

Nikki Haley, Out of the U.N. But Still In Fine Fettle

by Hugh Fitzgerald



Nikki Haley, the former American ambassador to the U.N., who became most famous for her coruscating criticism of the U.N. for its endless denunciations of Israel, has seen fit to [tweet](#) about the latest anti-Israel outrage at the U.N. Though she may no longer be the American ambassador to the U.N., she's not out of swiftian savage indignation. What infuriated her was a vote on a resolution at the U.N. Economic and Social Council, denouncing Israel for its "violation of women's rights."

Former US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley blasted a UN council on July 25 for singling out Israel for alleged violations of women's rights.

The UN Economic and Social Council resolution was approved by a 40-2 margin, with nine abstentions. Among the countries voting yes were Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Pakistan, all notorious for often misogynistic policies and denying basic rights to females.

“It amazes me how the U.N. condones votes like these,” Haley tweeted. “It is a total mockery of human rights to allow Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, and Yemen to name Israel as the world’s only violator of women’s rights.”

Nikki Haley might like to tweet a few more times describing the condition of women in the four countries she names or, still better, publish an Op-Ed, in which she quotes passages from the Qur’an and Hadith that show the misogyny of Islam, a misogyny that is a permanent feature of the faith.

Saudi Arabia is the country where women cannot leave the house without the permission of a male relative; where polygyny (one husband, up to four black-niqabbed wives) is widely practiced, where women cannot vote in major elections, where only recently were females given the right to drive. Women need their male guardian’s consent for any major activity, including travel, obtaining a passport, getting married or divorced and signing contracts.

Iran is the country where women have been imprisoned for not wearing their hijabs; where Nasrin Soutoudeh, the female lawyer defending women who protested against the compulsory wearing of the headscarf, was this year sentenced to 38 years in prison and 148 lashes.

Pakistan is a country where the low status of women is widely recognized. They are largely kept at home; only 24% of women are in the workplace. Child marriage, officially banned, is still practiced in rural areas. Women who report sexual crimes, including rape, are seldom believed. The abuse of wives is rampant; men know they have a right to “beat” their

wives if they are disobedient. Child marriages and forced marriages are common. Women receive far less education than men; as most Pakistani women will be staying home, the time and expense of educating them appears to Pakistani men as wasteful. Nearly 22.5 million of Pakistan's children – in a country with a population of just over 200 million – are out of school, the majority of them girls. Thirty-two percent of primary school age girls are out of school in Pakistan, compared with 21 percent of boys. By ninth grade, only 13 percent of girls are still in school. Malala Yousafzai was shot in the head for the crime of speaking in public about the importance of educating girls.

“The Pakistan government's failure to educate children is having a devastating impact on millions of girls,” said Liesl Gerntholtz, women's rights director at Human Rights Watch. “Many of the girls we interviewed are desperate to study, but instead are growing up without the education that would help them have options for their future.”

Yemen is another Muslim country Nikki Haley singled out for its voting for a resolution deploring Israel's treatment of women. Fewer than 1% of the members of its parliament are women; one out of its 57 ambassadors is a woman. Yemen is one of the worst countries in the world in gender disparity, the discrimination against women in Yemen is shown by World Bank figures which indicate that males achieve 5.9 years of education on average, while females only achieve 1.3 years. Only 6% of the work force consists of women. The illiteracy rate in Yemen is 52 %; for women it is as high as 70%.

Yet Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Yemen shamelessly voted against Israel's treatment of women. Of course, much of the resolution did not deal with women's rights at all – that was the excuse for the resolution, but not its essence – but rather parroted generic anti-Israel rhetoric, accusing the Jewish state of numerous crimes and alleged violations of human rights.

One clause, however, “[r]eaffirms that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women and girls with regard to the fulfilment of their rights, and their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society.”

The resolution also “urges the international community to continue to give special attention to the promotion and protection of the human rights of Palestinian women and girls and to intensify its measures to improve the difficult conditions being faced by Palestinian women and their families.”

The resolution has things backwards. It is the Council, in its shameless focus on Israel, that has been weighed and found wanting by Nikki Haley. In Israeli society, women are fully the equal to men in every respect, have the same access to education as men, receive equal pay for the same work, serve in the Knesset, are sent abroad as diplomats, head political parties, are CEO's of companies, have served at every level in the army, including on the General Staff. Tzipi Livni served as Vice Prime Minister; Golda Meir served as Prime Minister. In Israel there are no glass ceilings for women.

