



הארגון הבינלאומי של עורכי-דין ומשפטנים יהודים (ע"ר)
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS (R.A.)

November 17, 2014

Professor Don Nutbeam
Vice-Chancellor, University of Southampton
University Road
Southampton SO17 1BJ

Dear Vice-Chancellor Nutbeam,

It has come to our attention that the University of Southampton will hold a conference in April 2015 entitled Conference on International Law and the State of Israel: Legitimacy, Responsibility and Exceptionalism.

The International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists was founded in 1969 and is an accredited a non-governmental organization at the United Nations and at the European Union Parliament. It was founded to combat anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, and racism, and to promote human rights worldwide.

As President of said organization, I write to bring to your attention our position that we consider this conference one-sided, and disappointingly planned as such. We note the conference summary on your website, [here](#) and your conference's call for papers, [here](#). The title of your conference, Conference on International Law and the State of Israel: Legitimacy, Responsibility and Exceptionalism, itself reflects the anti-Israel attitudes prevalent in the documents referred to.

We respectfully remind you that the establishment of the State of Israel was facilitated by UN Resolution 181 of November 29, 1947, recommending that both the Jewish and Arab communities of Palestine establish states and join the UN after the Mandate for Palestine expires, which it did on May 14, 1948. Israel declared independence thereafter and was recognized by the international community. We make no claim that Israel is beyond criticism, like all states, but there is a significant distinction between criticism and questioning Israel's right to exist.

We find numerous examples of anti-Israel bias in your documents casting serious doubt on the claim that the conference will reflect a range of legal perspectives. Israel's establishment was internationally recognized yet your documents say your conference will formulate a "reasoned position with regard to the prima facie case for asking the question of the legal validity and legitimacy of the Israeli state." We see no relevance to your characterization of Israel's declaration of statehood as "unilateral" as unilateral declaration of statehood is the norm.

Lastly, we note that your conference is held over a Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, which means that the attendance of a segment of the legal and academic communities due to their religious beliefs is precluded.

רחוב דניאל פריש 10, תל אביב 64731 DANIEL FRISCH STREET, TEL AVIV 64731
טלפון: 972-3-6910673 TELEPHONE: 972-3-6910673
פקס: 972-3-6953855 FAX: 972-3-6953855
IAJLJ@GOLDMAIL.NET.IL WWW.INTJEWISHLAWYERS.ORG



הארגון הבינלאומי של עורכי-דין ומשפטנים יהודים (ע"ר)
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS (R.A.)

We recognize freedom of speech and academic freedom though we submit that these freedoms do not legitimize a conference based on bias and falsehoods and maintain that a self-respecting academic institution should not hold this conference as planned.

We trust you will give our comments their due consideration.

Sincerely,

Irit Kohn, Adv.
President

cc Professor Hazel Biggs, Head of Southampton Law School