



ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

Palestinian death, and thus it engages more of the world's attention. By contrast, the Russians imposed a virtual media blockade on Chechnya, and journalists who covered the story, like Anna Politkovskaya, had a way of ending up dead.

Events...

Sunday, April 26, 9:30am

HaRav Yosef Carmel, Rosh Kollel Eretz Chemdah, will speak on "Establishing a Jewish State: Then and Now" at Shaarei Shomayim.

Tuesday, April 28, 7:30pm

Mizrachi's communal Yom HaZikaron Commemoration and Yom HaAtzmaut Celebration, at BAYT.

Wednesday April 29, 5:30pm

UJA-Federation's communal Yom HaAtzmaut Celebration at 4600 Bathurst. Shuttle buses leave from BAYT starting at 5pm.

Commentary...

Our Selective Moral Outrage By Bret Stephens
Why does Israel face more opprobrium than Russia?

Few places on earth have been as systematically brutalized over the past decade as Chechnya. So you might have thought that the Russian government's decision last week to declare an end to its "counterterrorism" operations in the territory would have been an occasion for somber reflection in the Western media. Forget it. It's a 600-word news item at best.

Here's a contrast to ponder. Since the beginning of the second intifada in the autumn of 2000, roughly 6,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire. That figure includes combatants, as well as those killed in January's fighting in Gaza.

As for Chechnya, there are no solid figures for the number of civilians killed since the second war began in late 1999; estimates range anywhere between 25,000 and 200,000. Chechnya's population, at a little over one million, is about one-third or one-fourth that of the Palestinians. That works out to between 25 to 200 Chechen deaths per 1,000, as against 1.5 to 2 Palestinian deaths per 1,000.

Now type the words "Palestine" and "genocide" into Google. When I did so Monday, I got 1,630,000 results. Next, substitute "Chechnya" for "Palestine." The number is 245,000. Taking the Google results as a crude measure of global outrage, that means the outrage over the Palestinian situation was 6.6 times greater than over the Chechen one. Yet Chechen fatalities were anywhere between 13 to 133 times greater.

Final calculation: With an "outrage" ratio of 6.6 to one, but a proportional kill ratio of one to 13 (at the very low end), it turns out that every Palestinian death receives somewhere in the order of 28 times the attention of every Chechen death. Remember that in both cases we're mainly talking about Muslims being killed by non-Muslims.

I'll admit this math exercise is a bit of a gimmick. But it raises a worthwhile question: Why is Palestinian life so dear in the eyes of the world -- and Chechen life so cheap?

Maybe the answer is that the Palestinian cause is morally worthier than Chechnya's. But that can't be right. Yes, Chechen terrorists have committed spectacular atrocities, notably the 2004 Beslan school massacre. Yet modern terrorism is a genre Palestinians practically invented. As it is, Chechnya has been suffering grievously under Russia's thumb since the 1800s. (Just read Tolstoy's "Hadji Murat.") If colonialism is your beef, the case for Chechen independence is inarguable.

Maybe, then, the answer is that there is no shortage of imagery of

יום העצמאות שמח

But imagery need not simply be televised to be vivid, nor does the world lack for testimonials of Russian brutality. "I remember a Chechen female sniper," a Russian soldier told L.A. Times reporter Maura Reynolds. "We just tore her apart with two armored personnel carriers, having tied her ankles with steel cables. There was a lot of blood, but the boys needed it."

Maybe it's that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is simply more important strategically than Russia's war against Chechnya, in the same way that the attacks of 9/11 mattered more in the scheme of things than, say, Tamil Tiger atrocities in Sri Lanka.

Yet even before 9/11, there was evidence that al Qaeda was feeding money and arms to Chechen fighters, putting Chechnya squarely into the context of what became the global war on terror. Evidence of al Qaeda involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is sparser, and only came to light in 2007.

Of course, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict inflames the Muslim world in a way the Chechen one does not. But why is that, when so many more Muslims are being victimized by Russia?

