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Global Leaders Decry the Trivialization and Hijacking of the ‘Apartheid’ Label to Attack the Jewish State



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--News Direct--

Leaders from around the world spoke out last week against appropriation of the term “apartheid” from its historical South African context with the goal of defaming and isolating Israel by portraying it as a racist entity.

At a conference co-hosted by the **Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM)**, **NGO Monitor**, and the **World Zionist Organization** titled “[Trivializing History: How Anti-Israel Activists Have Hijacked the South African ‘Apartheid’ Label to Attack the Jewish State](#),” world leaders, diplomats, legislators, and policymakers discussed what must be done to restore the “apartheid” term to its proper context and delegitimize its use in discourse about a conflict to which it has no relevance.

“Categorizing Israel as an ‘apartheid’ state is just plain antisemitic,” said Vice President of the European Parliament and Special Envoy on Combating Religious Discrimination Including Antisemitism **Nicola Beer**. “In my opinion, such characterization counters progress made in the region concerning the peace process, instead it deepens the rifts and fuels antisemitism around the world.”

The conference was held in response to the global rise in antisemitism. The “apartheid” campaign questions Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state by framing Israel as an inherently racist state. During the past 18 months, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International published reports accusing Israel of “apartheid,” and the UN established two bodies where the claim of apartheid will be prominently featured. These attempts distort history of what happened during South Africa’s past system of institutionalized racial segregation. Continuous misuse of the “apartheid” conversation trivializes the suffering endured by true apartheid victims of the oppressive apartheid regime.

“The suffering of South Africans under Apartheid was unique and attempts to apply the same label to Israel trivialize that history and are unacceptable,” said Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic **Jiří Kozák**. “We consider this open antisemitism. By claiming that Israel is a racist endeavor is in violation of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. Claims of ‘apartheid’ is not about questioning a particular policy, but about challenging the nature of the Jewish state.”

"Whatever the world's greatest and most unforgiveable crime is in any particular moment of history, the Jews will be accused of it," said Member of the UK House of Lords Baroness **Ruth Deech**. "Those who accuse Israel of 'apartheid' are themselves racist in that their real mission is to deny the legitimacy of the only Jewish state in the world and if they got their way they would return Jews to dispersion, slaughter, and discrimination."

"Attempts to link South Africa's past system of institutionalized racial segregation to the nuanced complexity of contemporary Israel-Palestinian relations debase history and trivialize the unique suffering of 'apartheid' victims," U.S. Congressman **Henry Cuellar** said. "We must acknowledge the dangerous effects of falsified name-calling."

"A lot of political prisoners during the Apartheid era would have loved to live as a Palestinian in Israel," said Member of the European Parliament and Vice Chair of the Budgetary Committee **Niclas Herbst**.

"Applying the 'apartheid' label serves no purpose other than to delegitimize the Israeli state, demonizing the Jewish people and ultimately bring about Israel's destruction," said Former Minister for Justice and Equality and Minister for Defense of the Republic of Ireland **Alan Shatter**.

Alongside the conference, CAM released a public petition urging people to sign a [pledge](#) to "urge decision-makers at the international, national, and local levels to vocally reject and condemn the 'apartheid' libel of Israel."

NGO Monitor released a number of reports debunking the claims made by Amnesty International and other NGOs. Examples of such reports can be found [here](#) and [here](#). These releases highlight their work fighting the "apartheid" libel.

"We are combating the 'apartheid' calumny with a carefully orchestrated strategy and a dissemination of the truth and the facts," **Elan Carr**, CAM Advisory Board Member and Former US Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism, said. "The antisemitic 'apartheid' campaign will be defeated because it is built on lies and hate."

NGO Monitor Vice President **Olga Deutsch** commented, "It is heartwarming to see how many officials rallied to denounce the 'apartheid' smear. Preserving the uniqueness of the 'apartheid' narrative is central for the South African people, but in the context of today's event is also crucial for the global Jewish community facing violent antisemitic attacks. Strong message from our elected officials is imperative in setting the tone for the rest of us."

Watch a video of the full event [here](#).

The Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) is a global coalition engaging more than 500 partner organizations and 1.7 million people from a diverse array of religious, political, and cultural backgrounds in the common mission of fighting the world's oldest hatred. CAM acts collaboratively to build a better future, free of bigotry, for Jews and all humanity.

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"In my opinion, such characterization counters progress made in the region concerning the peace process, instead it deepens the rifts and fuels antisemitism around the world." The conference was held in response to the global rise in antisemitism. The "apartheid" campaign questions Israel's right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state by framing Israel as an inherently racist state. During the past 18 months, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International published reports accusing Israel of "apartheid," and the UN established two bodies where the claim of apartheid will be prominently featured. These attempts distort history of what happened during South Africa's past system of institutionalized racial segregation. Continuous misuse of the "apartheid" conversation trivializes the suffering endured by true apartheid victims of the oppressive apartheid regime. 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