In the Palestinian society, women are far from being the equals of men. They are not expected to take the same roles in the society as men, thus girls receive less education than boys in this patriarchal society. They are frequently the victims of physical abuse by husbands and siblings. An average of 37% of Arab women are victims of GBV (gender-based violence) in the West Bank; in the Gaza Strip, this percentage increases to 51%. The practice of honor killings continues. Women in Palestine are limited both in their employment prospects and in their political participation. The Hamas leadership is entirely male; the role of women is to produce martyrs. The Palestine Authority has had only one woman in its upper ranks, Hanan Ashrawi, who served for two years

(1996-1998) as the P.A.'s Minister of Education; both before and after being in that post, she has been an intermittent propagandist for the "Palestinian" cause, but does not make policy. She's merely a mouthpiece, useful for her fluency in English.

Palestinian women are keenly aware of all the restrictions placed on them by a misogynistic Muslim society, and they observe how much better and freer life is for Israeli women. This encourages Palestinian women to think that someday they, too, can achieve equal rights. Far from Israel being an obstacle to "the fulfillment of their [Palestinian women's] rights, and their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society," Israel is the primary promoter, by its own example in recognizing and enforcing equality of the sexes, of equality for Palestinian women. But that, of course, could never be recognized by the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

If Nikki Haley decides to write a longer article on this latest resolution of the U.N. Economic and Social Council, she should not confine herself to holding up for grim inspection the way girls and women are treated in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Yemen. She should also detail how girls and women are abused, held back, kept down, in Palestinian society, and compare their treatment to the way girls and women are treated in Israel.

And there's one other thing she should do, which is to go to the source of the mistreatment of Muslim women – the texts of Islam itself. Muslim men behave as they do toward women because of what they are told about them in the Qur'an and in several Hadith. Nikki Haley could begin by reminding everyone of Qur'an 4:34, in which Muslim men are told that "men have authority over women because God has made the one SUPERIOR to the other." In the same verse, they are told that they may "beat" their wives if they merely fear they may be disobedient. Polygyny, which allows a Muslim husband to have

up to four wives, clearly devalues women; the practice comes from 4:3: "Marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four...." Another example of the unequal treatment of women occurs in the Islamic inheritance laws, by which daughters are to inherit only half that which sons inherit (4:11). Similarly, the testimony in court of a woman is worth only half that of a man (2:282). And most important for Haley to include is Muhammad's reply, in a hadith, **when he was asked why a woman's testimony is worth only half that of a man, that it is "because of the deficiency in her intelligence."** (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 48, Number 826)

The vote at the U.N. Economic and Social Council denouncing Israel offers Nikki Haley just the opening she needs to provide a salutary lesson on the mistreatment of women in Islam. She can not only remind a vast audience of the dismal status of women in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Yemen (four of the Muslim countries that voted for the anti-Israel resolution), but she can note – and quote – the Qur'anic verses that justify that mistreatment, and the hadith in which Muhammad himself devastatingly describes women as intellectually inferior to men.

Nikki Haley was an inspiring American ambassador to the U.N. precisely because, like Jeanne Kirkpatrick before her, she was a diplomat who could be most undiplomatic, and nothing made her more furious, and undiplomatic, than the U.N.'s ludicrous fixation with Israel. Still, she held back in one respect – she never did quote the Qur'an or hadith in responding to the calumny of Muslim nations.

Now, out of office, she can be even more undiplomatic than she was as a diplomat at the U.N. What an impact she could have if, having left the U.N. at the end of 2018, she were now to reemerge as a columnist and hold up, for discussion in her columns, quotes from the Qur'an. A baker's dozen would fit the bill: 2:191-193, 3:110, 3:151, 4:34, 4:89, 8:12, 8:60, 9:5, 9:29, 47:4, 98:6. She could also offer two telling remarks by

Muhammad in the hadith: "War is deceit" and "I have been made victorious through terror." What could Muslims answer? How could they explain away those verses, or another hundred in which Believers are commanded to wage violent Jihad, and which they know Haley must be holding in deadly reserve? And how could they justify Muhammad's remarks?

No doubt a great many Muslim ambassadors at the U.N. breathed a sigh of relief when Nikki Haley finally left. They thought they had seen the end of her. They would be very unhappy to see her reappear as a columnist, and even more unhappy to read her discussions of Qur'anic verses. Nikki, do us all a favor. Make them unhappy.

First published in