Then too, why does the wider world participate in the Muslim world's moral priorities? Why, for instance, do high-profile Western writers like Portuguese Nobelist José Saramago make "solidarity" pilgrimages to Ramallah, but not to the Chechen capital of Grozny? Why do British academics organize boycotts of their Israeli counterparts, but not their Russian ones? Why is Palestinian statehood considered a global moral imperative, but statehood for Chechnya is not?

Why does every Israeli prime minister invariably become a global pariah, when not one person in a thousand knows the name of Chechen "President" Ramzan Kadyrov, a man who, by many accounts, keeps a dungeon near his house in order to personally torture his political opponents? And why does the fact that Mr. Kadyrov is Vladimir Putin's handpicked enforcer in Chechnya not cause a shudder of revulsion as the Obama administration reaches for the "reset" button with Russia?

I have a hypothesis. Maybe the world attends to Palestinian grievances but not Chechen ones for the sole reason that Palestinians are, uniquely, the perceived victims of the Jewish state. That is, when they are not being victimized by other Palestinians. Or being expelled en masse from Kuwait. Or being excluded from the labor force in Lebanon. Things you probably didn't know about, either. As for the Chechens, too bad for their cause that no Jew will ever likely become president of Russia. (Wall Street Journal Apr 21)

Suddenly, Holocaust Remembrance Is Also About the Future
By Walter Reich

President Barack Obama will deliver the keynote address at today's Holocaust Remembrance ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. The theme for this year's ceremony is "Never Again: What You Do Matters." The theme emphasizes individual responsibility.

In what he says about this theme at the ceremony, and in what he does about it afterward, Obama shouldn't only remember the terrible past. In urgent response to the outrageously belligerent statements about the Holocaust and about Israel made on Monday by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, he should speak also about what could be an even more terrible future.

Too often, the vow of "never again" has been a rhetorical utterance

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that, when we make it in speeches, costs us little and makes us feel better - but that, when we have the chance of putting it into practice, we shamefully ignore, especially when not ignoring it imposes on us personal or national costs. At tomorrow's ceremony, Obama should dedicate himself to making sure that, under his leadership, that vow will become effective national policy. On this crucial matter of individual responsibility, President Obama should - both as an individual and as president - lead the country and the world by example.

Until now, Holocaust remembrance has been about the past: the systematic murder by Nazi Germany of six million European Jews between 1939 and 1945. Suddenly, Holocaust remembrance is also about the future. It's about the threatened murder by Iran of nearly six million Israeli Jews. And, even worse, it's about the potential murder of many millions more. The meaning of "never again" has never been as clear, as urgent or as universal.

In 1939, Adolf Hitler issued his "prophecy" that the Jews would be exterminated. And now Ahmadinejad, even as he races to build nuclear weapons, denies that the Holocaust ever happened and threatens the elimination of Israel. In his speech Monday at the UN's "anti-racism" conference in Geneva, he called the Holocaust an "ambiguous and dubious question" and a "pretext of Jewish sufferings."

Hitler justified his animus against the Jews by accusing them of manipulating international finance and world governments. And Ahmadinejad, in his speech on Monday, justified his animus against Israel, as he'd done before, by hurling the same accusations against "the Zionists."

Ahadinejad also argued that it's "Zionists" - by which term he means Jews - who manipulate governments and nations. "It is time," he said, that "the ideal of Zionism, which is the paragon of racism, be broken." The seriousness of this threat by the bellicose leader of a country clearly rushing to amass nuclear weapons, and utterly committed to the elimination of Israel, can hardly be exaggerated.

The fact that the US and eight other nations had already decided to boycott the conference, and the fact that, in the midst of Ahmadinejad's vitriolic, Holocaust-denying and Israel-threatening speech, several dozen European diplomats walked out, won't slow his march toward nuclear weapons. Nor will it diminish the chance that he will actually use them. He's been chastised before, and it hasn't stopped him. Nor has Obama's hope to "reach out" to Iran induced Ahmadinejad to calm his bellicose rhetoric or stop spinning his centrifuges. This bellicose rhetoric, like the bellicose rhetoric of murderous leaders six and seven decades ago, sustains and justifies the rush to violence. Ahmadinejad is a man obsessed and determined, as are others in the Iranian leadership, and is fast on his way to building the instruments of mass death.

