



file Hadassah

THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

May 16, 2000

Dear Nita,

Thank you for your letter of May 3. I have followed the application process of Hadassah's bid to gain UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consultative status. My meeting with Hadassah was, I hope, helpful. We all continue to engage Hadassah representatives in ongoing consultations.

Hadassah is a fine organization, responsible for many humanitarian deeds throughout the world. Hadassah is a non-political organization serving the needs of people, without regard to their race, nationality, or religious beliefs. Their program of training health care professionals in the West Bank and Gaza is evidence of that fact. For that reason, I was deeply annoyed to hear that members of the ECOSOC Non-Governmental Committee (NGO) opposed their application last January. Comments made by Syria and Lebanon were particularly disturbing and helped mobilize our efforts to help Hadassah.

I can assure you that we are working diligently to convince members of the NGO Committee to support Hadassah's application. I think we are slowly building consensus. We continue to talk with members of the Committee who are from Islamic countries. While all of them recognize that Hadassah is doing good work, most still are obsessing about its Zionist origins, something which is both a simple fact of history and not germane. Nita, I assure you I will provide strong and active support for Hadassah and I hope that, with our efforts, Hadassah will be granted the ECOSOC status it deserves.

Thank you again for your kind letter and for the support you have provided to Hadassah.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Holbrooke

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Nita M. Lowey
Congress of the United States

18th District, New York

May 3, 2000

Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke
United States Representative to the United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Holbrooke:

I am writing to thank you for the attention you have given to Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, as it prepares to present its application once again for enhanced non-governmental status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council. I understand you had a productive meeting with Hadassah President Bonnie Lipton and members of her staff yesterday.

As you recall, 57 of my colleagues joined me last February in writing to you to express our dismay at the charges leveled at Hadassah by Lebanese and Syrian representatives to the U.N. Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations during the first consideration of Hadassah's application. I was particularly outraged that Hadassah, a humanitarian organization dedicated to providing assistance to medical and educational institutions throughout the world, was treated in this manner. As the May/June session of the Committee approaches, it is critical that the U.S. demonstrate its commitment to the approval of Hadassah's application, and I appreciate your commitment to contact Committee representatives from eight countries including Romania, chair of the upcoming session.

It is my hope that, with your help, a consensus in support of Hadassah's application can be built during next week's informal preparatory meetings, and a date certain can be established for Committee consideration of the application. Your vocal support will allow Hadassah to take its well-deserved place among other non-governmental organizations with a demonstrated dedication to humanitarian activities throughout the world. Thank you once again for your help, and I look forward to continuing our work together on behalf of Hadassah.

Sincerely,

Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress

cc: JC
USUN/W
ECOSOC
Press

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(718) 829-8027
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SEND TO
Melanie Vener
(with my reply)
for info of Mrs Clinton

May 12, 2000

NITA,

Dear ~~Congresswoman~~ Lowey:

Followed

Thank you for your letter of May 3. ~~Like you, I have been following events~~
~~surrounding~~ the application process of Hadassah's bid to gain UN Economic and Social
Council (ECOSOC) consultative status. ~~As you pointed out in your letter, I had~~ My
~~productive meeting with Hadassah and my staff continues to engage Hadassah~~ was, I hope, helpful. We all
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Sincerely,

Richard C. Holbrooke

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

something which is
both a simple part of
history and not
a German.

*file
Hadassah*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 17, 2000

Ms. Bonnie Lipton
National President
Hadassah
50 West 58th Street
New York, NY 10019-2500

Dear Bonnie,

I have been apprised of Hadassah's application for special consultative status at the U.N. Economic and Social Council. I agree that Hadassah's application should be acted upon favorably and my office has communicated my views to U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. I know he will make every effort to be of assistance.

Hadassah has a long and illustrious record on critical humanitarian issues ranging from women's and children's rights to health and education. Hadassah's voice, as enhanced through ECOSOC consultative status, would contribute significantly to the advancement of the issues that are critically important to human progress.

As you observe Passover this week, you have my prayerful good wishes.

Sincerely,

Hillary

Hillary Rodham Clinton

file Hadassah

HADASSAH

To: Ann Lewis – 202.456-2215
CC: Marla Gilson
From: Amy D. Goldstein
Date: 04/07/00
Re: Hadassah's ECOSOC Application

Pages: 23

Marla Gilson suggested that I send you – for your information – the enclosed briefing materials regarding Hadassah's application for special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as a non-governmental organization (NGO).

Hadassah currently enjoys the most common type of NGO status at the United Nations. We have applied to ECOSOC as a natural outgrowth of the work that we currently do in the areas of competence of ECOSOC, as well as to expand our ability to do that work.

Accompanying this memorandum are press articles, statements from other NGO's including B'nai B'rith (made on Israeli radio), the Anti-Defamation League, and the Government of Israel. In addition, we have contacted 18 of the 19 countries that sit on this committee requesting appointments to meet with their representatives. We seek to discuss with them the work of Hadassah in Israel, with the Palestinians, with third world nations, and in their own regions and countries.

Representatives Lowey and King circulated a letter (enclosed) to Ambassador Holbrooke urging him to help secure our acceptance on this committee. Our National President Bonnie Lipton also sent a letter to Ambassador Holbrooke, and he responded favorably, inviting us to set up a meeting with him (see correspondence). We have a meeting scheduled for April 17, 2000.

Today, I received several telephone calls from other NGO's in the Jewish community regarding our position on the Beijing +5 Conference, in light of how we are being treated by the ECOSOC NGO committee. We are hopeful that our various efforts will be successful in May, when we again go before the committee. Since you have had a close friendship with Hadassah over the years, we thought that you should be aware of the potential situation in the Jewish community. Obviously, it would be awkward if our application were rejected.

Hadassah is committed to the work of Beijing +5 and the ECOSOC Committee. We hope that we will have the opportunity in the future to contribute to this important work.



