

## UNESCO Anti-Israel Bias

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is supposed to serve three main purposes: (1) to ensure education for all, (2) to collaborate on scientific advancements, and (3) to understand and appreciate culture; however, UNESCO is inappropriately politically motivated, delegitimizing Israel and disregarding its Jewish origins.<sup>1</sup>

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### **Although UNESCO is supposed to promote cultural appreciation, it denies the millennia-old Jewish presence in Israel.**

- In April 2016, UNESCO passed a resolution entitled “Occupied Palestine” that attempts to erase Jewish history in Jerusalem, Hebron, and Rachel’s Tomb.<sup>2</sup>
  - The resolution uses Arabic and English names to describe these sites, omitting all relevant Hebrew names.<sup>3</sup>
    - Accordingly, it implies that these Jewish historical sites did not exist prior to the Byzantine era.<sup>4</sup> In reality, there is evidence of Jewish history there dating back over 2,000 years -- even before the existence of Islam.<sup>5</sup>
- In July 2017, UNESCO named the city of Hebron a “Palestinian World Heritage” site, blatantly ignoring the prominent Jewish history of the land.<sup>6</sup>
  - The Tomb of the Patriarchs/al-Ibrahimi Mosque located in Hebron is a holy site for Jews, Muslims, and Christians.<sup>7</sup>
  - Numerous other Jewish sites are located in Hebron such as the Avraham Avinu synagogue, a Jewish cemetery, and a Jewish Quarter.<sup>8</sup>
  - Jews have lived in Hebron since biblical times, only leaving to seek refuge after a murderous Arab pogrom in 1929 which killed 67 Jews.<sup>9</sup>
  - Israel legally won Hebron from Jordan in the defensive 1967 Six-Day War<sup>10</sup> and allows all religious groups to pray at Hebron’s holy sites;<sup>11</sup> however, under Jordanian control, Jews were prohibited from praying in Hebron.<sup>12</sup>

### **Although UNESCO is meant to be apolitical, its blatant bias against Israel demonstrates that its decisions are, in fact, politically charged.**

- UNESCO is controlled by a voting bloc of Arab countries that **manipulate the organization as a means to delegitimize Israel and erase Jewish history.**<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO Constitution. November 16, 1945.

<sup>2</sup> The Jerusalem Post. Alan Baker. *The self-destruction of UNESCO*. April 19, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Al Jazeera. *Israel outraged by UNESCO resolution on Jerusalem site*. April 22, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> The Times of Israel. *Israel slams UNESCO members for ‘erasing’ Jewish ties to Jerusalem*. April 21, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Jewish Virtual Library. *Hebron: History and Overview*.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Beaumont. The Guardian. *UNESCO Makes Hebron Old City Palestinian World Heritage Site*. July 7, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Jewish Virtual Library. *Hebron: History and Overview*.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Estrin. PRI. *In Hebron, Israelis and Palestinians Share a Holy Site...Begrudgingly*. November 10, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Jewish Virtual Library. *Hebron: History and Overview*.

<sup>13</sup> The Jerusalem Post. Herb Keinon. *The Changing Anti-Israel Voting Patterns*. October 29, 2016.

- Most of the Arab countries in this bloc openly deny Israel's right to exist.<sup>14</sup>
- Rather than supporting the only democratic nation in the Middle East, UNESCO sides with oppressive dictatorships that persecute women, homosexuals, and other minorities.<sup>15 16 17</sup>
- Ultimately, UNESCO has set up a system to allow Palestinian Arab leadership's demands to be uninhibitedly accepted by a **biased international community**.<sup>18</sup>
- UNESCO inappropriately gave "Palestine" full membership before the UN gave it nonmember observer status, further demonstrating its political bias.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2016, UNESCO falsely declared that Hebron and Jerusalem are "in danger,"<sup>20</sup> framing Israel as a threat to the sites.
  - This designation is misplaced, as Israel took the initiative years ago to create departments that continue to successfully preserve these sites' structural integrity.<sup>21</sup>
  - UNESCO absurdly groups together the well-maintained cities of Hebron and Jerusalem with terrorist-destroyed sites on the list.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> World Atlas. Ana Krneta. *The 25 Countries With The Least Personal Freedom*. July 5, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Haaretz. The Associated Press. *A Look at the Rights of Women in Arab Countries*. March 8, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Washington Post. Max Bearak and Darla Cameron. *Here Are the 10 Countries Where Homosexuality May Be Punished By Death*. June 16, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> The Times of Israel. *Trump: UNESCO decision more evidence of 'enormous anti-Israel bias' at UN*. October 14, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> The New York Times. Isabel Kershner. *UNESCO Declares Hebron's Core as a Palestinian World Heritage Site*. July 7, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> The Jerusalem Post. Seth Frantzman. *Five Reasons the UNESCO Hebron Decision Matters to Israel and the World*. July 13, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Emek Shaveh. *Selectively Sacred: Holy Sites in Jerusalem and its Environs*. April 11, 2016.

<sup>22</sup> The Jerusalem Post. Seth Frantzman. *Five Reasons the UNESCO Hebron Decision Matters to Israel and the World*. July 13, 2017.