Clearly the deadly past has become a frightening portent of a deadly future. And the Obama administration's readiness to drop the demand that Iran suspend its nuclear program while negotiating about it could guarantee that, as the talks proceed, the centrifuges will continue to spin, the warheads will be made, the rockets will be poised, and Iran will be ready to strike.

So, at this crucial time of Holocaust remembrance, the past is threatening to become prologue. In Israel, sorrow is being joined by fear. And "never again," at least for Israelis, has become a grim and concrete vow.

Too much is at stake - not only for Israel and its Jews but also for America and the world. A nuclear exchange between Iran and Israel could kill many times six million, both Israelis and Iranians. And before any exchange - even if Iran only uses its nuclear weapons for blackmail - other nuclear powers, fearful of Iran's thrust toward regional hegemony, will emerge in the region. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and several others will amass their own arsenals. At least the Cold War, horrible as it was in potential, could be controlled. The world created by a nuclear Iran could never be controlled. And the nuclear-tipped rockets shot off by those countries could reach well beyond the Middle East into Europe and elsewhere.

In addressing the theme of "never again" in the Capitol Rotunda on Thursday, President Obama should acknowledge not only the concrete danger of the "again" but also his personal responsibility, as an individual and as the most powerful leader in the world, to avert it. He should explain clearly why talking to Iran is necessary. But he should also explain, as the nuclear clock ticks on, what he wants to accomplish - and what he'd do if, after a reasonable effort, it becomes apparent that Iran is only using the talks as a tactical maneuver to buy the little time still needed to build nuclear weapons.

Options are available, including very sharp and targeted sanctions against elements in the Iranian regime, that have a chance of at least slowing, and even preventing, Iranian weaponization. Mr. Obama should make it clear that he's ready to pursue those options, and any others he thinks might work and would be compatible with world peace, and to lead America's European and other allies in doing so. And, given the urgency, he should make clear that he will do so well before Iran's ticking nuclear clock strikes twelve.

President Obama owes that to the victims of the last Holocaust. And he owes it to the potential victims, far greater in number, of the next.

The writer is a former director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (Jerusalem Post Apr 22)

Ahadinejad's Wager By Barry Rubin

Why did Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, with the full backing of Iran's regime, behave as he did at the Durban II conference? One reason, of course, is that he believed every word he said and that much of the Iranian Islamist regime thinks the same way. This factor should always be remembered, lest people think this was only some cynical ploy.

As the Iranian Islamist regime's founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, once said, the revolution was not just about lowering the price of watermelons. That is, his was not merely a movement for materialist reasons, but one that believed it was executing God's will on earth. Ideology was central.

To explain this properly, permit me to digress a moment. People often ask: Why did Jews under Nazi rule in Eastern Europe not flee or do more to escape the Shoah (Holocaust)? After extensive research and interviewing, it is clear to me that while there were a number of factors, foremost was the disbelief that the Germans would murder them all.

Remember that these Jews were forced into slave labor. They produced goods, farmed crops and repaired roads. In effect, they were helping the German war effort. These laborers were paid nothing and fed barely enough to stay alive. Why, then, would the Germans destroy, so to speak, a goose that was laying eggs, if not necessarily golden ones, possibly losing the war in the process?

The answer is: Because they believed in their own ideology, they would not act pragmatically; rather, they would make their own defeat - and their own deaths - more likely.

The second factor that should be remembered is that of miscalculation. A leader, particularly if reckless and overconfident, will take an action he thinks is in his interest, but which turns out to be a disaster. The best internal Middle East examples are those of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel-Nasser provoking the crisis that led to the 1967 Six Day War and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Nasser thought he could score points in the Arab arena and at home by threatening to wipe Israel off the map and taking at least some major steps toward war. He miscalculated. Israel attacked and inflicted a huge defeat on him.

