

B'NAI B'RITH  INTERNATIONAL

April 27, 2017

Your Excellency:

On behalf of B'nai B'rith International – the world's oldest Jewish humanitarian, advocacy and social action organization, with a grassroots presence in over 50 countries – we write to urge you to oppose any anti-Israel draft resolution at the 201st session of the UNESCO Executive Board.

Whether a resolution explicitly recycles the widely denounced content of previous inflammatory resolutions or "merely" invokes those resolutions, member states have an especially profound moral duty to oppose attempts to deny, question or obscure Jews' ties, historic and contemporary, to their most sacred of sites in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land, including Rachel's Tomb, the Cave of the Patriarchs, the Western Wall and above all the Temple Mount.

Additionally, it would be grossly irresponsible for UNESCO to take the political step of engaging in the absurd denial of Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem. No other country's capital is questioned internationally and no nation has deeper roots in its capital city. Historically, no other country has maintained Jerusalem as its capital, and no prior power ever protected diversity, culture and elemental religious freedom in the city as the democratic State of Israel has.

Passage of the draft in question would further critically undermine the standing of UNESCO in those areas that are within the organization's competency, and your government must reject complicity in an outrageously ahistorical affront not only to Israel but to Jews as well as Christians around the world.

We very much value each opportunity to raise with you vital concerns related to the agency and its bodies, including the ongoing politicization that has deeply impaired UNESCO's ability to fulfill its mandate. We look forward to continuing our communication on issues of mutual concern at UNESCO, and thank you in advance for joining in principled opposition to resolutions that do the body and its values lasting harm.

Sincerely,

Gary P. Saltzman
President

Daniel S. Mariaschin
Executive Vice President

David J. Michaels
Director of UN and Intercommunal Affairs