



Educator's Guide

UN Resolution 3379: Is Zionism Racism?

“Zionism is racism” is an all-too-familiar refrain in certain communities today. But did you, or your students, know that this was an official UN resolution passed in 1975 and repealed in 1991? This video addresses the different countries who supported and opposed the resolution, and how it came to pass. It also explores the UN’s complicated relationship with Israel, from devising the Partition Plan that led to Israel’s establishment, to passing and retracting the Zionism is Racism resolution, to its numerous condemnations of Israel today. Why is the UN so focused on Israel?

Link to video: <https://unpacked.education/video/un-resolution-3379-is-zionism-racism/>

Further Reading

1. Patrick Moynihan’s “Zionism is Racism” [speech](#), 1975
2. Chaim Herzog’s [speech](#) in opposition to U.N. Resolution equating Zionism with racism, 1975
3. President George H.W. Bush, Repeal of “Zionism is Racism” Resolution [speech](#), 1991
4. Yitshak Rabi, “Kristallnacht at the United Nations: 100,000 in Rally to Protest Against Anti-Zionist Resolution Mass,” 1975
<https://www.jta.org/1975/11/12/archive/kristallnacht-at-the-united-nations-100000-in-rally-to-protest-against-anti-zionist-resolution-mass>
5. Paul Lewis, “U.N. Repeals its ‘75 Resolution Equating Zionism with Racism,” 1991
<https://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/17/world/fun-repeals-its-75-resolution-equating-zionism-with-racism.html>



Review - Did the students understand the material?

1. What country was behind the “Zionism is Racism” U.N. resolution?
 - a. USSR (correct)
 - b. USA
 - c. UK
 - d. UAE
2. What role did Yasser Arafat play in this story?
3. In 1991, the U.N. repealed the resolution, but...
 - a. it was reinstated a few years later
 - b. much of the damage had already been done (correct)
 - c. it almost didn't pass
 - d. the USSR still supported the original resolution

Discussion Questions

1. What does “Zionism is racism” really mean? What prompted this bold claim?
2. Some people think it is “whataboutism” to bring up the crimes of other countries, like China and North Korea, and distracts from the challenges Israel has within its own borders. Do you see criticism of Israeli policies as legitimate, or do you think it smacks of anti-semitism if Israel is the focus of criticism as opposed to other countries?
3. Similarly, what do you make of the fact that when other countries, like Syria or the former Soviet Union, engage in murderous behavior toward its own citizens or have racist policies like segregation in the U.S. and Apartheid in South Africa, the world calls for the behavior to cease but does not call into question the legitimacy of the country to exist? This is essentially what happened in 1975 when Zionism--the right for Jews to have self-determination--was equated with racism.
4. In the last five years, the U.N. Human Rights Council has condemned Israel in nearly as many resolutions as every other country in the rest of the world



combined. Why is the world so focused on Israel, when there is much to be desired in the human rights department by other countries throughout the world?

Reflection Questions

1. Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, said: “When countries single out Israel for unfair treatment at the U.N., it isn't just a problem for Israel, it is a problem for all of us... No country is immune from criticism, nor should it be. But when that criticism takes the form of singling out just one country, unfairly, bitterly and relentlessly, over and over and over, that is just wrong—and we all know it.” Why is the U.S. such a staunch supporter of Israel in the U.N.? What do you think it's like to stand up for a cause when most people around you disagree? Have you had this experience?
2. Although the U.N. repealed the resolution in 1991, the damage had been done. Today, people still call Israel/Zionists racists. How could you articulate why Zionism does not inherently mean racism?
3. See U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley's speech condemning the U.N.'s double standard against Israel. What feelings and sentiments does this speech engender?
4. Both Republicans and Democrats have condemned the singling out of Israel by the U.N. Why do you think the United States is so keen on protecting Israel in the international arena?