Saddam Hussein thought he could score points in the Arab arena and at home by seizing Kuwait, making himself the Arab world's leader, plus getting many billions of dollars from that oil-rich little country. He miscalculated. A US-led coalition attacked and inflicted a huge defeat on him.

For Ahmadinejad, then, ideology and miscalculation are major factors. They will continue to be major factors if Iran gets nuclear weapons.

But of course, as with Nasser and Saddam Hussein, there are shorter-run calculations. Three are important:

1. Domestic popularity. This is always a basic factor with Middle Eastern radical regimes. Not all Iranians will support Ahmadinejad and many hate the regime. But among the 20 percent hardcore, and perhaps 50 percent total, who can be mobilized, they may cheer Ahmadinejad. 'Iran is strong, its enemies are weak and its leadership is courageous.' 'America, the Jews and the West are satanic.' 'Rally to the Islamic regime!'
2. Regional popularity. Iran's regime is seeking to be leader of the Muslim world and the leading power in the Middle East. But in doing so, it has two very big problems: Iran is mostly Shia Muslim, while most Muslims (especially Arabs) are Sunni; and Iran is mostly ethnically Persian, while Arabs are Arab.

How to overcome these barriers? Iran already has Arab and largely Sunni allies - Syria, Hamas, Hizbullah - but that's not enough. By becoming the leader against America, the West and Israel, Iran hopes to override these problems. 'Who cares if we are Persian and Shia,' Ahmadinejad says, 'we are the true Muslims doing what your governments aren't doing.'

3. Global popularity. While this is a miscalculation, Ahmadinejad and other regime leaders believe that this kind of behavior can make them popular throughout the world. This includes not only Muslim-majority countries, but also the Third World and even the West. In a recent interview with Der Spiegel magazine, Ahmadinejad said that he believed most Germans also hated Israel and wanted to see it wiped out. Certainly, there is reason for him to believe such things.

Some better-informed regime leaders view Ahmadinejad as a disaster. The problem is that the top leadership is backing him, and thus his words and actions do represent the regime. The June elections will almost certainly return him to office for several more years - years during which Iran will get nuclear weapons.

There's one other extremely important point on which Ahmadinejad is misunderstood. It is true that he does not control the government. The most powerful man in Iran remains the supreme guide, Ali Khamenei. But Ahmadinejad, allied with powerful current and former Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officers, is building his own apparatus. In the future, he could well emerge as the uncontested leader of Iran. For the moment, though, it is enough that he has the regime's backing.

Ahmadinejad and other Iranian leaders - though not all - believe the West is weak and cannot respond to their aggression. They are not, as sympathizers portray them in the West, trembling people motivated by fear of external attack. Clearly, Iran has legitimate security concerns. But the real threats are heightened by their own behavior. If they were, in fact, so frightened, then they could change policy and reduce the threat. Some regime leaders, though not those in control right now, advocate just such a policy. Unfortunately, the West hasn't helped them enough by making that threat more credible through denunciations and effective sanctions.

So here's the bottom line. By failing to oppose Iran more effectively, the West is unintentionally encouraging it to be more extremist and dangerous. By failing to help relatively moderate Arab regimes, the West is making them more susceptible to having to appease Iran. By pressuring and criticizing Israel, the West is encouraging Iran's regime to believe it can be destroyed.

Not a pretty picture. But neither is that of the would-be fuhrer as an honored guest at United Nations meetings. No wonder Ahmadinejad and his backers believe that theirs is a winning bet. (IsraelNN.com Apr 22)

Never Since the 1930s By Sarah Honig

Minimal intellectual honesty compels us Jews to admit that we live in dangerous times - so dangerous that they cannot but remind us of the noxious atmosphere that led to the incomparable tragedy we will solemnly commemorate this Tuesday.

Never in its annals was the phoenix-like Jewish state - literally arisen from the ashes of incinerated Jewish multitudes - so defamed, so unaccepted by the so-called family of nations and so tossed in a howling tempest of ill will. Never since the 1930s have we experienced isolation so suffocating and so ubiquitous. Never since the 1930s did our collective pariah-status breed among us a resignation so deep-seated that it appears to border on apathy.