HADASSAH
THE WOMEN'S
ZIONIST
ORGANIZATION
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FOUNDED BY
HENRIETTA SZOLD
IN 1912

February 7, 2000

The Honorable Richard Holbrooke
Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary
Permanent Representative from the United States to the United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Holbrooke:

We are writing to draw your attention to the developments last week during the review of Hadassah's application for special consultative status at the U.N. Economic and Social Council. As you may know, Hadassah testified on Wednesday, January 26, 2000 before the committee reviewing our application.

While Hadassah's representatives were treated with respect, several countries repeatedly asked questions about Hadassah's relationship with Zionism, and the Lebanese representative and the Syrian observer raised the discussion equating Zionism with racism. The Syrian representative went further, stating that "Zionism is based on the concept of occupation, terrorism, plundering of resources and land, racial supremacy and elitism."

This accusation, leveled against our organization in particular and against all Zionists in general, reflects a troubling atmosphere in the United Nations, especially at a time when Israel is pursuing peace with her neighbors. Moreover, the Lebanese and Syrian representatives dismissed the repudiation of U.N. resolution 3379 equating Zionism with racism, by stating that U.N. Assembly resolution 4686 was passed due to "political pressure," and further stating that the equation between Zionism and racism still holds.

Hadassah's more than 300,000 members were instrumental in achieving the repudiation of this troubling resolution, and our membership will be dismayed once they hear of this development. We would like to meet with you to discuss these developments and other issues of mutual concern.

We hope that we will be able to meet in the near future. Someone from our staff will follow up with your office shortly, to arrange a meeting. We look forward to discussing these and other important issues with you soon.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Lipton
National President

cc: Barbara Spaack, National Chair, Israel, Zionist and International Affairs



THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

February 28, 2000

Ms. Bonnie Lipton, National President
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.
50 West 58th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019-2500

Dear Ms. Lipton:

Thank you for your letter of February 7. Like you, I was troubled by the January 26th proceedings of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Non-Governmental Organizations Committee. Hadassah is a widely respected organization with an established record of service to humanitarian causes, and should be granted ECOSOC consultative status.

The comments made by the representatives of Syria and Lebanon, including the allegation equating Zionism with racism are especially disturbing. We have all worked too hard to defeat these anti-Semitic attitudes. It is also noteworthy that these caustic allegations are not germane to the review of your application. This process ought to be limited to the evaluation of Hadassah's activities to determine the relevance of its work to ECOSOC.

As you are aware, the NGO Committee has deferred consideration of your application to its next session, which meets from May 15-19 and June 12-23. In order to prepare for this, I agree that we should meet to discuss this matter and determine what measures can be taken to help Hadassah secure consultative status with ECOSOC. Please contact my office at your earliest convenience to schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Holbrooke".
Richard C. Holbrooke

03/13/2000 17:05 202-363-4651

HADASSAH-WASHINGTON

Page 03/03
2002

THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

March 10, 2000

Dear Nita:

Thank you for your letter of February 23. I have received similar letters from concerned individuals, including Bonnie Lipton, the Hadassah National President. A copy of my response to Ms. Lipton is attached to this letter.

Hadassah deserves to be granted UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consultative status, and my staff is working diligently to achieve that goal. The Syrian and Lebanese comments equating Zionism with racism were an outrageous and disturbing reminder of a hostile past. We all worked hard to pass UN Resolution 46/86, which rescinded a previous resolution that endorsed that concept, and we continue to work to change anti-Semitic attitudes in the UN and the Middle East.

In my letter to Ms. Lipton, I requested that a member of her staff contact my office to schedule a meeting to discuss this matter and identify measures to help Hadassah gain ECOSOC consultative status. I am looking forward to that meeting in order to prepare for the next session of the ECOSOC Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Committee in May. One of the problems we face is an NGO Committee composed of many countries with positions contrary to ours, such as Cuba and Sudan. The opportunity to bring balance to the NGO Committee will not occur until elections in May 2002. In the meantime, we will work to insure that the voices of NGOs are heard and welcomed at the UN and that Hadassah will be given its rightful place among the NGO community at the United Nations.

Thank you again for expressing your thoughts to me on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Holbrooke".

Richard Holbrooke

The Honorable

Nita M. Lowey,

U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC 20515.

president's PASSOVER AND ZIONISM column



Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, is built into the Passover Haggada. The parallel between Moses leading us to the land of our ancestors and the return from exile in the modern era is not only obvious to us, it is the reason so many people around the world are inspired by Israel's story.

Passover not only teaches us our history but our purpose. Yes, Zionism is about advancing the Jewish family, but as we returned to our land we were also reminded to pursue justice, to be a light unto the nations, to welcome strangers and to feel compassion for our enemies. These are not just lessons we teach at the Seder table but ethics built into the fabric of Jewish life.

On one recent day at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem I was privileged to view these lessons in action. In addition to seeing the usual multicultural roster of patients—Jewish, Christian and Muslim—we hosted the Prince and Princess of Thailand and gave a humanitarian award to the Dalai Lama. I also met with a group of Palestinian medical students who were studying neurology at Hadassah. When I asked their dean why he chose our program, he said, "These are our best and brightest students and Hadassah is the best hospital."

But there are some people for whom facts are of little consequence. Two of Hadassah's ablest representatives, Bernice Tannenbaum and Ruth Kaslove, discovered this recently when they went to testify before the United Nations Economic and Social Council's Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in support of Hadassah's application for special consultative status with ECOSOC. Though we already have official UN status (as do hundreds of other NGO's), this enhanced status would enable us to work more effectively on human rights, child labor, women's rights and the other humanitarian issues that ECOSOC addresses.

Some of the delegates were decidedly behind the times when it comes to the ethos of Middle East peacemaking. Though most acknowledged Hadassah's humanitarian work, some unveiled old canards about the word "Zionism" in Hadassah's name. "We know that for decades now the United Nations, in its famous resolution, established a parallel between Zionism and racism," said the Lebanese delegate, Hassan Najem. The Syrian and Palestinian observers at the meeting added similar sentiments. The committee chair deferred a vote on our application until May.

