


period, many campaigns of Jewish protection would show that the 19th-century model remained in force. When it came time to “save” Soviet Jews suffering repression, it was not to the U.N. that Jews turned, but rather to the United States in an effort to help their co-religionists abroad.

The failure to create a vertical alliance with the U.N. does not imply that the U.N. is useless for Jews, either historically or today in broader human affairs. We should also recognize that the vertical alliance Jews have long sought in politics still largely culminates in their nation-states, like the State of Israel the U.N. helped recognize in the same year it proclaimed “human rights.”

Of course, it is critical to remember that many Jews have emotionally cherished and defended those ideals the U.N. helped introduce to the world — including the human rights of non-Jews living under Jewish sovereignty or occupation. But perhaps the best proof of where the vertical alliance stands today is how Palestinians have sought to make use of the U.N. in concert with their international supporters. Like the Jews in 1948, they have sought the U.N.’s help in forging their state, which shows that for most peoples, the vertical alliance still goes only so high. 

## Discussion Guide

Bringing together a myriad of voices and experiences provides *Sh'ma* readers with an opportunity in a few very full pages to explore a topic of Jewish interest from a variety of perspectives. To facilitate a fuller discussion of these ideas, we offer the following questions:

1. Is it legitimate to draw parallels between the U.N. recognizing the State of Israel and a state of Palestine?
2. Should Israel care about what happens at the United Nations?
3. Do you think the Arab states will ever accept a Jewish state in the Middle East?
4. How might the Israeli leadership move forward toward a two state solution with Palestine? If so, how?
5. Why is attention — good or bad — disproportionately focused on Israel? Is Israel held accountable to a different, higher standard?
6. How has the U.N. vote influenced the position, or status of the United States in the Middle East and as a global leader?

# The United Nations’ War against the Jews: Destructive and Self-Destructive

GIL TROY

**T**ragedically, the United Nations has gone from being the Jews’ best friend to the Jews’ worst enemy. This descent not only hurts Israel and the Jewish people; it damages the U.N. itself. Like so many times before in Jewish history, the noxious, obsessive, attack on the collective Jew — in this case, Israel — has revealed deep flaws in the organization’s character and structure.

Back on November 29, 1947, the U.N. appeared to be the Jews’ savior. It was not just that the U.N. had recognized Jews’ rights to a Jewish state in Palestine. More important, the U.N. embodied the Allied ideals mobilized to defeat Nazism. Jews, particularly American Jews, believed in the U.N.’s promise — that this world body could solve conflicts with words, not weapons, advancing justice and peace in a world that had just devoured six million Jews.

By 1975, the U.N. had established itself as a brand name for doing good worldwide. The General Assembly’s Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both adopted in December 1948, established a language and a legal structure for advancing human rights. U.N. peacekeepers, with their distinctive blue helmets, calmed the world’s most volatile flashpoints, patrolling in Cyprus, the Congo, and the Sinai. The U.N. also was — and remains — the most effective international social service agency in history, pushing economic reform, championing education in developing countries, fighting parasitic diseases, pressing for universal immunization, and, ultimately halving child mortality rates.

In 1975, however, the U.N. passed Resolution 3379 on November 10, declaring

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