



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0762-2011, **Version:** A

Proposed Res. No. 762-A

Resolution calling upon the United Nations to either cancel or relocate the Durban III conference, currently scheduled to convene in New York City in September, 2011 and if the conference does occur calling upon President Obama to boycott it and for the City to afford it no accommodation other than that which is necessary to protect the public.

By Council Members Fidler, Nelson, Van Bramer, Mark-Viverito, Greenfield, Comrie, Arroyo, Dickens, Dilan, Recchia, Weprin, Oddo, Mendez, Rivera, Vacca, Vallone, Ferreras, Eugene, Brewer, James, Jackson, Koslowitz, Lander, Koppell, Levin, Reyna, Wills, Ulrich, Koo, Dromm, Ignizio, Halloran, Gentile, Gonzalez, Gennaro, Crowley, Rose and Cabrera

Whereas, The United Nations has held a series of conferences under the name of the “World Conference Against Racism” since the 1970s, including one in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, since referred to as Durban I; and

Whereas, The Durban I conference was meant to deal with issues regarding racism in a positive manner, but quickly degenerated to other, more hateful, purposes through the circulation of the notorious anti-Semitic forgery “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion” by a Palestinian-sympathetic group, the equation of Zionism with racism in a draft document and the proposal that Israel’s Palestinian policies be referred to as “ethnic cleansing,” amongst other acts displaying a clear turn to anti-Israeli biases in the conference; and

Whereas, The United States, appropriately, pulled out of the Durban I conference; and

Whereas, In 2009, a “Durban Review Conference,” dubbed Durban II, was held in Switzerland; and

Whereas, The United States, along with Australia, Canada, and many other Western countries, appropriately, boycotted the Durban II conference; and

Whereas, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the only head of state to actually attend the Durban II conference, used the forum to describe Israel as a racist state and to criticize its creation, causing dozens of

delegates to walk out; and

Whereas, In an earlier version of his speech, President Ahmadinejad stated that Israel was created “on the pretext of Jewish sufferings and the ambiguous and dubious question of the holocaust;” and

Whereas, President Ahmadinejad’s deliberately antagonistic comments demonstrate a refusal to live in a world of tolerance and mutual respect for other cultures and religions and exhibit a desire to thwart the original purpose of the Durban conferences; and

Whereas, The United Nations, following a 2009 resolution and subsequent vote on December 24, 2010, has decided to commemorate the ten year anniversary of the Durban I conference; and

Whereas, This commemoration, known as “Durban III,” is currently scheduled to be held in New York City on September 21, 2011; and

Whereas, Although Durban III is meant to be a one day meeting for heads of state, Canada and Israel have already declared their intention to boycott; and

Whereas, Canadian Immigration Minister Jason Kenney described his country’s decision to boycott by saying, “Canada will not participate in this charade. We will not lend our good name to this Durban hatefest... Despite the fact that the Durban declaration and its follow-up have served, frankly, to fuel bigotry, the General Assembly has chosen to repeat and even augment the mistakes of the past;” and

Whereas, Despite whatever intentions the originators of the Durban series of conferences may have had and despite the noble goal of combating racism, the Durban conferences have been repeatedly hijacked and abused as a forum to promote racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and anti-Israeli agendas; and

Whereas, The commemoration of the Durban I conference, that was twisted by hateful purposes, has no place in New York City, a home to diverse ethnicities, cultures and religions; and

Whereas, The close proximity, in both geography and time, of the Durban III conference to the commemoration of the ten year anniversary of the events of 9/11 is an affront to both this City and to our fellow citizens who lost their lives that day because of other hateful agendas; and

Whereas, U.S. Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) have urged the United States to boycott the Durban III conference, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United Nations to either cancel or relocate the Durban III conference, currently scheduled to convene in New York City in September, 2011 and if the conference does occur calls upon President Obama to boycott it and for the City to afford it no accommodation other than that which is necessary to protect the public.

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