I know that the Jewish people are still not universally loved, but the reaction of some of the delegates nevertheless shocked me. So for the benefit of those who don't know us as well as they should—and to aid read-

ers in talking about an issue so central to our identity—I offer the following very short course on Zionism.

1. Zionism is the belief in Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and its centrality in Jewish life.
2. Zionism—as in "Next year in Jerusalem"—is supported by all the denominations of Judaism and the overwhelming majority of the world's Jews. Attempts to express sympathy for the Jews while attacking Zionism are ludicrous. Every people has the right to decide who its foes are, and anyone who attacks Zionism per se attacks the Jewish people as a whole.
3. There are Zionists of all stripes—political and, like Hadassah, non-political—and identifying the word only with fringe elements in Israel is an injustice.
4. In 1975, led by a Soviet-Arab coalition, the UN General Assembly passed its infamous resolution equating Zionism with racism. In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, the General Assembly repealed the resolution. But some rejectionists are still trying to dig up a dead issue.

I am proud of Hadassah's role in building Israel. I am equally proud of our reputation for opening our doors to everyone. Treating Arabs, Africans, Asians and Europeans is an expression of Zionism, too.

We treat everyone equally, even those who come from countries that have opposed Israel's existence for most of the past 50 years, because we are Jews and because it is right. We offer hospitality to strangers because our tradition teaches us to put ourselves in their place. The Haggada tells us to remember the Exodus from Egypt—and all its lessons—not as history but as if each of us personally was liberated.

Perhaps we remember the harder lessons of our return to our homeland because they are mixed with the sweetness of Passover. We have no Moses today to part the waters of exile, or the waters of hate, so each of us has to have a little Moses in us. I'm looking forward to the Seders and—a few weeks later—to our next appointment at the UN.

Bonnie Lipton

BONNIE LIPTON

The NY JEWISH WEEK 2-25-00

UN.
ECCFDC

Lost Tribes

*Concerning a chance encounter between two old neighbors
the Jews and — the Assyrians.*

One day in 1943, the Labor Zionist essayist Hayim Greenberg was visited in New York by a stranger claiming to represent, of all things, the Assyrian nation. It appears you Jews are about to get yourselves a state, the visitor said. Can you spare a corner of it for an old neighbor?

Greenberg was dumbfounded, he later wrote. When Jews and Assyrians last crossed paths, our Northern Kingdom was destroyed and 10 tribes were lost.

Now they want our help? But you saved us once before, the visitor persisted, when Jonah warned Nineveh to repent. Now we're reduced to 30,000 battered souls, clinging to a mountainside in northern Iraq, beset by Arabs, Turks and Kurds alike. All Europe spurns us. You are our last hope.

Besides, after Hitler, you may not need as much space as you thought.

J.J. Goldberg is author of "Jewish Power: Inside the Jewish Establishment."



"It doesn't matter how I answered," Greenberg wrote, quoting the visitor's own conclusion: "History is brutal, and — who knows the ways of Providence?"

As Providence would have it, the two paths crossed again last month, at the United Nations. Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, was appearing before an obscure UN committee that approves non-governmental organizations seeking UN affiliation.

Also on the schedule that day was the Assyrian National Congress.

Neither organization passed muster. The committee "was not what I would call a friendly group," says former Hadassah president Bernice Tannenbaum, who came to testify. She faced a barrage of venom from Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian delegates. The Syrian actually quoted the defunct "Zionism is racism" resolution. Most countries were sympathetic, but the Syrian-Lebanese hostility was enough to block consensus. Only

a tricky maneuver by the Tunisian delegate saved Hadassah's bid, deferring it to the next meeting in May. "It was very disheartening," Tapnenbaum says.

The Assyrians, by contrast, were rejected outright — after furious denunciations from nearly everyone present. They never even replied, because they hadn't sent a representative. The State Department warned them in advance that it would be pointless. Disheartening? You should only know from disheartening.

"I'm not surprised," says the president of the Assyrian National Congress, Sargon Dadesho, a full-time Assyrian rights activist in Modesto, Calif. "We have long been opposed by the Iraqi observer and his gang, the Arab countries."

Assyrians don't lack enemies, and Iraq easily tops the list. With Dadesho, though, it's personal. A militant nationalist, he's been targeted by Baghdad for assassination. A hitman was sent to Modesto in 1990, but the FBI nabbed him outside Dadesho's home. Dadesho won a \$1.5 million judgment against Baghdad in federal court, which he's still trying to collect.

Assyrians are patient people.

Assyria first emerged 4,000 years ago as a mighty Semitic empire, ruling the expanse between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that the Greeks called Mesopotamia ("between the rivers"). For 1,500 years, from their fabled capital in Nineveh, they battled Babylon and Egypt for control of Middle East. A military defeat around 610 set off a long decline.

Since then they've farmed quietly in villages along the Euphrates. They practice an ancient form of Christianity, the Nestorian rite, and speak Aramaic, the language of the Talmud. In 1915 they tried to throw off Turkish rule but were butchered, along with another Christian tribe, the Armenians. Thousands fled into exile.

After World War I, the League of Nations promised the Assyrians autonomy in their homeland, which they call Ashur or Bet Nahrain (Aramaic for, well, Mesopotamia). But Britain gave the region instead to the newly formed Kingdom of Iraq. Iraq has been trying ever since to assimilate them forcefully into its Arabic-speaking majority.

"The trouble is, they consider us a religion, not an ethnic group," says former Illinois state Sen. John Nimrod, president of the Assyrian Universal Alliance, an umbrella for rival Assyrian groups. "What we're trying to do is tell the world who we are. We've been trying for years. But nobody notices."

