

H. Res. 615

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

July 15, 2004.

Whereas since the mid-1960s, the member states of the United Nations have been divided into five groups, including the Western European and Others Group and the African, Asian, Latin American, and Eastern European groups;

Whereas the United Nations increasingly relies on this “Group System” to facilitate its work and two leading United Nations organs, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, have passed numerous resolutions granting this system a central role in United Nations elections;

Whereas Israel has been refused admission to the Asian Group of the United Nations and is therefore denied the rights and privileges of full membership in the United Nations;

Whereas exclusion of Israel violates crucial principles of the United Nations Charter, including the right of states to be treated in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality and the right to vote and participate fully in the United Nations General Assembly;

Whereas the Bureau of every United Nations conference comprises one representative from each group in the United

Nations and Israel is therefore denied access to this vital apparatus enjoyed by other United Nations member states;

Whereas on May 30, 2000, Israel accepted an invitation to become a temporary member of the Western European and Others Group at the United Nations;

Whereas Israel's membership in the Western European and Others Group is limited and, as a temporary member, Israel is not allowed to compete for open seats or to run for positions in major bodies of the United Nations, such as the Security Council, or United Nations-affiliated agencies, such as the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;

Whereas Israel is only allowed to participate in limited activities of the Western European and Others Group at the United Nations headquarters and is excluded from discussions and consultations of the Group at the United Nations offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Rome, and Vienna;

Whereas the Western European and Others Group includes Canada, Australia, and the United States;

Whereas Israel is linked to Western European and Others Group member states by strong economic, political, and cultural ties;

Whereas the Western European and Others Group is the only bloc which is not purely geographical but rather comprises countries which share a Western democratic tradition; and

Whereas Israel is a free and democratic country and its voting pattern in the United Nations is consistent with that of the Western European and Others Group member states: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the President should direct the Secretary of State and the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to seek an immediate end to the persistent and deplorable inequality experienced by Israel in the United Nations;

(2) United States interests would be well served if Israel were afforded the benefits of full membership in the Western European and Others Group at the United Nations so that it could fully participate in the United Nations system;

(3) consistent with section 405(a) of division C of H.R. 1950, as passed the House of Representatives on July 16, 2003, “the Secretary of State and other appropriate officials of the United States Government should pursue an aggressive diplomatic effort and should take all necessary steps to ensure the extension and upgrade of Israel’s membership in the Western European and Others Group at the United Nations”; and

(4) the Secretary of State should continue to submit to Congress on a regular basis a report which describes actions taken by the United States Government to encourage the Western European and Others Group member states to accept Israel as a full member of their

group and describes the responses thereto from the member states.

Attest:

Clerk.