

‘Human rights’ are a weapon in the political arsenal of Israel’s enemies

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Today at the United Nations in New York City, the UN’s top women’s rights body, the Commission on the Status of Women, will wrap up its annual session by condemning only one state for violating the rights of women anywhere in the world. Not Syria, or China, or Saudi Arabia. But Israel, for violating the rights of Palestinian women.

Next week, the UN’s top human rights body, the Human Rights Council, will end its session by adopting six resolutions condemning human rights violations by one state alone. Israel. And one resolution each on human rights violations in seven of the other 192 UN countries combined.

One doesn’t need a lawyer or foreign affairs guru to figure it out. This isn’t about human rights at all. Twisted beyond recognition, ‘human rights’ are a weapon in the political arsenal of Israel’s enemies.

The strategy is a blow not only to Israel, however, but to the millions and millions of human rights victims left by the wayside in the stampede to denounce and defeat the Jewish state.

In Syria, reports suggest that there are more than 90,000 dead, 2.5 million internally displaced and 750,000 refugees. Syrian refugees have even fled to Israel through the Golan Heights where they have received life-saving medical care.

And yet the Human Rights Council has just circulated a resolution called “Human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan.” In it, the Council “calls upon Israel to allow the Syrian population of occupied Syrian Golan to visit their families and relatives in the Syrian motherland.” Nobody believes that the residents of the Golan are pining to rush into mother Syria, but the UN human rights body is guaranteed to rubber-stamp the absurd declaration next week.

Iran is one of the most abysmal places on earth when it comes to human rights. Torture is widespread. Religious minorities are viciously persecuted. Homosexuals are hanged and strung up in public. Flogging, amputation, and execution by stoning are all part of the criminal “law” and actually applied. Iranian women do not have equal rights. Nor can they run away, since they cannot get a passport without permission of a husband or male relative.

Nevertheless, Iran is a full voting member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the UN Human Rights Council refuses to get tough. Now on the table in Geneva, courtesy of Sweden, is a one-page, three paragraph resolution “calling upon” Iran to do only one thing: permit a human rights investigator “access to visit the country.” More reporting. No doing.

When it comes to Israel though, Islamic and Arab states have successfully produced another 22 pages and more than 50 detailed paragraphs of denunciations. Passage at the Council is a done deal.

The carefully orchestrated “human rights” pitch will climax just as President Obama disembarks in Israel next week for the first time. Specifically, the UN-based feeding frenzy will converge on the subject of Israeli settlements. Today’s CSW resolution on Israel adds so-called “settler violence” to last year’s list of Israeli crimes against Palestinian women and girls, and the Human Rights Council will hold its first three-hour kangaroo court devoted to settlements come Monday.

Having made joining and legitimizing the Human Rights Council one of his signature foreign policy moves, President Obama may be tempted to take its output seriously or to adopt a good cop/bad cop routine with Israel’s new government. With approval assured, administration diplomats can vote against the whole host of UN decisions, and then the President can turn around and bear down reluctantly on Jerusalem, for the sake of what he has repeatedly referred to as “Israel’s own best interests.”

For the sake of the victims of human rights abuse worldwide – as well as in Israel – let’s hope he chooses to point the human rights weapon where it belongs.