If they're invisible, it's partly because they're terribly inconvenient. Their Bet Nahrain happens to overlap the homeland of

after World War II and then betrayed. Divided among Turkey, Iraq and Iran, the Kurds have been battling everybody ever since.

Today, thanks to worldwide revulsion for Saddam Hussein, Kurds have a measure of U.S.-protected self-rule in northern Iraq. They're in no mood to share it with the Assyrians, whom they outnumber 10 to 1. Armed clashes are reported almost monthly.

The Assyrians have another problem. They're hopelessly divided. "They have dozens of organizations, and they all hate each other," says an exasperated U.S. official. Last fall, when the Iraqi opposition assembled its warring factions for a CIA-backed convention in New York, Washington made sure five seats were reserved for Assyrians on the 100-member executive council.

"Unfortunately, we had 16 groups demanding those seats," said the U.S. official. "Nobody was willing to give in. It was a nightmare."

John Nimrod, the Chicago leader, has been trying for years to forge unity under his Assyrian Universal Association. He's got two dozen groups sitting together. He's also built respectful ties with government officials in countries where Assyrians live, from Washington to Tehran.

He's up against tall odds, though, none taller than Sargon Dadesho. Dadesho is tough to tame. He infuriates Baghdad, calling Assyrians "the indigenous people" of Iraq. He also defends other Christian "indigenous peoples" in the region, from the Copts of Egypt to the Nubians of Sudan. Some observers say his rhetoric helps intensify Arab hostility.

Through it all, Assyrians continue to look with longing and envy at their old neighbors, the Jews. It's hard not to. Jews are the one non-Muslim minority in the Middle East that's successfully stood up to the Arab majority. Jews have also succeeded spectacularly at the very thing the Assyrians have done worst: garnering sympathy from the Christian West.

Nimrod, who used to represent the mostly Jewish village of Skokie in the state Senate, brings the topic up repeatedly, always trailing off a moment later. "There have been some contacts in the past," he says. And later: "There are many similarities. Your language is our language." And finally: "What makes for strange bedfellows is that Israel is close to Turkey." That makes cooperation impossible.

Next May Nimrod is taking a delegation to Armenia, which usually ignores them. He hopes to spotlight their shared suffering. "We might get some things to come out about the 1915 genocide," he says, adding hopefully: "That might bring us close to the Holo-

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The Full Story

February 4, 2000 / 21 Shvat 5760

In the Beginning

Syria Resolute Against Zionism

By: Steve Lipman,

Syria might make peace with Israel one of these days.

When will it make peace with Hadassah?

A Syrian observer at the UN, invoking the reviled and repealed UN resolution that called Zionism a form of racism, joined Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority last week in urging a UN body to reject Hadassah's application for enhanced status as a non-governmental organization.

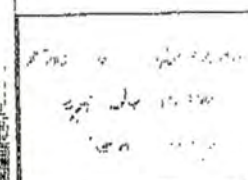
Hadassah-The Women's Zionist Organization of America, which bills itself as the largest Jewish organization in the country, is part of a movement "based on the concept of ethnic superiority, of occupation and exclusion of others," Syria's observer said during an hour of questioning of Bernice Tannenbaum, former Hadassah president.

She and Ruth Kaslove, Hadassah's NGO representative, appeared before a committee of the UN's Economic and Social Council requesting an upgrade to consultative status, which seven other Jewish groups — among more than 1,000 NGOs — now have. That status, Tannenbaum says, would put Hadassah at "a higher level" in UN circles and give it greater entrée to UN meetings where humanitarian activities are discussed.

Thumbs down, said Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians.

"We know for decades now the United Nations, in its famous resolution, established a parallel between Zionism and racism," Hassan Najem, Lebanon's representative on the council, said of the resolution that was adopted in 1975 and repealed in 1991. It was repealed, Najem said, "due to political reasons. It was not based on a conceptual position."

The Arab comments marked the first known time that the anti-Zionism resolution was used in this way against a Jewish organization in the last decade, Tannenbaum said. "It's rather unfortunate that their representatives sit at the UN and recall an



old canard."

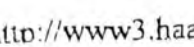
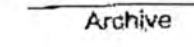
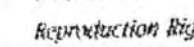
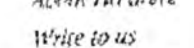
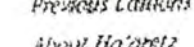
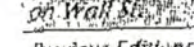
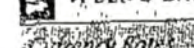
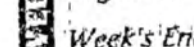
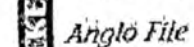
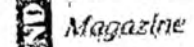
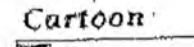
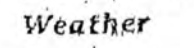
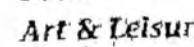
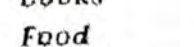
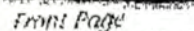
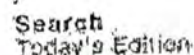
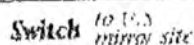
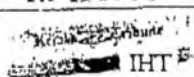
"Hadassah is seeking consultative status ... to enhance our participation in humanitarian efforts, and [last week's attacks by Arab representatives] will not deter us," said Bonnie Lipton, Hadassah national president. "They once again identify themselves with the rejectionist camp rather than those seeking peace in the Middle East."

Israel's mission to the UN issued a statement calling the Syrian and Lebanese actions "an affront to the Jewish people as a whole."

The UN committee deferred action on the Hadassah application until its next meeting, in May.

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Anglo File

Friday

'Zionism is racism' slur revived at the UN

By Catherine Cohen

Lebanon and Syria have refused to accept a major Zionist organization as an advisory member to the United Nations because of the "parallel between Zionism and racism." The move comes despite on-going peace talks between Israel and Syria and despite the 1991 repeal of the infamous UN resolution that equated Zionism with racism.

Hadassah Women's Zionist Organization in America had applied to become a consultative member of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in order to increase its influence and privileges.

"I was drilled for over one hour in front of the 19-member ECOSOC sub-committee which votes on whether to accept non-governmental organizations as consultative members," former national president of Hadassah, Bernice Tannenbaum told Anglo File. Tannenbaum, who was sent to represent the nonprofit organization at the UN, politely described the event as "a very interesting experience."

