

# Things Got Heated Tuesday at the UN Security Council

In what was already expected to be a contentious meeting of the United Nations Security Council, gasoline was thrown on the flames when Israeli Permanent Representative to the U.N. Danny Danon ripped into the Palestinian Authority for its continued funding of terrorists and their families.

Middle East envoy Nickolay Mladenov, who has been critical of Israel in the past, had urged the members of the Security Council to refrain from making inflammatory comments about the situation at the Temple Mount. But in light of the recent and very gruesome attack in the Halamish settlement in Samaria, Danon wasn't going to sit idly by.

"We do not need more carefully worded statements asking for calm," he said at a press conference ahead of the Security Council meeting. "The council must demand real action by [Palestinian Authority President] Mahmoud Abbas, make him stop his tacit support for terror, force him to end this unbearable wave of violence and make him do so immediately before the lives of more innocent victims are lost.

"As diplomats, as ambassadors, as leaders, it is not often that we are at a loss for words. When I learned of the horrific terror attack this past Friday evening, when I saw the ghastly pictures of the Shabbat meal interrupted by a vile terrorist, I was left speechless."

In the Halamish stabbing attack, 70-year-old Yosef Saloman, his 46-year-old daughter Chaya and 36-year-old son Elad were killed last Friday by 19-year-old Omar al-Abed, a Hamas sympathizer from a neighboring community. Yosef's 68-year-old wife, Tova, survived the attack but was severely injured. al-Abed was shot by an off-duty IDF soldier and taken into

custody.

Yosef, Chaya and Elad were buried Sunday at a ceremony attended by more than 10,000 people.

At the press conference prior to Tuesday's Security Council meeting, Danon introduced Oran Almog, a survivor of the 2003 Maxim terrorist attack, who lost five family members and was himself severely injured. He still bears the scars of the attack. During the meeting that followed, he cited Almog's experience as one of many instances where the perpetrators of terrorist attacks on innocent Israelis or their family members are receiving enormous "stipends" from the Palestinian Authority.

Danon repeated his demand directly to the Security Council to take action in light of the PA's refusal to do so. Afterward, he unleashed a lengthy "tweet storm" to vent his frustrations:

Today I told the Security Council that the massacre of the Salomon family did not happen in a vacuum.

The terrorist committed this heinous crime following rampant, relentless calls by Palestinian officials inciting violence.

I introduced Oran Almog to the SC. He lost 5 members of his family & was severely injured in the 2003 Maxim terror attack.

Oran is a true hero and a true model for the appreciation of life, while the PA pays the salaries of convicted murderers.

The murderers of his family have been paid over half a million dollars by the PA.

How many thousands of dollars will the Salomons' killer be rewarded before the world acts?

Now is the time for the Security Council to act and demand

that the PA ends payments to terrorists.

During Tuesday's meeting, a visibly frustrated U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN Nikki Haley gave what can only be described as a restrained response:

The United States shares everyone's concern about the heightened tensions in Jerusalem. All parties should work to reduce these tensions, and we offer whatever assistance we can in helping to do this. At the holy sites, it is vital that both access and security be ensured. In keeping with Nickolay's recommendation, I am going to refrain from further comment on this sensitive issue in the hope that wisdom will prevail over emotions.

This is our monthly gathering to discuss the Middle East. The complicated and seemingly unending conflict there is frustrating to many Americans. It's frustrating to me. But truth be told, the Security Council often makes the Middle East more complicated than it actually is. It obsesses over Israel. And it refuses to acknowledge one of the chief sources of conflict and killing in the Middle East—that is, Iran and its partner militia, Lebanese Hezbollah.

Hezbollah is a terrorist organization. In its own words, it is dedicated to the destruction of Israel. It has the blood of hundreds of Americans and thousands of others on its hands. Together with its Iranian patron, Hezbollah seeks to cause destruction throughout the Middle East. Some see "two wings" to Hezbollah—a terrorist wing, and a political and social wing. This is a convenient excuse for Hezbollah, but it is dangerous fiction. Just because a terrorist group also promotes political candidates for office doesn't make it any less a terrorist group.

For a glimpse of Hezbollah's true nature, look no further than its work on behalf of the Syrian dictator. From its base in Lebanon, Hezbollah sends its men into Syria. There,

they have been responsible for some of the bloodiest campaigns of a very bloody war. They are returning to Lebanon battle-hardened, and their presence in Syria keeps open their supply route of sophisticated weapons from Iran. Simply put, Hezbollah has grown stronger. It is preparing its men and its arsenal for a future war.

None of this is secret. The leader of Hezbollah boasts about the destruction that his group is capable of. He talks openly about the support Iran provides. Hezbollah even takes journalists on tours of its military operations on the border Lebanon shares with Israel—operations that are in defiance of this Council.

It is no secret where the United Nations stands either. It has passed multiple resolutions calling on Hezbollah to disarm. It has called on the Lebanese state to exercise control over its territory. But neither of these things has happened. The trend is very much in the opposite direction. Hezbollah openly defies these resolutions and impedes the Lebanese government's ability to exercise full control over its territory.

For too long, the Security Council has chosen to pretend that the status quo is acceptable for the people of Lebanon. It is not. Hezbollah's illegal weapons build-up is putting the people of Lebanon in great danger. Remarkably, this Council cannot even bring itself to use the word "Hezbollah" in recent resolutions or statements on Lebanon. Many here are happy to name Israel, time after time, but Hezbollah is somehow off limits. It's absurd. Worse than that, it's dangerous.

The least the American people expect from this Council is to acknowledge the obvious threats that are right in front of us. How can I explain to them that there is a terrorist organization preparing its men and its arsenal for war, but the United Nations refuses to even say their name? This must

change. We must show Hezbollah that they cannot get away with its illegal weapons.

The United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon has an important role to play. The United States supports UNIFIL. But there is much more that UNIFIL should do to help prevent another conflict. It can begin by acknowledging what is happening right under its nose. There are reports of UNIFIL not fully investigating alleged violations. Sometimes it fails to report what its investigators have found. If UNIFIL can't acknowledge illegal weapons that Hezbollah parades in front of the media, one wonders what else it's missing. We will have more to say about UNIFIL when its mandate is up for renewal next month.

The American people sympathize with the challenges facing the Lebanese people. We will continue to support them as they combat ISIS and host over a million Syrian refugees. We understand that the issues in the Middle East are complex. But we also understand right and wrong, and we expect our leaders to know the difference as well.

Hezbollah is a destructive terrorist force. It is a major obstacle to peace. And the dangers it poses are getting larger, not smaller. Simply acknowledging this—and saying it out loud—would be a significant step forward. But we must do more than that. We must begin to get serious about enforcing our own resolutions that have been routinely violated by Iran and Hezbollah.

Haley's comments were meant to coincide with Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri's visit to the White House, where President Donald Trump made it clear that he expects Israel's neighbor to do more to curb Hezbollah's influence in the region. With Hariri standing next to him at a Rose Garden press conference, the president repeated those expectations:

"Hezbollah is a menace to the Lebanese state, the Lebanese

people and the entire region,” he said. “The group continues to increase its military arsenal, which threatens to start yet another conflict, with Israel constantly fighting them back.”  
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