January 21 meeting by the “Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN”, Riyad Mansour make it clear that the Palestinian Authority has no present plans to negotiate a peace treaty with Israel. Instead it plans to use the UN to impose a peace arrangement on Israel on the very same terms on which Yasir Arafat insisted, when he rejected the “Clinton Parameters” in the negotiations of 2000.

The peace arrangement which the UN will be asked to impose will (a) establish a Palestinian state within the 1949 armistice demarcation lines, usually referred to as “the 1967 borders,” (*without land swaps*), and (b) provide for the migration of up to 4.7 million Palestinians to the State of Israel under the so-called “right of return.” The program also calls for the admission of the “State of Palestine” to membership in the United Nations.

To attain this result the sponsors of this program need (a) Security Council approval and (b) a two-thirds vote in the UN General Assembly.

The Security Council

There is every reason to believe that the United States will be prepared to veto any proposal to have the UN take action that would bypass Israeli/Palestinian peace negotiations by imposing an arrangement that Israel rejects. For the last four years, the U.S. did not have to use its veto to block a proposed Security Council resolution directed against Israel because opponents of Israel did not have the nine affirmative votes needed to require a veto so as to prevent approval of the resolution.

However, there is reason for concern about the make-up of the current Security Council. Opponents of Israel appear to have been able to load the 2011 Council with non-permanent members that can be expected to vote against Israel. An effort should nevertheless be undertaken to get seven Council members to commit to vote “no” or, at least abstain on resolutions designed to impose a peace arrangement that Israel rejects and to grant Palestinian membership in the UN without a peace agreement. Even if that

effort fails, thus requiring a U.S. veto, it is important that the United States does not stand alone. As many other members as possible should be encouraged to join the U.S. in voting “no” or to abstain.

The General Assembly

Under the UN Charter, members may be admitted to the United Nations by decision of the General Assembly “*upon the recommendation of the Security Council.*” Thus, without Security Council support for implementing the program outlined by CEIRPP, the CEIRPP plan for UN recognition of the State of Palestine and its seating as a UN member state will not be attained.

That will not prevent supporters of the CEIRPP program from seeking to embarrass the United States and Israel by getting the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution that will put two-thirds of its membership on record in support of recognition of the State of Palestine. Such action will not have any *legal* effect, but it will be used to support the argument that the United States and Israel thwart the wishes of “the international community.”

At the January 21 CEIRPP, the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations announced that 107 UN member states have recognized the State of Palestine and that a continuing effort will be made to get to the level of two-thirds of the membership, which, if all members are present, would be 128.

There is no doubt that a major, organized effort is now under way to persuade 128 states to support the CEIRPP plan. Given past experience, it is likely that ethically challenged means will be used to attain that number. It is critically important to counteract this effort, which is designed to undermine efforts to attain a bilateral peace agreement between Israel and a future State of Palestine.

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