Both Lebanese and Syrian representatives at the hearing opposed Hadassah's request and dismissed the December 1991 repeal of the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. "We all know that for decades now, the UN in its famous resolution, established a parallel between Zionism and racism," the Lebanese representative said.

"Zionism is based on the concept of ethnic superiority, of occupation and exclusion of others," said a Syrian observer at the hearing, who added that the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism was repealed for "political reasons."

The vote has been postponed at least until the next ECOSOC sub-committee meeting in May.

Anti-Defamation League director Abe Foxman, meanwhile, was dismayed by Syria and Lebanon's attempt to resurrect the "Zionism is racism" charge. "It is shocking that Syria and Lebanon, while peace negotiations are taking place, would seek to revive the resolution equating Zionism with racism nearly 10 years after its repeal. This blatantly anti-Semitic declaration represented one of the saddest chapters in the

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history of the UN," he said.

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The New York Post

February 3, 2000, Thursday

SECTION: All Editions; Pg. 040

LENGTH: 405 words

HEADLINE: SKEPTICISM OVER SYRIA

BODY:

Even as Secretary of State Madeleine Albright this week was urging Israel and Syria to seize a historic opportunity to make peace, Damascus was demonstrating on three different fronts why those who harbor doubts about the so-called peace process have seen their skepticism justified.

Syria, frustrated because Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak refuses to commit himself in writing -- even before the resumption of negotiations -- to a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights, has once again unleashed its Hezbollah terrorist allies in Lebanon on Israeli forces. In a missile attack Monday, three Israeli soldiers were killed.

Even as Albright was urging Israeli restraint, Syria was adding a war of words to its deadly missiles. An obscene editorial in the official state newspaper Tishrin charged that Zionists "created the Holocaust myth" and now "silence those" who Syria says "speak the truth" about the Nazi slaughter.

Just days earlier, Syrian and Lebanese delegates to the United Nations (Lebanon is a puppet state under Syrian control) launched a similar attack on Israel, recalling the world body's 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism.

"Zionism is based on the concept of ethnic superiority, of occupation and the exclusion of others," said the Syrian delegate during a debate on the Zionist group Hadassah's application for consultative status on the Economic and Social Council.

Albright dismissed the Tishrin editorial as "ridiculous," while a U.S. delegate reacted to the "Zionism is racism" diatribe by saying, "I thought we were beyond that."

Both rebukes were welcome -- if decidedly weak. The question is what lesson the Clinton administration takes from these ugly episodes.

If a genuine peace is to come to the Middle East, it must be accompanied by a change in attitudes. By everything it has done in the past two weeks, Syria has sent a powerful message that a peace agreement is, at best, a strategic political decision -- which can easily be reversed tomorrow.

If Damascus remains willing to indulge in such reprehensible rhetoric -- and to use terrorist groups as an alternative to meaningful negotiations -- then it is not yet a genuine partner for peace.

This means that Israel's reluctance to surrender territory to a dictatorial state is entirely justified -- and should not be subjected to pressure from an administration eager to reach an agreement at any price.



NEWS

HADASSAH
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Roberta Elliott, Director

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HADASSAH OBJECTS TO BEHAVIOR OF SYRIA AND LEBANON AT UN HEARING ON HADASSAH'S STATUS TO HUMANITARIAN COMMITTEE

Application should be evaluated on its merits and not be used for political purposes

(New York -- January 27, 2000) -- Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is deeply troubled by the statements and behavior of Syria and Lebanon at yesterday's hearing to evaluate Hadassah's application for consultative status to the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Hadassah National President Bonnie Lipton today stated:

"While Syria and Lebanon speak the language of peace in negotiations with Israel, their behavior yesterday in the United Nations was most objectionable. By raising the rescinded and repudiated 'Zionism Is Racism' resolution, they once again identify themselves with the rejectionist camp rather than those seeking peace in the Middle East.

"We consider it indecent to continue to raise old canards for political grandstanding. While seeking enhanced status to a humanitarian committee, Hadassah's application should be evaluated on its merits, and not used for political purposes that are outside the scope of our work and ECOSOC's area of competence.

"Hadassah is seeking consultative status in ECOSOC to enhance our participation in humanitarian efforts, and yesterday's actions by a minority of those in attendance will not deter us. For 88 years, Hadassah has been committed to improving the lives of all the people in the Middle East through our health care and educational institutions in Israel. We have taken our knowledge and expertise around the world, where we have provided state-of-the-art consultative advice and practical assistance for medical organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As the premiere Zionist organization in America, Hadassah has demonstrated by our actions the true meaning of Zionism."

Hadassah was represented before the ECOSOC Committee by former National President Bernice S. Tannenbaum and Hadassah NGO Representative Ruth Kaslove.

###

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, is the largest women's and largest Jewish organization in the US. In Israel it supports the Hadassah Medical Organization, youth and education institutions, reforestation and parks development. In the US it promotes health education, community volunteerism, social action and advocacy, Jewish education and research, partnerships with Israel, and the Young Judea youth movement.

JEWISH WORLD

E.U. may act against Austria

The European Union is preparing to take action against Austria if the far-right Freedom Party joins that country's government, France's foreign minister said. Hubert Vedrine declined to give details Monday, but sources said they might be announced soon.

Awards planned for educators

In an effort to heighten recognition for Jewish education, a Massachusetts-based family foundation is offering \$75,000 a year to fund 50 recognition awards being granted to Jewish studies teachers.

Teachers must work at least eight hours per week and be nominated by their Jewish federation, which is required to raise \$1,000 to supplement the money from the Harold Grinspoon Family Foundation.

Death march marked in Russia

A ceremony was held near a Russian town to mark a Nazi death march that took place 55 years ago. Mourners erected a plaque Sunday commemorating the thousands of Jews killed by Nazi machine guns at a mine near Yantarny on the Baltic Sea.

