

UNITED NATIONS REFORM

1 Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc., is committed to upholding the
2 founding principles of the United Nations and is proud to be a non-governmental organization
3 (NGO) in special consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

4 Hadassah is deeply concerned that the U.N.’s integrity and effectiveness have been
5 compromised. While recognizing some recent strides toward Israel’s acceptance at the U.N.—
6 such as the long-awaited inclusion of Israel in the Western European and Others Regional Group
7 in Geneva—Hadassah is outraged by the bias against Israel that continues to pervade the
8 institution. In 2006, Hadassah welcomed an initiative for U.N. reform and now reaffirms calls
9 for significant reforms that will lead to a more productive U.N., where bias against any state, and
10 against Israel in particular, does not occur.

11 In 2012, 138 member nations of the United Nations General Assembly approved Palestinian non-
12 member observer state status— using the opportunity to demean and delegitimize Israel while
13 enabling Palestinians to circumvent international pressure for direct bilateral negotiations.

14 The United Nations Human Rights Council has become a mockery of its intended goals. The
15 council includes, and frequently appoints to leadership roles, the very nations who have the worst
16 human rights records, such as Iran, China, Cuba, and Sudan. The Council has passed more than
17 45 resolutions against Israel—over one-third of all country-specific resolutions—and Israel is the
18 only country singled out on the Council’s permanent agenda.

19 Hadassah urges the U.N. to implement broad and substantive changes to its institutions and
20 bodies, specifically:

- 21 • to eliminate redundant and anachronistic resolutions and committees, specifically the four
22 committees on Palestinian affairs that have only served to exacerbate the Israeli-
23 Palestinian conflict, and waste the time and resources of the General Assembly;

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- 24 • to implement clear conditions for membership and leadership positions within the Human
25 Rights Commission that require countries to abide by the highest standards of human
26 rights, and cooperate fully with the Commission and its mechanisms;
- 27 • to evaluate and increase transparency in the nomination, selection, and appointment
28 process of United Nations Special Rapporteurs and other mandate holders;
- 29 • to recognize Yom Kippur as an official United Nations holiday, along with the major
30 Christian and Muslim holidays Christmas, Good Friday, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha,
31 which were approved for inclusion by the General Assembly in 1998; and
- 32 • to adopt a clear and comprehensive definition of terrorism that condemns it in absolute
33 terms.

34 Additionally, Hadassah calls upon the United Nations Secretary General, President of the
35 General Assembly, and High Commissioner for Human Rights to condemn any remarks by
36 international leaders, U.N. officials or independent consultants that include false statements, anti-
37 Semitism or delegitimize Israel.

38 Finally, Hadassah urges the U.S. to continue its strong and vocal support for Israel at the United
39 Nations and lobbying for broad and significant U.N. reforms.