

PETER J. ROSKAM

6TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON BENGHAZI



2246 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4561

2700 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE
SUITE 304
WEST CHICAGO, IL 60185
(630) 232-0006

roskam.house.gov
facebook.com/RepRoskam
twitter.com/PeterRoskam

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1306

October 14, 2016

His Excellency Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General-Elect
United Nations
760 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Mr. Guterres:

I write to raise concern about a troubling development at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Yesterday, on the day of your election as Secretary-General, UNESCO passed Item 25 of its provisional agenda for the Executive Board's 200th session. Item 25, titled "Occupied Palestine," contemptibly denies Jewish and Christian ties to the Old City of Jerusalem and its holiest sites, the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. This action flies in the face of history, archaeology, science, and reason.

In March 2013, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon noted, "Israel's been weighed down by criticism and suffered from bias and sometimes even discrimination [at the U.N]." This has perhaps never been more evident than today. Item 25 does not seek to promote a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It only serves to legitimize a fabricated narrative which erases any Jewish connection to Jerusalem. This resolution egregiously reconstructs thousands of years of history and is destined to embolden Palestinian terrorists to continue their heinous attacks against Israeli civilians. Item 25 plays right into the hands of those who oppose a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

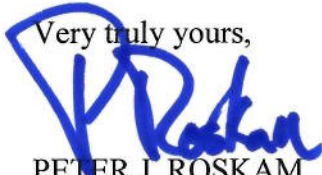
Yesterday's actions are only the most recent display of long-running bias against the Jewish state by the organization you will soon lead. Since its founding in 2006, the U.N. Human Rights Council has adopted 135 resolutions targeting specific countries.^[i] Sixty-eight of these have been directed against Israel, comprising more than 50% of the body's work.^[ii] In the past four years, the U.N. General Assembly has adopted 97 resolutions chastising specific nations.^[iii] Eighty-three of these have targeted Israel, over 85% percent of the total.^[iv] And each year, UNESCO adopts roughly 10 resolutions criticizing only Israel,^[v] the only true democracy in the Middle East.

At this very moment, the Islamic Republic of Iran is jailing journalists and executing dissidents; ISIS is committing genocide against religious minorities throughout the Middle East; and

Russian, Iranian, and Syrian forces are massacring civilians in Aleppo. The U.N. must cease its assault on Israel, the only genuinely free nation in the region, and focus on the pressing issues facing the international community.

I look forward to working with you closely as you guide the international community through this period of great violence, strife, and instability. Tragically, the U.N. and its affiliates have become the leading platform to proliferate an anti-Israel, anti-Semitic agenda which solely focuses on demonizing and delegitimizing the State of Israel. I hope, under your leadership, the organization's active hostility towards the Jewish state will end. I am committed to working with you to achieve this goal.

I urge you to condemn the recent anti-Israel UNESCO resolution and commit to refocusing the U.N. on peace, security, and international cooperation.

Very truly yours,

PETER J. ROSKAM
Member of Congress

^[i] U.N. Watch. "The UN and Israel: Key Statistics from UN Watch." UN Watch, 21 Sept. 2016. Web. 14 Oct. 2016. <http://www.unwatch.org/un-israel-key-statistics/>.

^[ii] Ibid.

^[iii] Ibid.

^[iv] Ibid.

^[v] Ibid.