FCC rules on religious programs

The Federal Communications Commission reversed an earlier decision that certain religious programming could not count as educational. The FCC took the action last Friday after coming under fire from religious broadcasters.

Academic forum opens in Russia

A three-day conference on Judaic studies near Moscow is bringing together 400 scholars from around the world. The conference, which opened Monday, is organized annually by Sefer — The Center for the University Teaching of Jewish Civilization in Russia.

Televangelist: Victims in heaven

A television evangelist jailed for defrauding his followers of \$158 million told CNN talk-show host Larry King he believed all the victims of the Holocaust are in heaven.

When King asked Jim Bakker if this meant "you don't have to believe in Christ to go to heaven," Bakker replied "I believe that decision is in God's hand, not mine."

Actress/fiancee may convert

Actress Catherine Zeta-Jones is considering converting to Judaism before marrying fellow star Michael Douglas, according to a British newspaper.

The 30-year-old Zeta-Jones has become "fascinated" by her future husband's Jewish faith, the London Daily Mail reported Sunday.

Hadassah's Zionist credentials are a roadblock at United Nations

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Although it has been nearly a decade since the United Nations repealed its "Zionism Is Racism" resolution, Jewish nationalism apparently still sparks debate in the international body.

Clinging concerns about its Zionist ties, representatives of Lebanon and other Arab countries are putting up roadblocks against the largest Jewish women's organization in the United States in its efforts to achieve greater involvement in the U.N.'s humanitarian work.

At a Jan. 26 hearing before the U.N. Economic and Social Council, Hadassah: The Women's Zionist Organization of America requested consultative status, which would enable it to participate in the Commission on the Status of Women and work with nongovernmental organizations around the world on humanitarian issues.

Seven other Jewish groups, including B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee, have consultative status on the committee, along with more than 1,000 other nongovernmental organizations.

Hassan Najem, Lebanon's representative to the 19-member committee — which is chaired by Tunisia and includes several countries that are hostile to Israel — moved to reject Hadassah's application. In the hearing, Najem and representatives of other Arab countries, including Syria and the Palestinian Authority, which are observers on the committee, described Zionism as racism and questioned Hadassah repeatedly about its Zionist ties.

A decision on whether to accept Hadassah was deferred until the committee's next meeting, scheduled for May.

According to Amy Goldstein, the director of Israeli, Zionist and international affairs for Hadassah, an organization best known for its hospitals in Jerusalem that serve Jews and Palestinians, representatives on the U.N. committee "saluted our work," but repeatedly asked Hadassah officials to clarify their definition of Zionism.

"They stated that our definition of Zionism is not Zionism and insisted that Zionism is not just a political movement but inherently racist," said Goldstein, explaining that Hadassah describes its philosophy as "practical Zionism." This philosophy includes establishing projects that address social, educational and health needs in Israel.

At the more than hourlong hearing, Hadassah was questioned about the nature of its efforts in Palestine at the time of the group's founding 88 years ago and why the founders chose to work in Palestine rather than "other places in the world that had the same problems," Goldstein said.

Lebanon's Najem did not return phone calls requesting comment.

Israel's mission to the United Nations issued a statement criticizing Lebanon's and Syria's behavior, stating that attacks on Zionism are "an affront to the Jewish people as a whole." The statement concludes by saying, "It is hoped that these anachronistic and confrontational remarks do not reflect the position of the government of Syria today as it faces Israel across the negotiating table."

Harris Schoenberg, the chair of the caucus of Jewish nongovernmental organizations at the United Nations, said the line of questioning, which he described as a "vicious onslaught" and "bullying," was "very surprising because we're supposed to be in the middle of a peace process."

Following the meeting, Hadassah President Bonnie Lipton said, "While Syria and Lebanon speak the language of peace in negotiations with Israel, their behavior yesterday in the United Nations was most objectionable."

"By raising the rescinded and repudiated 'Zionism Is Racism' resolution, they once again identify themselves with the rejectionist camp rather than those seeking peace in the Middle East."

"Syria and Lebanon crossed the line in describing Zionism as racist and elitist," said an official with the U.S. mission to the United Nations. "I don't think a lot of Jewish organizations are looked at favorably in this committee, and unfortunately Hadassah's name has the word 'Zionist' and that tends to make people upset." □



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Lebanon, Syria oppose Hadassah's link with UN

By Anthony Goodman

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 27 (Reuters) - Lebanon and Syria have opposed U.N. consultative status for Hadassah, a U.S. women's Zionist and charity group, by invoking a now-repealed but still controversial U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Failing to reach consensus, a U.N. committee dealing with nongovernmental organisations deferred a decision on Wednesday for Hadassah's request for consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Hundreds of nongovernmental organisations have ties to ECOSOC, as well as other U.N. organs, that enable them to take part in some of the work of the 54-nation body.

During a discussion that lasted more than an hour, a Hadassah representative answered questions from members of the 19-member committee and may be called back again.

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organisation of America, was founded in 1912 and has a membership of more than 300,000 in the United States. It supports hospitals and medical facilities in Israel and has medical programmes in many developing countries. It also has links with the Palestinian Authority.

Lebanon's representative on the committee said he wanted a definition of Zionism. He said that while he wholeheartedly respected Judaism as a monotheistic religion, "we know that for decades now the United Nations, in its famous resolution, established a parallel between Zionism and racism."

REPEALED IN 1991

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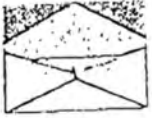
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Acknowledging that the General Assembly repealed the 1975 resolution in 1991, he said that "this was due to political reasons. It was not based on a conceptual position."

The observer of Syria, which is not a member of the committee, earlier made similar comments, prompting the U.S. envoy to say he "found it odd that there was a statement that equated Zionism with racism."

"I thought we were beyond that with U.N. resolution 4686, which rescinded the U.N. resolution 3379 which had previously equated Zionism with racism," he said.

