

**Amb. Nikki Haley and Israel at the UN/ By Yossi Krausz, AMI MAGAZINE**

He asked her what she thought the US should do, and she said that she thought they should object to the appointment. “Good, do it,” he responded.

The withdrawals from UNESCO and the UN Human Rights Council were also undertaken by the US on its own, not due to a request from the Israelis.

### TRUMP AND HALEY

Not everyone sees Ambassador Haley as wholly changing US engagement on Israel in the UN.

Dr. **Michal Hatuel-Radoshitzky**, a research fellow at **INSS** who studies the treatment of Israel in the international arena, told *Ami*: “Ambassador Haley’s time in the UN was no different from others who preceded her in terms of issues concerning Israel. Notably, Ambassador Samantha Power, even in her speech after abstaining from UNSCR 2334 [which condemned Israel’s activity in land won in 1967] noted that the UN is biased against Israel and substantiated abstaining, rather than supporting the resolution, partly owing to this bias. The United States has had a long tradition of providing Israel with a diplomatic shield in the UN, and this policy is rooted in the two states’ shared values and strategic interests—and not in their representatives in the UN.”

To Dr. **Hatuel-Radoshitzky**, there was one major difference, however: “The difference between Ambassador Nikki Haley and her predecessors is the outspoken, assertive and direct way Ambassador Haley confronted and dealt with anti-Israel bias in the UN. Part of her ability to act in this manner emanates from the backing and support she received from President Trump.”

Lerner presents the difference more strongly. For one, he notes that even the Bush administration ambassadors usually took action only after consultation with Israel.

In regard to the Obama era, he puts it

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much more starkly, stating that the abstention on UNSCR 2334 shocked the Haley team; they saw it as the US betraying Israel in an unfriendly forum.

He noted that he got a shock on his first time in the US’s UN office in Washington, taking over from the Obama team:

“When I walked into the office, I was a bit surprised. Given that the United Nations covers the entire world, I was a bit surprised to find several of the offices within our suite had posters on the walls showing, in great detail, the Israeli settlements in the West Bank. And I thought to myself, well, it’s curious that with all of the, you know, hot spots and difficulties around the world, that this office, this UN office, was almost singularly focused on the question of Israeli settlements.”

Lerner did note that Haley’s ability to take the stances that she did was due to President Trump’s support of Israel. But he also said that President Trump didn’t micromanage her. Also, she was made a member of the president’s cabinet, which had not been true of recent Republican-appointed UN ambassadors.

That helped her challenge other figures in the Trump administration who were not as supportive of Israel, particularly former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who pushed for the US to continue supporting UNRWA

(the UN organization focused on Palestinian refugees) even as the agency refused to deal with terrorist tunnels under its schools and buildings.

### ANY CHANGES?

Did she make a permanent change in the UN?

Lerner contended that she did:

“It’s a new era because Haley challenged and disproved some important basic assumptions about Middle East policy. It turns out that the United States can support Israel strongly and still work closely with Arab states to promote common interests such as opposing Iranian threats.”

The idea of being able to defund an agency like UNRWA was also something that no one would have thought of before her, he said. “Even if future US administrations revert back to the policies of the past,” he wrote, “these old assumptions will remain disproven.”

Dr. **Hatuel-Radoshitzky** is doubtful that things have really changed in the UN itself.

“The UN is a microcosm of the world,” she said. “The 193 member states of this organization do not formulate their policies vis-à-vis Israel because of one US ambassador to the UN or another, but rather as a factor of their strategic interests. These take into account cost/benefit aspects of their relations with Israel, Israel’s policies and values, and domestic public opinion, among other issues.”

“Haley’s words about the United States ‘watching’ votes in the General Assembly certainly may have impacted states’ conduct in voting on Israel-related issues. We have yet to see if this will influence additional votes going forward.”

“Nevertheless, cutting US monetary support to states that vote against US policies in the UN should not be tied to US policies relating only to Israel, nor only to Ambassador Haley. This is because such action is firmly rooted in President Trump’s policy directives.”●