

**13<sup>th</sup> PLENARY ASSEMBLY  
OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS  
Jerusalem, 27 January 2009**

**RESOLUTION**

**Durban II**

The delegates of the 13<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly of the World Jewish Congress, representing 90 Jewish communities throughout the world and meeting in Jerusalem on 27 January 2009:

**NOTE** that the UN World Conference Against Racism held in Durban 2001 (Durban 1 Conference) was preceded by the NGO Forum which was marred by virulent anti-Semitic behaviour from a number of Non-Government Organisations and which was marked by abuse of process and outcomes prejudicial to genuine work to combat racism.

**NOTE** that the Durban I Government Conference produced outcome documents including the Declaration which singled out Israel (while naming or identifying no other countries) and introduced extraneous anti-Israel content under the pretext that Israel's actions are racist, which anti-Israel content overshadowed and distorted the critically important professed agenda of the Durban 1 Conference.

**NOTE** that the Durban Review Conference (Durban II), is to be held in Geneva in April 2009 and that there is every reason to believe that the worst elements from the Durban I Conference Declaration may be included or even accentuated and that new unacceptable elements are likely to be introduced. At the same time, even moderate condemnations of anti-Semitism may well be removed and any declaration forthcoming from Durban II will compromise and hinder any effective action to eliminate hatred and intolerance and to do justice to the victims of discrimination in all of its forms.

**NOTE** in particular that although no draft Declaration or Plan of Action has been produced, the current *Draft Outcomes Document*, which will be the basis of pre-conference deliberations at Intercessional meetings and the April 2009 Preparatory Committee meeting, singles out Israel as the only country named, or clearly identified, in respect of "*alleged racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia or related intolerance*":

**FURTHER NOTE** that Regional Meetings have submitted to the Draft Outcomes Document elements which, if they are not excised, adversely impact on free speech, democratic rights and freedoms and the fight against terrorism based on the "defamation of Islam" and by so doing: attempts to import Islamic anti-blasphemy prohibitions into international human rights law; advocates censorship in Western democracies; ignores extremist incitements by radical Islamic, left-wing and other groups; calls for new laws to restrict free speech; equates national identity with racism, links counter-terrorism to racism; but omits to mention hatred that fuels terrorism; ignores forms of racism that led to the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide and the current genocide in the Darfur province of Sudan, for example by:

- drawing attention "to the impact of counter-terrorism measures on the rise of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including the practice of racial, ethnic, national and religious profiling";
- acknowledging "that the most disturbing phenomenon is the intellectual and ideological validation of Islamophobia which when expressed in the form of defamation of religions, takes cover behind the freedom of expression and when expressed in the form of profiling, hides behind the war against terrorism";

- believing “that association of terrorism and violence with Islam or any other religion including through publication of offensive caricatures and making of hate documentaries would purposely complicate common endeavours to address several contemporary issues including fight against terrorism and occupation of foreign territories and people”;
- alleging that “besides strengthening discrimination against Muslims, this insidious association is preventing Muslim communities from practicing their religion freely or integration in the society in many countries”.

**RECORD** that the Governments of Canada and Israel have decided not to attend Durban II and expresses the hope that other countries will adopt the same approach.

**EXPRESS THE BELIEF** that the outcomes of the Asian and African Regional Preparatory Committees, and the OIC, which produced the objectionable sections of the Draft Outcomes Document, and the December 2008 resolution of the UNHRC on Gaza, clearly indicate the high possibility that Durban II will constitute an unwarranted and illegitimate attack on democratic freedoms, international human rights law, and an attack on Israel, not only through a series of one sided and inaccurate resolutions, but also by ignoring the worst forms of racism that continue in a number of parts of the world.

**RECALL** that some governments played a constructive, vital and courageous role at Durban I, but were unable to prevent abuses of process or to have removed all objectionable parts of the Declaration.

**STRONGLY BELIEVE** that the “red lines”, which:

- single out or demonise any one State;
- introduce the policy of opposing defamation of religion;
- delete condemnation of anti-Semitism;
- remove calls for Holocaust commemoration; or
- construct a hierarchy of racisms,

will be crossed at the Durban 11 Conference.

**ACCORDINGLY CALL UPON** Jewish communities worldwide to implement a plan of action directed at their heads of state, foreign ministries, foreign ambassadors and human rights NGOs, to ensure that the Durban 11 Conference is not a reprise of the excesses and abuses of Durban 1, but is confined to its legitimate purpose of eliminating racism, and failing this to encourage governments to withdraw from the Durban 11 process as it is currently configured and not attend the Durban 11 Review Conference in April 2009.