He said he was sure the Syrian delegate "would agree that, indeed, the U.N. recognises that Zionism is not equivalent with racism, especially in the spirit of the very delicate talks which are going on in the Middle East."

The Syrian envoy replied that his Lebanese colleague had stated that the repeal of the Zionism-racism resolution was the result of political pressure.

"We all know that Zionism is based on the concept of ethnic superiority, of occupation and exclusion of others," he said, adding that this was opposition to what Hadassah had espoused in its answers to questions.

The chairman of the caucus of Jewish nongovernmental organisations at the United Nations, Harris Schoenberg, said the committee's "onslaught was out of place ... and out of context, given the current peace process" in the Middle East.

It "grotesquely distorted the nature and history of Zionism and its relationship to the United Nations in order to malign Hadassah, a distinguished humanitarian organisation," he said in a statement.

**For more on the Israel-Syria peace talks
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26 January 2000



Press Release NGO/333

COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUES CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR CONSULTATIVE STATUS

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations -- a 19-member standing body of the Economic and Social Council -- directed questions this afternoon to the representatives of two groups applying for consultative status with the Council, and left its decisions on both applications pending.

In addition to reviewing the applications from Hadassah, Women's Zionist Organization of America, and from Admiral Family Circle Islamic Community, the Committee heard a report from the President of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO).

Committee members posed questions to Hadassah, Women's Zionist Organization of America, this morning and this afternoon, and heard from its representative. Although the observer for Syria said questions had not been answered and the application should be rejected, the Committee decided to leave its decision pending until it received further information.

The observer for Palestine said Zionism was a political doctrine based on exclusiveness and the gathering of all Jews to go to Palestine. She had never before heard of non-political and humanitarian Zionism. The organization had said it was not political, and that it promoted mutual understanding and peace -- but peace was a political issue, she said. She then asked where and in what capacity the organization was involved in the Middle East, and what its relationship was with the World Zionist Organization, the World Jewish Agency and the Palestinian Authority.

Lebanon's representative said that, while Jewish ideals were to be respected and venerated, they could not be equated with Zionism. For decades, the United Nations had established a parallel between Zionism and racism through a resolution that had been rejected by the General Assembly for political -- not conceptual -- reasons. He asked a series of questions, including whether the organization had centres in Israel, and what the nationalities of its board members were. Further clarification was needed on its relation with the World Jewish Agency, which was displacing inhabitants and bringing more Jews to Palestinian territories.

The representative of the United States said Assembly resolution 46/86 rescinded resolution 33/79, which had previously equated Zionism with racism. The United Nations now recognized that Zionism was not equivalent with racism. It was important to stress this, he said, particularly in view of the delicate talks going on in the Middle East.

Committee on NGOs - 2 - Press Release NGO/333 730th Meeting (PM) 26 January 2000

Syria's observer said the Committee's discussion had nothing to do with the peace talks. It was surprising that the Committee was considering an organization that espoused Zionist ideas. Zionism was based on the concept of ethnic superiority, occupation and exclusion of others. Zionism upheld the occupation of Palestine by Israel, and that occupation was the result of the support given by the

Zionist movement. If the organization did not discriminate, what had it done in favour of the inhabitants of the Syrian Golan Heights who continued to live under occupation? There was no point in continuing the discussion, he said. The Committee should reject the application.

The representative of the Hadassah, Women's Zionist Organization of America, said her group espoused a special form of Zionism focusing on being of service to people of the world. It was a voluntary, non-profit organization dedicated to ideals of Judaism, democracy, health, education, and human rights. It had a record of 88 years of service in education and health worldwide. It combated racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination. It had a close relationship with the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian doctors came to Hadassah to be trained in specializations and services, while Hadassah doctors also went to Palestinian hospitals. Based on service, people were brought together on a scientific level; in her view, sharing knowledge was a means to peace.

Hadassah's medical outreach also included programmes free of charge in countries including Liberia, United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia and Côte d'Ivoire --- all with emphasis on local participation and training. In Cuba, Hadassah International Medical Relief Association was involved in distributing pharmaceuticals that were sent there by manufacturers, hospitals, individuals.

Her group was a member organization of the World Zionist Organization and was represented on the World Jewish Agency, she said. Her group, which in no way supported the foreign policy of any government, had been involved in the work of the United Nations through the Department of Public Information for a long time. Now, it wanted to be more involved and to contribute more. "We are faithful to the United Nations", she said. The group wanted to bring better health and technology and peace to the world.

When the Committee turned to the Admiral Family Circle Islamic Community, several delegations expressed support for granting it special consultative status, rather than roster status as it had requested. Special status carries with it a broader set of privileges and responsibilities.

Questions were posed to the organization's representative by Committee members from India and the Russian Federation. India's representative asked for clarification on the group's membership, finances, affiliations and projects.

The representative of the Community said his group was an Islamic community, and most of its members were Muslim. To broaden its net to encompass more people from different communities, it had decided to create the Malik Shabazz Human Rights Institute. It also participated in an Islamic leadership

Committee on NGOs - 3 - Press Release NGO/333 730th Meeting (PM) 26 January 2000

council, but was not paid by it. In addition to monthly contributions from members, the organization benefited tremendously from volunteers. In an effort to reflect that, it had presented volunteer hours in a dollar amount in the application.

Regarding the group's work for self-affirmation, he said that, because of their history, some African-Americans had been forced to take the names of former slave owners. But since many Muslims had been brought to the United States before the revolution, many in the African-American community were reclaiming their Islamic heritage. Self-development did not imply developing a separate nation or separate sovereignty; rather, for the Islamic community, it meant working on issues such as developing hospitals run by Muslims. Projects included attempts to reclaim people coming out of the criminal justice system and providing opportunities so they did not become repeat offenders.

