

On the Anniversary of Israel's Founding, UNESCO Offers a 'Gift'

As millions of Israeli and diaspora Jews marked Israel's 69th Independence Day, the United Nations cultural body UNESCO voted Tuesday to adopt its latest resolution denying Jewish ties to Jerusalem.

The resolution—which passed in a 22-10 vote, with 23 abstentions—states that “all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the ‘basic law’ on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith.”

The 10 countries voting against the resolution were the U.S., U.K., Italy, Netherlands, Lithuania, Greece, Paraguay, Ukraine, Togo and Germany. Among those voting in favor of the measure were Brazil, China, Egypt, Iran, Russia, South Africa and Sweden.

Italy was the only European Union country to publicly oppose the resolution ahead of the vote.

“Our opinion is very clear,” Italian Foreign Minister Angelino Alfano said. “UNESCO cannot be the place for a permanent ideological confrontation.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday, “There is no nation in the world for whom Jerusalem is more holy than for the Jewish people,” adding that UNESCO “is trying to bury this truth. We will uphold it.”

Israel's Ambassador to the U.N. Danny Danon called the

resolution “distorted” and “shameful,” and said it will “not change the fact that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish people.”

Last October, UNESCO passed two separate resolutions ignoring Jewish and Christian ties to Jerusalem’s holy sites. {eoa}

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