Haley calls Security Council response to Gazan volleys 'outrageous'

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<https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Israel-calls-Kuwait-UN-resolution-shameful-cynical-after-Gaza-attacks-558792>

Nikki Haley, US President Donald Trump's envoy to the UN, tore into the organization on Wednesday for what she characterized as a lackadaisical response to the firing of over 70 rockets on Israel from Gaza the day before.

Claiming a double standard, and questioning why Israeli military actions against Hamas, recognized as a terrorist organization, rile world opinion more so than the reverse, Haley called on the Security Council to condemn the attack as an act of terrorism.

The Gazan volleys were "a clear escalation of violence," Haley said, accusing the council of being "disconnected" from the realities on the ground. "The people of Gaza do not need protection from an external force. The people of Gaza need protection from Hamas."

The US had called an emergency session of the council for Wednesday over the rocket firings, hoping to secure a statement of condemnation. But Kuwait, a non-permanent member, blocked the move, and is rather offering a conflicting resolution calling for "international protection" for the Palestinian people.

Kuwait's resolution “calls for the consideration of measures to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population,” according to a draft obtained by Agence France-Presse. Kuwait has already vowed to veto any measure proposed by the US condemning the Gazan attacks on Israel, one of which struck a kindergarten.

"It is outrageous for the Security Council to fail to condemn Hamas rockets attacks against Israeli civilians," Haley said. "You would think no one would want to side with Hamas over its rocket launches. But the statement was blocked."

"Apparently some council members didn't think Hamas launching rockets qualified as terrorism," she continued, but "the United States begs to differ."

Israel’s envoy to the UN dismissed a draft of Kuwait's resolution before the Security Council meeting as a “cynical” and “shameful” ploy.

“We have no intention for escalation, but if someone will attack Israel, we will attack them back,” Israel’s Ambassador Danny Danon told reporters at the council.

While representatives from Britain, France and the UN "unequivocally condemned" the rocket attacks, Paris' envoy also linked Tuesday's volleys with Palestinian protests that took place earlier in the month around the US opening of its embassy in Jerusalem. The IDF response to those riots on the Israeli border resulted in dozens of Palestinians deaths and hundreds more wounded.

"There is a real risk of a cycle of violence which the players in question could quickly lose control of," France's ambassador Francois Delattre told the council. "This situation is sadly predictable."

Speaking by satellite to the council from Jerusalem, the UN's special coordinator for Middle East peace, Nickolay Mladenov, warned that Israel and Gaza remain on "the brink of war," and said that Hamas's rocket firings "cannot be justified under any circumstances."

He noted that, while Israel's "retaliatory" strikes against Hamas did not result in any civilian infrastructure damage in Gaza, Hamas' own rockets damaged Gazan power lines, which would take days to repair.