
Anne Bayefsky

April 23, 2008, 1:30 a.m.

Redefining Anti-Semitism

At Durban II, only anti-Muslim racism counts.

By Anne Bayefsky

Geneva — Tuesday was Day 2 of the United Nations hatefest known as the “first substantive session of the Durban Review Preparatory Committee,” now taking place in Geneva. Delegates rolled up their sleeves, and the Jewish and Western-bashing exercise entered a new phase.

The Egyptian representative gave a good summary of most everything wrong with Durban II. He claimed the conference and its preparatory process should focus on criminalizing “racial profiling,” “racism in the media,” “the challenges posed by Islamophobia since the events on 9/11,” and “instrumentalization of democratic processes for racist applications.” In short, racism is an evil Western plot to victimize Muslims, who can only be protected by the undermining of democracy, freedom, and law enforcement.

The Ambassador of Sri Lanka was more philosophical. In his words, “the relationship between racial discrimination and freedom of expression is a complex and dialectical one; more freedom of expression is not an antidote to racial discrimination.”

The Algerian Ambassador took the U.N. Durban II platform to claim “anti-semitism . . . targets . . . Arabs who are also Semites, and by extension, the whole Muslim community.” Defining anti-Semitism this way has become a key component of the Durban II strategy, since once the concept has been Islamicized, Muslim states are happy to shout about taking it very seriously, confident that Western UN-ophiles still won’t catch on to their game.

While the European Union attendees stayed in their seats, the assault on democracy carried on. Algeria said “freedom of expression spread[s] hatred and violence and lead[s] to the burning of mosques in ‘advanced’ countries.” Syria ranted about “the crimes that are perpetrated in the name of democracy” and the “killers” that “are countries that advocate democracy . . . and give [a] free hand to perpetrate massacres.”

U.N. “expert” Doudou Diene from Senegal — whose name has been bandied about as a possible successor to the current U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, who retires in June — worried about “groups that have instrumentalized the freedom of expression” and the so-called “ideological freedom of expression.” According to Diene, “we should no longer use freedom of expression as the ideological tool [it is] . . . today.” The “Danish caricatures” cannot be tolerated in the name of freedom of expression “anymore.”

Though the United States is boycotting the forum, American taxpayers will be surprised to learn that —

if the U.N. gets its way — they are still paying for it. The U.N. Secretariat revealed a new end-run around the U.S. promise not to fund Durban II. The secretariat announced that they had cut their original \$7 million price tag for the preparatory side of Durban II in half. The other half will be “absorbed in existing resources” — a euphemism for using funds already in U.N. coffers, 22 percent of which are from American taxes. Washington is now faced with ensuring that this brazen attempt to avoid official American policy does not succeed.

And the EU is faced with the impossible task of keeping a straight face while speechifying that Durban II is good for human rights.

— *Anne Bayefsky is senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. She also serves as the director of the Touro Institute for Human Rights and the Holocaust and as the editor of EYEontheUN.org.*

National Review Online - <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=OTU5MzZIN2Y2MzMxMGY2Mzg5YTRkYTg0NzdiMmVhZmQ>

Presented with permission of author.