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UNITED NATIONS

UN OKs ISRAELI RESOLUTION OPPOSING ABUSE OF WOMEN, THEN OKs RESOLUTION BLASTING ISRAEL FOR ABUSE OF WOMEN

By Hollie McKay

A U.N. commission has adopted an Israeli-sponsored resolution - the first put forward by the country in five years - opposing sexual harassment in the workplace. But hours later the same commission approved a draft resolution blasting Israel for allegedly oppressing Palestinian women.

The approval Friday by the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women of the Israeli resolution followed weeks of comprehensive diplomatic engagement between the Israeli mission and the other 44 members of the commission eligible to vote - including reliably anti-Israel members Qatar and Iran.

"The prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace is alarming. Too many are silent when it comes to this menace," Ambassador Danny Danon, Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, told Fox News. "We hope this resolution will give people all over the world a voice and make clear that the dignity of every human being, men and women alike, is not something that can be ignored."

The resolution focuses on raising awareness, educating young people and encouraging employers to take preventative steps. It also marks the first Israeli-backed initiative centered on human rights, and the first in the U.N. with a specific focus point on denouncing sexual harassment in the workplace.

Iran, however, used the vote to criticize Israel for its allegedly apartheid policies.

The same day, the same commission approved a draft resolution that, in part, blasted Israel for its mistreatment of Palestinian women.

Israeli anti-sexual harassment resolution adopted by consensus at the United Nations on Friday. (AP Photo/Osamu Honda)

The draft resolution condemns "acts of terror" and the amount of "violence, intimidation and provocation" inflicted on Palestinian women by "extremist Israeli settlers." It expresses "grave concern that Palestinian women and girls continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centers under harsh conditions" and "reaffirms that the Israeli occupation remains the major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society," calling on the international community and secretary-general to take action.

Benjamin Ryberg, chief operating officer and director of research at the Lawfare Project, an international free speech advocacy group, denounced the commission for hypocrisy.

"This was the only resolution condemning any state for violating women's rights," Ryberg noted. "Not shockingly, that resolution made no mention of Hamas's flagrant and well-documented abuses of women, nor the permissibility of 'honor killings' under Palestinian rule."

Much of the global hostility toward Israel stems from its ongoing military occupation of parts of Palestinian land, continued settlement building and failure to reach a peace agreement to simmer the decades-old dispute. However, some are hopeful that Friday's resolution passing will signal a change for Israeli efforts to make progress within the world's largest intergovernmental organization to promote cooperation.

"I often speak of the public and private U.N. - how many countries who vote and speak out against us in public often speak to me privately about ways to cooperate with Israel. I view resolutions like this as important in closing that

gap,â€ Danny Danon, Israelâ€™s permanent representative to the U.N., told Fox News. â€œI think more and more countries are publicly acknowledging all Israel has to contribute to the world â€ and we are more than happy to share our innovation and ingenuity with our friends around the globe.â€