What makes our times so chillingly similar to the era that conceived and tolerated the Holocaust is the broad social respectability accorded Jew-bashing. It matters little if the pretext is the fake ogre the Nazis called "International Judaism," or the state that the Jews established so they would never be defenseless again. What matters is that Jewish self-defense in the framework of the Jewish state is as assiduously demonized as was the nonexistent cabal of the Elders of Zion.

Jewish self-preservation today is as illegitimate as it was then, and assailing it is as bon ton as in those dark days before the great cataclysm.

The vulgar bigotry of thugs - whether brown-shirted and in hobnailed boots or skin-headed or keffiyeh-wrapped - was and is facilitated by the ideologically-honed vitriol of an ostensibly exemplary, honorable sort. They rationalize their abhorrence as decent and de rigueur. They were the ones who once made it possible for the storm troopers to terrorize and who now vindicate jihadist terror. Once more the self-professed spokespersons of

enlightenment and free speech horrifyingly shout down and shut up the objects of their scorn.

Reviling the Jewish state is today just as proper and urbane as turning sophisticated noses up at Jews was for the prewar smart-set. Verses like T.S. Eliot's "The rats are underneath the piles/The Jew is underneath the lot" were received with knowing winks and smug nods of approval by his literary milieu. Jews were judged as deserving repugnance, and the then-guardians of virtue perceived nothing untoward in the diabolical portraiture.

To be sure, Eliot-style spitefulness is crude by today's slyer standards, but the bottom-line is unchanged. No need to badmouth Jews indelicately when Judeophobic ends can be more effectively achieved via compassion for the Jews' would-be annihilators.

When the latter are painted as oppressed victims, Jews per force emerge as ruthless oppressors. When Jews, moreover, are called Israelis, their maligners can fend off accusations of anti-Semitism. Such accusations are anyhow brandished as proof of manipulative intent to silence all criticism of the Jewish state. Calculated, circuitous reasoning eventually turns Jew-haters into righteous, persecuted underdogs, while Israelis are cast as ferocious hounds.

It's thus possible to seethe with anti-Semitism without admitting it. This in turn enables self-loathing Jews to join the denunciation-fest, present themselves as morally superior to benighted "other" Jews and thereby strive for their own personal exoneration from Jewish guilt. Hate-mongers need only claim that they just cannot abide the suffering inflicted by Nazi-clone Jews/Israelis on pitiable Palestinians. By equating Jewish/Israeli "crimes" with the Holocaust, the ploy becomes altogether irresistible. It no longer matters that Israel's army is humane to its own detriment, or that the Palestinians are merely the vanguard of the pan-Arab/Muslim drive to ethnically cleanse this region of any negligible Jewish vestige.

It doesn't even matter that Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular were avid cheerleaders and collaborators in the original Holocaust. Pop-culture banality nearly casts Jews/Israelis as the bad guys of the Holocaust saga.

In the topsy-turvy reality of shallow pop-conscience, descendants of history's worst mass murderers and most indifferent onlookers now decontaminate their heritage by arrogantly portraying descendants of the most downtrodden as flagrantly evil. Exploiting the Holocaust to condemn the children of Holocaust survivors for seeking to preempt a Holocaust sequel must be the epitome of cynicism. But this cynicism is the basic prerequisite for progressive credentials.

That's why The New York Times published Pat Oliphant's cartoon featuring a gigantic, headless, sword-wielding, goose-stepping, uniformed fiend wheeling a razor-fanged Star of David that threatens to run down a tiny, defenseless Gazan woman and baby. Every last demonizing stereotype is there, yet the guise is of an indignant liberal commentary rather than the Der Sturmer calumny it replicates.

The Australian-born Oliphant, moreover, is no gutter-agitator. He's the world's most widely syndicated political cartoonist, the winner of numerous awards, including the Pulitzer, and his works have been exhibited in no less than Washington's National Portrait Gallery. Even more disheartening is the fact that Oliphant's distortive cliché is so commonplace.

