

The US and Israel: The Hypocrisy of UN Security Council Resolutions

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Global Research, July 31, 2006

31 July 2006

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
In-depth Report: [THE WAR ON LEBANON](#)

“hypocrisy is the practice of professing beliefs, feelings, or moral values that one does not hold or possess.”

Two nations stand out above all others as notorious serial abusers of UN resolutions – the US and Israel. Over the last half century, the US has used its Security Council veto many dozens of times to prevent any resolutions from passing condemning Israel for its abusive or hostile actions or that were inimical to Israeli interests. It’s also voted against dozens of others overwhelmingly supported by the rest of the world in the UN General Assembly. By its actions and with 6% of the world’s population, the US has thus arrogantly ignored the will of nearly all the other 94% to support its client state even when Israel had committed war crimes or crimes against humanity the rest of the world demanded it be held to account for. In the words of one UK observer using a baseball analogy: “Only the USA could have a World Series and not invite the rest of the world.”

The Israeli record on UN resolutions over that same period is far worse. With full US support for its actions, it’s flagrantly and with little or no pretense routinely ignored over five dozen UN Resolutions condemning or censuring it for its actions against the Palestinians or other Arab people, deploring it for committing them, or demanding, calling on or urging the Jewish state to end them. Israel never did or intends to up to the present, including the mass slaughter and destruction it’s now inflicting on the people of Lebanon and the Palestinians in their Territories that Israel illegally occupies and attacks whenever it wishes. It does so with impunity using any contrived pretext it can get away with to deny the Palestinians any chance ever for a viable sovereign independent state and to avoid a political solution with them it won’t ever tolerate.

UN Resolutions As Examples of US and Israeli Hypocrisy

Consider now three UN Security Council Resolutions as examples of gross hypocrisy – one Israel and its US paymaster and benefactor support and two others both countries do not so they ignore them. In September, 2004, the Security Council passed UN Resolution 1559, cosponsored by the US and France, that called on Syria to withdraw its military forces from Lebanon and stop intervening in the Lebanese political process. It also demanded all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias (aimed mainly at Hezbollah, of course) disarm and disband (meaning surrender). Following the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, in February, 2005, Syria bowed to international pressure and complied fully with the resolution by April. In so doing, it ended its 29 year occupation of the part of the country it controlled which excluded the rest in the South under Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) control that Israel maintained after its invasion of Southern Lebanon in 1978 and again

in 1982. Hezbollah's military resistance wing did not comply. Had it done so, it would have left itself and the Shia third of the Lebanese population dependent on it defenseless against the Israelis. The Lebanese government and its small and weak security forces had no power to force Hezbollah's compliance and were unable to do it.

Hezbollah was born out of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the oppressive occupation that followed. It's a popular resistance movement, much like and in the same spirit as the French Resistance freedom fighters the Nazis called terrorists, formed to resist their illegal occupiers and expel them. Ever since, it's continued as an effective resistance force against the Israelis that finally withdrew from Lebanon in May, 2000 but maintained its occupation of the 25 square kilometer area of South Lebanon known as Shebaa Farms it never relinquished after seizing it in the 1967 war. Hezbollah, the Lebanese people and its government demand Israel give it back as well as cease its frequent hostile cross-border incursions, unjustifiable abductions, repeated violations of the country's airspace as well as end its current brutal assault and invasion of their country once again. To continue being an effective resistance force, Hezbollah remained armed, has every right to do so in its own self-defense whatever resolutions the UN passes, and will continue resisting Israeli oppression until it ends. It's now doing it against a vastly superior IDF invasion force in South Lebanon far more effectively than the Israeli government is willing to admit.

Now consider UN Resolutions 465 and 476. The Security Council unanimously adopted UN Resolution 465 in March, 1980 that addressed Israel's illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights. Among other provisions in it, it condemned Israel's policy of "setting parts of its population and new Immigrants in those territories (and said doing so constituted) a flagrant violation of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war and also constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East." It called on the government of Israel to "dismantle the existing settlements and in particular to cease....the establishment, construction and planning of (new) settlements in the Arab territories since 1967, including Jerusalem."

In the last 26 years, Israel has flagrantly violated this resolution and still continues to build new settlements illegally in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. The US supports and funds the Israeli government enabling it to do it, and the UN and world community have taken no action to bring Israel into compliance which it could do by imposing sanctions severe enough to force Israel to stop new settlement construction, dismantle the existing ones and make restitution to the Palestinians and Syrians for the harm caused them.

The Security Council also passed Resolution 476 in June, 1980. Like Resolution 465, it, too, reaffirms the necessity to end the Israeli occupation of Arab territories ongoing since the 1967 war. It went on to condemn Israel for its continued refusal to do it or to comply with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions demanding it does. It repeated provisions detailed in Resolution 465 and reaffirmed its determination in the event of Israeli non-compliance to examine practical ways to get it to do so. Israel never complied, and the UN never took action to see that it did. Also, by its reinvasion of Lebanon now and its unending occupation of the Shebaa Farms area it's held since 1967, Israel is also in violation of UN resolution 425 and nine additional ones demanding the withdrawal of its forces from South Lebanon. The net effect of UN action - many relevant and high-sounding words and speeches amounting to nothing, at least when it concerns Israel.

