Jewish Groups Applaud US Decision to Stay Away From ‘Anti-Israel’ Durban IV Events in September

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Leading Jewish organizations welcomed the Biden administration’s decision to stick to the US policy of not attending any events to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration in September due to their “anti-Israel sentiment.”

A US State Department spokesperson told The Jerusalem Post Monday that the US would not take part in planned Durban anniversary events, saying that it “remains deeply committed to combating antisemitism at home and abroad. Furthermore, the United States stands with Israel and has always shared its concerns over the Durban process’s anti-Israel sentiment — used as a forum for antisemitism and freedom of expression issues.”

Commenting on the decision, B’nai B’rith International said it “salutes the US administration for taking a principled decision, like its predecessors, to deny legitimacy to a UN framework that purports to fight prejudice but is fundamentally marred by it.”

“The 2001 conference was poisoned by manifestations of virulent anti-Zionism and open antisemitism. We urge all countries of goodwill to do similarly — and we will continue to insist that all forms of hate, including those targeting Jews, not be given a platform by foremost international institutions,” B’nai B’rith stated.

The UN is scheduled to hold a special “Durban IV” event on Sept. 22 to mark the 20th anniversary of the World Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, from which the US and Israel previously withdrew over objections of anti-Zionism. Israel was singled out from the Durban conference declaration and was depicted as being racist and as committing “crimes against humanity,” “ethnic cleansing,” “apartheid” and “genocide” against the Palestinians.

“Kudos for rejecting hate. The 2001 Durban Conference was an orgy of hate so vile that the US and Israel pulled out in disgust,” Avi Mayer, Managing Director of Global Communications at the American Jewish Committee (AJC), tweeted in response to the US decision. “It was so bad that even the UN’s Mary Robinson, who chaired it, said there was ‘horrible antisemitism present.'”

Michal Cotler-Wunsh, a former member of Knesset for Israel’s Blue and White Party, said: “Durban was the ecosystem for declared escalation in the war waged on Israel, weaponizing international law and it’s institutions. The orchestrated, systematic implementation of this strategy threatens not only Israel, but shared values and foundations of democracy and human rights.”