

Eagles' Wings Leads Pro-Israel Durban III Protest

As world leaders gathered in New York City for the U.N. General Assembly and the "Durban III Review Conference on Racism" sponsored by the United Nations, another strategic, international event was taking place only a block away.

Eagles' Wings led a coalition of Christians, Jews and other faiths to recognize the importance of standing with Israel, and participants came from near and far to protest the Durban III Conference. □□

While this conference espouses itself as anti-racist, it sadly is the exact opposite. Its bigoted agenda is to single out the democratic nation of Israel and condemn it as a "racist and apartheid state." Though Durban III was boycotted by nations including the U.S., Canada, Australia and Israel, it was supported by many others.

More than an hour before the rally was to start, hundreds began to fill the Dag Hammarskjold Plaza outside the U.N. High school and college students, mothers, businessmen and grandmothers came to make their voices heard. By 12 p.m., more than 2,000 people flooded the plaza—coming from across the U.S. as far away as California, Georgia and Florida, and from many countries including New Zealand, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, the U.K., Finland and Israel—all uniting together to stand for Israel.

Robert Stearns led the rally, his voice booming through the plaza: "How dare the Durban Conference, this United Nations sponsored event, supported by American tax dollars, single out the one nation in the Middle East which has the most progressive human rights record of all, and routinely and systematically ignore human rights abuses of other member

states?"

He went on to proclaim the true record of freedom and human rights enjoyed by all the citizens of Israel, reminding those gathered that "there are decisive moments in history when people of basic decency, common sense, and goodwill have to step outside the comfort zone of their daily routine, and step into the uncomfortable place of speaking truth to [those in] power."□

A sea of Israeli flags waved in the cool breeze of the day, peppered with hundreds of signs reading, "Israel We Stand with You" and "Stop the Durban Lies", with the crowd lifting up a cry to those who would try to subvert true justice, by saying, "Not on our watch!"

The crowd cheered as speakers from a broad spectrum of ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds attested to the record of the State of Israel.

Rabbi Yaacov Kermaier, of the 5th Avenue synagogue in NYC, spoke on behalf of the Jewish community by saying, "I want to say to the broader Christian community, thank you. ... Israel and the Jewish people feel that the world is closing in on them. But ... it gives us so much courage ... and strength when we know our Christian brothers and sisters are there as friends."

Sudanese former child slave Simon Deng also addressed the rally, challenging the U.N. leaders who are completely ignoring the genocide in his country and are instead paying heed to falsified accusations against the only viable democracy in the Middle East, Israel, and underscored the illegitimacy of the Durban III Conference.

Deputy Speaker of the Knesset in Israel, MK Danny Danon was on hand and spoke to the cheering crowd, "I am very honored to be in New York City, in front of the UN with real lovers and supporters of the Jewish people...and...the state of Israel, and I want to thank you and bless you for coming here today and

standing for the people of Israel who are watching what happens at the UN today.”

The protest was hosted by a coalition of more than 30 organizations led by Eagles’ Wings, including StandWithUs, The Jerusalem Institute of Justice, EyeOnTheUN, Human Rights Coalition against Radical Islam, the Hudson Institute, Americans for a Safe Israel, National Conference of Jewish Affairs, and Z-Street, as well as dozens of Christian leaders including Bishop Carlton Brown of Bethel Gospel Assembly in Harlem who addressed the gathering.

Robert Stearns closed the rally by leading in the singing of the national anthem of the State of Israel, the “Hatikva” or “the Hope,” with the song echoing across the Dag Hammarskjold Plaza outside the U.N. for all to hear.