The Hypocrisy of the US Congress

Now consider a further gross hypocrisy. On July 20, the US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly 410 – 8 to unconditionally endorse Israel’s illegal aggression against the Palestinians and people of Lebanon. Earlier in the week, the US Senate passed a similar resolution by voice vote, but added a worthless and outrageous clause that “urges all sides to protect innocent civilian life and infrastructure.” The House version showed no such disingenuous delicacy, and in language Orwell would love, actually praised Israel for “minimizing civilian loss” ignoring the obvious evidence to the contrary.

Along with its arrogance, the Congressional resolution violated the UN Charter by unjustifiably claiming Israel has the right of self-defense guaranteed it under Article 51 and thus has just cause to destroy Lebanon’s infrastructure and kill innocent civilians to do it. Once again, Orwell would approve. These House and Senate resolutions are compelling evidence of both parties’ unconditional support for Israel whatever it does. They also show the Bush administration’s utter contempt for all international laws and norms and its unconditional endorsement of Israel when it violates them as it did so egregiously in its outrageous attack on a civilian target in Qana on July 30 killing 60 or more innocent men, women and at least 37 children.

The Congressional resolution also unjustifiably accused, and by implication condemned, Lebanon for failing to observe UN Resolution 1559 by not disbanding and disarming Hezbollah and allowing it instead to amass thousands of rockets and other weapons. It also criticized the legitimate integration of Hezbollah into the Lebanese government where it’s represented by 11 democratically elected lawmakers in the Parliament and two ministers in the country’s cabinet. The Congressional resolution ignores the fact that UN Resolution 1559 calls only for Hezbollah’s armed militia to be disarmed and disbanded, regardless of how unreasonable that demand is.

For Lebanon’s failure to enforce UN Resolution 1559, including provisions not even in it, the US Congress, in effect, gave Israel its approval to destroy the country and kill many hundreds of its people. At the same time, Israel never complied with UN Resolutions 465 and 476 demanding it withdraw from the Occupied Territories and Golan Heights it holds illegally, UN Resolution 425 and nine others making the same demand it remove its forces from all Lebanese territory, and all the dozens of other UN resolutions Israel routinely violates or disregards.

The US Congress, UN, world leaders and most Arab states remain committed to Israel overtly or tacitly. They’ve done it despite Israel’s many violations including the crime of aggression in its ongoing brutal assaults on Lebanon and the Occupied Territories that it falsely and disingenuously claims to be a justifiable response to the capture (not kidnapping) of three of its soldiers, a minor provocation at most. At the same time, the Congress and world leaders remain silent refusing to condemn Israel for its failure to comply with UN Resolutions 465, 476, 425, nine similar ones. and all the other UN resolutions against it for the past half century.

The message is clear. When it comes to the UN, the US runs the show, and no substantive or significant action can be taken with teeth unless it approves – especially when it applies to Israel, in part, because of the power of the Israeli lobby in the US. Also, all actions of a valued US client state are quite acceptable, even when they violate the UN Charter and international law, so long as they serve Washington’s interests. Israel’s illegal aggression in

Lebanon and the Occupied Territories clearly do. In spite of it, the US, as de facto ruler of the world, has given the Israelis carte blanche to run amuck and commit the supreme war crime with impunity. In the kind of world Orwell understood, Israel's mass killing and destruction is in the US's imperial interest, especially in the strategically important Middle East where oil is central to all else, so its scorched-earth policy is quite acceptable and may go on unabated and end only when the two allies decide to stop it. It doesn't matter what the law is or that the innocent are paying the supreme price for its violation.

Peacekeeping Hypocrisy

A brief word about still more hypocrisy. The US, UK and Israel have called for a robust international military force (Israel appears to want a NATO run one) to serve as "peacekeepers" in South Lebanon once Israel ceases its aggression and allows it to come in. No one is considering the wishes of Hezbollah, the people of South Lebanon it serves or the Lebanese government. Only Israel and its US and UK allies are to be allowed to decide or whatever other countries Israel is willing to allow in the decision-making loop. It's also undiscussed publicly what Israel really has in mind, how oppressive the Christian South Lebanon Army (SLA) was when it acted as Israel's occupying enforcer after 1978 or how ineffective the current UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has been since it was first put in place in 1978 and never succeeded in establishing peace or security.

So what's really going on? After just days on the ground inside Lebanon, the IDF is finding the going very rough. It's already admitted to taking significant losses with dozens of its soldiers killed and hundreds more injured in intense fighting with a determined and resilient Hezbollah force as committed now to expelling an invading Israeli force as it was in the 1980s and 1990s when it succeeded in doing it. Clearly the IDF is struggling and taking more losses than it's willing to continue sustaining. So it wants instead to have a proxy army it can control come into South Lebanon, again act as its enforcers, engage Hezbollah in confrontation if necessary and have it do its killing and dying for it. Will Hezbollah and the people of South Lebanon now allow it in when they were unwilling to accept their SLA and UNIFIL occupiers in the past? Not a chance, Israel and the US know it, and yet both countries are going through the charade of trying to convince the world, the Lebanese people throughout the country, and its government that they will. Once the fighting ends, the IDF likely will withdraw and an occupying force acceptable to Israel will move in to serve in its place. It will be as unwelcome as the others that preceded it and eventually it will be driven out. But before it is, many more will die and suffer, and the long struggle of the Lebanese people and Palestinians as well in the Occupied Territories will go on unresolved.

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