The Malik Shabazz centre held seminars and participated in conferences, he explained. There was a

COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUES CONS Page 3 of 3

large African community in the United States, but most of the groups that dealt with those immigrants were Christian. While that was not a problem, some issues must be addressed from an Islamic perspective.

Also this afternoon, the President of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, Afaf Mahfouz, briefed the Committee on consultations that had been held regarding the relations between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations. Financial and logistical constraints often impeded the participation of groups from the South, while groups from the North were more often able to attend meetings. A special fund could be created to underwrite NGO participation from the South. Another idea was the formation of small groups with the Committee to discuss issues. Minutes from the meeting were on the Web site: www/conferenceofngos.com.

The representatives of Lebanon, United States, Cuba, Ireland, Chile, Algeria, France, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Pakistan and Turkey also spoke this afternoon, as did the observer for Iran.

At the outset of the meeting, the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Hanifa Mezoui, responded to questions posed this morning regarding the procedure for notifying NGOs of the Committee's decisions.

The Committee will meet again at 10 a.m. tomorrow to continue its review of requests for consultative status.

* * * * *

from an earlier press release

Committee on NGOs - 3 - Press Release NGO/332 729th Meeting (AM) 26 January 2000

Also during the meeting this morning, the Committee took up the application from the Hadassah Women's Zionist Organization of America. Committee members asked for clarification of the terms "practical zionism" and "pragmatic zionism" contained in communications from the group.

The observer from Syria noted that one of the organization's stated purposes was to try to establish institutions to combat discrimination because of religion, nationality and race. But zionism was based on occupation, terrorism, plundering of resources and land, racial supremacy and elitism, he said. Clarification was needed. Cuba's representative asked what was meant by the group's stated objective to promote the external policy of the United States throughout the world.

Statements before today's vote were made by the representatives of Chile, Bolivia, Turkey, Ireland, Russian Federation, India and Cuba.

Also this morning, statements were made by the representatives of Pakistan, Sudan, China, Tunisia, France, and the observers from Iran and Iraq. The Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Hanifa Mezoui, addressed the Committee.

When it meets again at 3 p.m. today and continues its consideration of applications for consultative status, the Committee plans to hear from a representative of the Hadassah Women's Zionist Organization of America.

• * * * •

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**ADL SHOCKED AT RESURRECTION OF "ZIONISM IS RACISM" CHARGE
BY SYRIA AND LEBANON AT U.N. HEARING**

New York, NY, January 28, 2000 ... At a time when peace negotiations are taking place in the Middle East, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) today said it is shocking that Syria and Lebanon have attempted to resurrect the "Zionism is racism" charge at the United Nations.

Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National Director, said: "It is shocking that Syria and Lebanon, while peace negotiations are taking place, would seek to revive the resolution equating Zionism with racism nearly 10 years after its repeal. This blatantly anti-Semitic declaration represented one of the saddest chapters in the history of the United Nations."

The "Zionism is racism" charge was raised by Syrian and Lebanese representatives at a hearing this week to evaluate the application of Hadassah, which is seeking consultative status to the U.N. Economic and Social Council. Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is one of America's most respected Jewish organizations.

During a hearing on Hadassah's application, Lebanon's representative on the committee requested a definition of Zionism, saying that while he respects Judaism, "We know that for decades now the United Nations, in its famous resolution, established a parallel between Zionism and racism." The Syrian observer added, "We all know that Zionism is based on the concept of ethnic superiority, of occupation and exclusion of others."

The U.N. General Assembly repealed the "Zionism is racism" resolution in December 1991.

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, is the world's leading organization fighting anti-Semitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry.

Founded in 1913 "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people, to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike."

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PRESS RELEASE

ISRAEL'S REACTS TO SYRIAN AND LEBANESE BARBS AT UN

THE UNITED NATIONS, January 28, 2000—Following confrontational statements made yesterday by representatives of Syria and Lebanon in a meeting of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations has responded as follows:

It is most regrettable that the Representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon have resurrected the false and malicious allegation that Zionism is linked to the notion of racial superiority.

It should be recalled that the infamous General Assembly resolution 3379 of November 10th, 1975, which equated Zionism with racism, was revoked by the General Assembly on December 16, 1991, by an overwhelming majority.

Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. It is the realization of a centuries-old dream to establish a safe haven in our homeland. This is, in fact, a manifestation of our basic right to self-determination as a people, coming after centuries of persecution. To attack Zionism is therefore an affront to the Jewish people as a whole.

As is well known, the Governments of Israel and Syria are now engaged in bilateral negotiations, aimed at reaching a lasting peace between our two countries. This process depends on the willingness of both parties to achieve mutual recognition and coexistence. The remarks made yesterday by the Representative of Syria contradict the idea of mutual recognition - the very foundation of the peace process itself.

It is hoped that these anachronistic and confrontational remarks do not reflect the position of the Government of Syria today, as it faces Israel across the negotiating table.

B'nai B'rith statement (suggestion):

Hadassah's credentials on issues of competence for the U.N. Economic and Social Council are unimpeachable. For Syria and Lebanon to question Hadassah's application to ECOSOC – a humanitarian committee of the United Nations – demonstrates once again how the United Nations has been hijacked. Instead of being utilized for international humanitarian efforts, the U.N. is being used as a staging ground for anti-Zionism, anti-Israel and anti-Semitic rhetoric.

The most dangerous part of this whole episode is that Syria and Lebanon, supported by the Palestinian Authority in this instance, have declared that the repeal of the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism, is inconsequential. According to their statements and questions during the review of Hadassah's application, they continue to hold, and to advance the thought, that Zionism is racism, no matter what resolutions have been passed by the U.N.

B'nai B'rith stands with Hadassah and the rest of the American Jewish community, as well as with Israel, in stating that enough is enough. This anachronistic language must end. The isolation of Israel in the international community must end. As Israel is negotiating peace with her neighbors, and has completed treaties with two Arab countries, we must demand the end of attacks in international bodies on Jewish and Zionist organizations such as Hadassah.