



Goldstone Retracts His Own Report

Judge Richard Goldstone has retracted the central claims of his controversial report that falsely accused Israel of targeting civilians during its Cast Lead military campaign in December 2008 and January 2009. The Goldstone Report claimed that Israel committed war crimes in Gaza as it targeted the Hamas terrorist organization—a serious charge that was made with no evidence.

“If I had known then what I know now, the Goldstone Report would have been a different document,” Goldstone wrote.

Goldstone’s stunning reversal, published in a Washington Post op-ed in April, affirmed a key distinction between Israel and Hamas that the original report ignored: Whereas Hamas’ rocket attacks deliberately and indiscriminately sought to murder civilians, Israel’s campaign tirelessly strove to protect innocent life.

The United States should lead efforts to press the U.N. Human Rights Council and General Assembly to repudiate the report and end all follow-up actions related to it.

Congress and the Obama administration have criticized the Goldstone Report since it was first published almost two years ago. At that time, the House passed a resolution calling the Goldstone Report “irredeemably biased and unworthy of further consideration or legitimacy.”

More recently, in reaction to Goldstone’s recantations, the Senate passed a bipartisan resolution that calls on the U.N. Human Rights Council to rescind the full Goldstone Report. More than 30 senators cosponsored the measure, which passed by unanimous consent. Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Jim Risch (R-ID) led the Senate effort urging the U.N. panel to stop carrying out the report’s recommendations and take measures to ensure that the panel no longer makes false accusations against Israel.

Susan Rice, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, spoke bluntly about how the Obama administration feels about the report. “I’m not sure it can be amended,” Rice said. “What we want to see is for it to disappear and no longer be a subject of discussion and debate in the Human Rights Council or the General Assembly or beyond.”

She is exactly right. The U.N. secretary general should push for real reform of the Human Rights Council so that in the future, there are no more anti-Israel investigations. The threats from Hamas and Hizballah’s rocket arsenals are not going away any time soon. Israel needs to know that it can defend itself without the anti-Israel majority in the United Nations automatically condemning it.