In bastions of professed broadmindedness, deploring "Israeli excesses" is the barest minimum expected of upstanding persons of goodwill and forward-thinking inclinations. It's an indispensable accessory for the liberal image. Any young quasi-cultured person one might encounter overseas is likely not to like us. That has nothing to do with malice and everything to do with the trendy indoctrination of the do-gooders in crowd.

Said do-gooders orchestrate sinister demonstrations outside Israeli embassies. They throng at college campuses to heckle and abuse any speaker suspected of pro-Israeli sentiments (or of not being sufficiently anti-Israel). They clamor for boycotts of all Israeli products. In freedom's name they initiate inherently incongruous academic boycotts of Israeli universities (which are renowned for unconstrained nonconformity and pluralism). They disrupt sporting events in which Israelis compete. Some even purport to champion opposition to genocide by abiding chants like "Hamas! Hamas! All Jews to the gas!"

They so detest bloodshed and injustice that they vehemently deprecate any remotely feasible plan to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear warheads. The politically correct thing to do is not impede tyrants who broadcast their

bloodcurdling intentions before every available microphone. World peace will supposedly be secured by restraining Israel. Submissive Jews/Israelis are presumably assured the affections of do-gooder non-anti-Semites. Which brings us right back to the 1930s, when Jews couldn't have been more powerless or compliant. Nonetheless, their helplessness won them no kind consideration.

"In those days before the war," Chaim Weizmann said in recalling international vexation with the Jews, "our protests were regarded as provocations. Our very refusal to subscribe to our own death sentence became a public nuisance."

This also goes for Weizmann's warning to Anthony Eden: "The fire from the synagogues may easily spread to Westminster Abbey... If a government is allowed to destroy a whole community which has committed no crime... it means the beginning of anarchy and the destruction of the basis of civilization. The powers which stand looking on, without taking measures to prevent the crime, will one day be themselves visited by severe punishment." (Jerusalem Post April 17)

The Limits of Terrorism By Daniel Pipes

Does terrorism work, meaning, does it achieve its perpetrators' objectives?

With terror attacks having become a routine and nearly daily occurrence, especially in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, the conventional wisdom holds that terrorism works very well. For example, the late Ehud Sprinzak of the Hebrew University ascribed the prevalence of suicide terrorism to its "gruesome effectiveness."

Robert Pape of the University of Chicago argues that suicide terrorism is growing "because terrorists have learned that it pays." Harvard law professor Alan M. Dershowitz titled one of his books *Why Terrorism Works*.

But Max Abrahms, a fellow at Stanford University, disputes this conclusion, noting that they focus narrowly on the well-known but rare terrorist victories - while ignoring the much broader, if more obscure, pattern of terrorism's failures. To remedy this deficiency, Abrahms took a close look at each of the 28 terrorist groups so designated by the US Department of State since 2001 and tallied how many of them achieved their objectives.

His study, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," finds that those 28 groups had 42 different political goals and that they achieved only three of those goals, for a measly 7 percent success rate. Those three victories would be: (1) Hizbullah's success in expelling the multinational peacekeepers from Lebanon in 1984, (2) Hizbullah's success in driving Israeli forces out of Lebanon in 1985 and 2000, and (3) the Tamil Tiger's partial success in winning control over areas of Sri Lanka after 1990.

That's it. The other 26 groups, from the Abu Nidal Organization and al-Qaida and Hamas to Aum Shinriko and Kach and the Shining Path, occasionally achieved limited success but mostly failed completely. Abrahms draws three policy implications from the data.

- Guerrilla groups that mainly attack military targets succeed more often than terrorist groups that mainly attack civilian targets. (Terrorists got lucky in the Madrid attack of 2004.)
- Terrorists find it "extremely difficult to transform or annihilate a country's political system"; those with limited objectives (such as acquiring territory) do better than those with maximalist objectives (such as seeking regime change).

- Not only is terrorism "an ineffective instrument of coercion, but... its poor success rate is inherent to the tactic of terrorism itself." This lack of success should "ultimately dissuade potential jihadists" from blowing up civilians.

