



Conniving, hypocritical and treacherous: UK Foreign Minister Ed Miliband falsely accuses Israel of ethnically cleansing Judea and Samaria of Palestinians, though no Palestinians have been displaced. Instead, Miliband insists Jews are “occupying” their ancient homelands and wants them ethnically cleansed.

UK’s Miliband accuses Israel of “ethnic cleansing” Palestinians—but cleansing Jews from ancient homelands OK

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Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

As he announced sanctions on Israelis in Judea and Samaria (the “West Bank”) last week, British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband accused Israel of “illegally occupying” Palestinian territory in Judea and Samaria, “ethnically cleansing” Palestinians from the disputed territories and taking steps to prevent a two-state solution.

Self-righteous and indignant as Miliband tried to sound, his claims against Israel rang hollow—simply repeating long-disproven falsehoods.

The illegal occupation accusation is false according to international law. Palestinians have never controlled any territory that could be “occupied,” nor is Israel’s presence in any way illegal.

The second claim is also false, unless you consider it ethnic cleansing to remove unlawful squatters and unauthorized construction from public land. Ironically, Mr. Miliband makes no mention of true ethnic cleansing in the territories by Palestinian Authority (PA) laws ruling it illegal for Jews to own property in ancestral Jewish lands controlled by the PA.

Miliband doubles down on his treachery by joining the PA to declare Israel and some half a million Israeli Jews *personae non grata* in their homelands—thus advocating his own form of ethnic cleansing.

Finally, Miliband lies when he blames Israel for blocking a Palestinian state that presumably would live in harmony with the Jewish state. In fact, the Palestinian Arabs have for 78 years obstinately refused many generous offers to form their own state bordering Israel. It’s doubtful even today that Miliband could produce a single Palestinian leader who supports his fantasy of two states.

While Miliband’s tired posturing against Israel has been characterized as a vote-getting ploy, chances are he may succeed in banning products from Israeli-controlled lands in the disputed territories. However, it’s clear that slapping Israel’s wrists will produce no benefits for the Palestinians, nor is it likely to influence Israel’s behavior.

In short, Miliband’s complaints are naïve and amateurish: Israel has been grappling with Palestinian intransigence and murder daily for decades. Israelis know that while Miliband will be gone from power soon enough, the thankless dirty work of pacifying belligerent Palestinians will still be left to them.

There is no “occupation.” According to international law, an occupation exists when one country seizes the territory of another country. But Judea and Samaria was never legally part of another country, nor did the Palestinian Arabs ever exercise sovereignty over it. Rather, while the land was allocated for a Jewish state under the 1922 British Mandate of Palestine, it was unlawfully seized by Jordan during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

Jordan subsequently annexed the territory—a move almost universally rejected by the international community, though no one suggested that Jordan “illegally occupied” Palestine. It was only when Israel took control of Judea and Samaria from Jordan after the 1967 Six-Day War that the world suddenly screamed “occupation.”

Israel is undeniably the rightful sovereign power in Judea and Samaria. Under international law, a new country inherits the borders of the preceding entity. Since Israel was established inside the borders of the British Mandate, it is the legal inheritor of this land, including Judea and Samaria.

International law also holds that an occupation ceases to exist once the occupying power concludes a peace agreement with the country from which it won the territory. Israel concluded a peace agreement

with Jordan in 1994. This agreement legally eliminated any question of Israel “occupying” Judea and Samaria. As for the Palestinians, they were never a political entity, nor did they have legal claims in this dispute.

There is no “ethnic cleansing.” Miliband spoke of Palestinian “Houses bulldozed. Roads and public infrastructure destroyed. Families displaced from their homes,” in Judea and Samaria as evidence of ethnic cleansing. Truthfully, Israel simply enforces its own building codes, which apply to both Jews and the 300,000 Palestinian Arabs living in Area C, under full Israeli control per the Oslo Accords. This is not ethnic cleansing. It is law enforcement.

Miliband hypocritically ignores the fact that Jews are effectively forbidden from living in Areas A and B, under full or partial PA control. Indeed, PA law specifically forbids selling land to Jews. Worse still, Miliband wants half a million Jews expelled from Judea and Samaria to enable Palestinian statehood. This is ethnic cleansing. Two million Arabs live in Israel, but apparently no Jews can live in the ancient Jewish homeland.

Miliband should remember that Israel already tried the approach he advocates. In 2005, it withdrew every soldier and settler from the Gaza Strip. Instead of peace, Israel got the October 7th massacre—the worst mass slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust.

Israel has never blocked a Palestinian state. The League of Nations, the UN, Israel (with the U.S) have all offered the Palestinians statehood many times—in 1937, 1947, 2000, 2001, 2008, and 2020. But they’ve always refused, because they cannot accept a Muslim Palestinian state living in peace alongside a Jewish one. Yet Mr. Miliband doesn’t criticize the Palestinians at all for their obstructionism.

In fact, not a single, notable Palestinian leader genuinely supports “two states for two peoples.” At most, “moderate” Palestinian leaders like PA President Mahmoud Abbas sometimes pay lip service to the two-state solution, yet still demand a “right of return”—which would allow some five million *descendants* of Palestinian refugees to demographically flood Israel.

Sanctions will neither benefit the Palestinians nor will they change Israeli policy. In fact, sanctions could harm Palestinians, since thousands work in Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria. If sanctions damage their economy, their jobs would be threatened.

Chances are, however, that the new sanctions announced by Miliband won’t be impactful, because after decades of boycotts, Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria still endure and grow. Moreover, polls show that Israel’s Jews strongly support Israeli communities in these territories. Indeed, last March, the JPPI Israeli Society Index reported that 48% of Israeli Jews support expanding Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria. In addition, last month, 55% of Jewish Israelis surveyed asserted all Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria should remain under Israeli sovereignty in any future agreement.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that Miliband slanders Israel with accusations of occupation and ethnic cleansing, yet promotes the ethnic cleansing of Jews from their ancestral homeland. This makes him conniving and hypocritical, but nonetheless treacherous.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,
Jason Shvili, Contributing Editor

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, we at FLAME are constantly fighting to defeat our enemies' slanders against Israel. But I hope you agree that it's *just as important* for us lovers of Israel to spread the word about the amazing triumphs of Zionism. I believe that in addition to defending Israel from media and politicians' lies, we need also to help the world understand Israel's righteous cause and its power for good—we need as well to trumpet Israel's miraculous achievements. God knows, Americans will never learn about Israel's good deeds in mainstream media, like the *New York Times*, CNN or NPR! I believe we need to stand tall because of who the Jewish people are . . . be proud of what Israel does for the world. For this reason, I hope you'll approve of FLAME's new *hasbarah*—our explanatory message called “**How Zionism's Miracle Benefits Us All**.” With your agreement and support, FLAME will soon begin running this message as a paid editorial ad in major mainstream newspapers nationwide. This ad tells the truth about Zionism's unmatched power to create economic prosperity, global security, world health and democratic freedoms. It also explains why the enemies of Zionism are not just foes of Israel, they are also the enemies of human progress. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME is about to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to **support us** with a donation.



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