



Charging Israel with Genocide is Orwellian

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Three months after a genocidal, anti-semitic terrorist group slaughtered 1,200 of its citizens in a barbaric fashion, Israel sits in the docket of the International Court of Justice, accused of committing genocide because it hasn't defended itself from future attack as pristinely as the world demands.

The court is holding hearings this week on an application that South Africa filed in late December, asking the court to begin proceedings against Israel for committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

"Acts and omissions by Israel," South Africa wrote, "... are genocidal in character, as they are committed with the requisite specific intent... to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a part of the broader Palestinian national, racial and ethnical group," putting Israel "in violation of its obligations under the Genocide Convention."

It is a quintessentially Orwellian affair, a spectacle of the victim as the perpetrator, and it fits within a longstanding pattern of the global community holding the singular Jewish state to a singular human rights standard. No one should buy it.

In its "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," the United Nations General Assembly defined genocide as action "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group."

Ironically, it is Hamas, created in 1987 as the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, which has set out to commit that very crime—against Israel and the Jewish people.

In its covenant of 1988, Hamas states, "Our struggle against the Jews is very great and very serious... The Movement is but one squadron that should be supported by more and more squadrons from this vast Arab and Islamic world, until the enemy is vanquished and Allah's victory is realised [sic]."

"The Islamic Resistance Movement," it continues, "is one of the links in the chain of the struggle against the Zionist invaders," and it "aspires to the realisation of Allah's promise... The Day of Judgement will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees."

Some thirty-five years later, the group has lost none of its genocidal luster. After October 7, when Hamas' terrorists beheaded men, slaughtered babies, raped women, desecrated bodies, and, in some cases, took videos of their deeds. The group's deputy foreign minister, Ghazi Hamad, vowed to repeat such attacks until Israel is destroyed.

Where does Israel fit into this maelstrom?

The Jewish state unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005, leaving it to the Palestinian Authority. Two years later, Hamas seized Gaza in a violent coup and ruled its two million residents with an iron fist, brooking no dissent and murdering those who work with or seek peace with Israel.

Israel responded to the barbarism of October 7 as one might expect, vowing to destroy the terrorist group so it could never again attack the Jewish state. What Israel is promising is nothing more than any responsible government would pursue in the aftermath of such an attack by such a group.

Israel's military campaign is multi-faceted, arduous, and, yes, bloody. What began with heavy bombing has morphed into a harrowing firefight. But, notwithstanding the charge of genocide that Israel's critics around the world are so quick to level, who's really trying to boost civilian casualties?

While searching for Hamas operatives, Israel's military has dropped leaflets, made phone calls, and sent texts, warning Palestinians to flee areas where it plans to mount operations. That is no different than what Israel has done for years during its multiple wars and skirmishes with Hamas.

Hamas, as usual, embeds its fighters and weaponry in schools, hospitals, and mosques, purposely boosting civilian casualties to swing global public opinion against Israel. Hamas has told Palestinians to ignore Israel's warnings to flee or has prevented them from doing so. One Hamas official suggested that civilians serve as human shields, sacrificing themselves to protect Hamas' assets.

This week's spectacle in The Hague is part of a larger international picture, marked by an obsession with the Jewish state.

With war raging in Ukraine and elsewhere and autocrats brutalizing their people all over the world, the General Assembly last year condemned Israel fourteen times and the rest of the world just seven.

Meanwhile, the UN's Human Rights Council remains a cesspool of anti-Israeli activity that has 1) made Israel its only permanent agenda item and 2) condemned and subjected it to more special sessions and commissions than any other country. The council has passed no resolutions to condemn human rights abuses in such nations as Algeria, China, Cuba, Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and Zimbabwe.

Are innocent Palestinians dying in Gaza? Yes. Is Israel seeking to wipe out the Palestinians, as per the charge of genocide? The allegation is rooted in willful blindness or moral bankruptcy—or both.

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