

dragged in the irrelevant issues of Israel and the Palestinians in a convoluted attempt to justify his aggression. Worse, it is a linkage when, desperately encircled as he is, the option of provoking direct conflict with Israel – which would be catastrophic for all – looms constantly and menacingly over all international efforts to achieve a resolution. Finally, there has, from the outset, been an implicit political and moral linkage for many people because of the accusation of double standards.

Regrettably, the Israeli government itself has now made this linkage explicit. Israel has long been dependent on a small minority of UN members and Security Council vetoes to distinguish its actions from the kind that have now, in the case of Iraq, attracted near-universal condemnation and mandatory UN sanctions. Israel's continuing occupation and subsequent colonization of the West Bank, the Gaza strip and East Jerusalem was unanimously repudiated by the Security Council in 1967, 1973 and 1980, meaning that this illegal occupation remains unfinished business of the legitimate peace and security organ of the international community (as are the issues of East Timor, and Cyprus, with Tibet an unresolved concern of the General Assembly). Some states have accepted some of the delay, being equally sensitive to Israel's demonstrably legitimate security concerns, including its need for viable defence frontiers (also recognized by the Security Council), pending implementation of the wider resolutions for justice and stability in the region.

When, however, in the midst of this first major crisis of the post Cold War era – with exacting standards being applied against one of its adversaries elsewhere in the region – the Israeli government refuses cooperation with the Security Council on a new resolution relating to the Temple Mount investigation, and Prime Minister Shamir deliberately underlines the government's intention to defy a series of existing resolutions by stating, on November 18, 1990, that the occupation will be made permanent and sealed with massive colonization by immigrants, the Israeli government itself makes it impossible to avoid much greater linkage.

It is still a logically and legally defensible position, however, for the Security Council and the international community to give priority to the major crisis of Iraqi aggression and the measures to end it, and to resist making this conditional on resolving other, unrelated problems in the region. However, it has now become morally, politically and legally inescapable for the international community, and the West in particular, to indicate firmly that, as soon as this crisis is under control, the unfinished business of other Security Council resolutions on