This final implication, of frequent failure leading to demoralization, suggests an eventual reduction of terrorism in favor of less violent tactics. Indeed, signs of change are already apparent.

At the elite level, for example the former jihad theorist Sayyid Imam al-Sharif (a.k.a. Dr. Fadl) now denounces violence: "We are prohibited from committing aggression," he writes, "even if the enemies of Islam do that." On the popular level, the Pew Research Center's 2005 Global Attitudes Project found that "support for suicide bombings and other terrorist acts has fallen in most Muslim-majority nations surveyed" and "so too has confidence in al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden."

Likewise, a 2007 Program on International Policy Attitudes study found that "large majorities in all countries oppose attacks against civilians for

political purposes and see them as contrary to Islam... Most respondents... believe that politically-motivated attacks on civilians, such as bombings or assassinations, cannot be justified."

On the practical level, terrorist groups are evolving. Several of them - specifically in Algeria, Egypt and Syria - have dropped violence and now work within the political system. Others have taken on nonviolent functions - Hizbullah delivers medical services and Hamas won an election.

If Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama bin Laden represent Islamism's first iteration, Hizbullah and Hamas represent a transitional stage, and Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, arguably the world's most influential Islamist, shows the benefits of going legitimate.

But if going the political route works so well, why does Islamist violence continue and even expand? Because it is not always practical. Rita Katz of the SITE Intelligence Group explains: "Engaged in a divine struggle, jihadists measure success not by tangible victories in this life but by God's eternal benediction and by rewards received in the hereafter."

In the long term, however, Islamists will likely recognize the limits of violence and increasingly pursue their repugnant goals through legitimate ways.

Radical Islam's best chance to defeat us lies not in bombings and beheadings but in classrooms, law courts, computer games, television studios and electoral campaigns.

We are on notice. (Jerusalem Post Apr.21)

The Time To Face Reality Is Now By Ariel Rodal

Although the Jewish world has been preparing for the Durban Review Conference for several months, and indeed has been impressively coordinated in dealing with challenges of this event, I still was not prepared for the shock, sadness, and fear I felt watching Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad receive a standing ovation after delivering a keynote address on the ironic topic of human rights.

Confirming without a doubt that this UN Conference will do nothing towards advancing its mandate, that is, combating racism and promoting human rights, Ahmadinejad, the only head of state to attend, ranted about the arrogance of the United States, Europe, and Israel, and stated that after World War Two, Europe sent migrants to Palestine to establish the racist regime that is now "the worst racist regime in the world".

Before leaving Teheran, Ahmadinejad gave the press his usual tirade of anti-Semitic and hateful messages, and even had he not, it is clear from the international community's knowledge of him what his message was going to be. The United Nations has sunk to a new low by giving this man a platform at conference on human rights - a man who presides over a regime where the execution of the very homosexuals whose existence he denies and the systematic oppression of women are a way of life.

Several delegates walked out of the plenary during the address, including those from the EU and Jordan, and Ahmadinejad was heckled throughout the speech, but what struck me most was the enthusiastic reception his words received from the majority of those in attendance. I am aware that this is commonplace behavior in the United Nations, and that this rhetoric characterized the entirety of the first Durban conference in 2001, but what sent chills down my spine was that this time around, the modern day blood libels perpetrated by hate-mongering scoundrels is being done by those who will likely, within an extremely short period of time, be a nuclear power.

It is my hope that this latest spectacle in Geneva will open the eyes of those states that care about fighting intolerance, that care about universal rights and freedoms. If there was ever a time for the remaining countries to boycott the Durban Review Conference, it is now. If there was ever a time that countries, especially the United States, should acknowledge that Iran's leaders are motivated by a sinister and heart-felt hatred of the West, and that this ideology cannot be wished away by those who hope for a convergence of interests, it is now. Those who advocate engagement with Iran cannot be allowed to ignore the true nature of those who they seek to engage.

If there was ever a time to face reality, it is now.

The writer is the coordinator of the World Jewish Diplomatic Corps for the World Jewish Congress. (Jerusalem Post Apr. 21)