**Poland Not Sending Official Delegation To Durban III**

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By: Benjamin Weinthal

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A Polish diplomat informed *The Jerusalem Post* on Thursday that the Polish government will not send an official delegation to participate in the Durban III anti-racism conference slated for September 22 in New York City.

“Poland’s high-level delegation is not planned for the Durban III conference,” wrote Jacek Biegal, a spokesman for the Polish Embassy in Berlin, in an email to the*Post* on Thursday.

Critics accuse the UN-sponsored Durban event with stoking hate against the Jewish state because its founding document attacks only Israel as a violator of human rights.

When asked repeatedly by the*Post* if Poland intends to walk away from the Durban III event, Biegal said, “That is final official statement with no other comments.”

Poland currently heads the 27-member European Union, placing it in a unusual situation because its decision to possibly stay away from Durban III could be viewed as EU policy.

Poland’s six- month term runs from July until December.

The United Kingdom announced on Wednesday that it will not attend Durban III, joining Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, the United States, Israel, Austria, Australia, Canada, Bulgaria and the Netherlands.

If Poland intends not to show up with a formal delegation, it would mean that 12 countries are boycotting the Durban III event. The Polish government, traditionally considered a close ally of Israel, would send an additional blow to the UN organizers.

Anne Bayefsky, an expert on the Durban process and director of Touro College’s Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, has launched a counter-conference to Durban III, also on September 22 in New York.

She told the *Post* on Thursday that if Poland has withdrawn, as it did from Durban II in Geneva, then it should be congratulated.

“The UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is attempting to hijack world leaders already arriving in New York for the annual opening of the General Assembly, and to force them to be part of this appalling attack on Israel and human rights. Poland has taken the right step in refusing to be bullied into supporting an agenda that it does not share,” Bayefsky said.

The human rights scholar urged major European powers like Germany and the UK to pull out. She has also called on Poland and France to skip the event due its anti-Semitic nature.

In a statement issued to the *Post* on Thursday, the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote that it “urges Poland to join the growing list of civilized nations and boycott Durban III.”

“The only issue that the EU should be discussing is the total and permanent de-funding of the so-called Durban Process. From day one instead of being an effective anti-racism tool, it has been leveraged to facilitate hate and provide their podiums for the likes of one the world’s most dangerous bigots, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad,” said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center who was a spokesman for the Jewish groups at the first Durban conference a decade ago.

“With threatened economies, growing unemployment, and bailouts for banks across Europe, surely the EU can find something better to invest in than continuing the Durban farce any longer,” Cooper said.