To the Editor:

In discussing Italy's plan to expand the United Nations Security Council (news article, Sept. 3), you note that 79 of the world body's 185 members have never served on the Council, "including Iceland, Israel and most Caribbean and smaller African nations."

This description neglects one important difference between Israel and the other countries mentioned. The latter, at least theoretically, are able to aspire to one of the 10 nonpermanent seats on the Security Council, whereas Israel is denied even this hope.

To gain a nonpermanent seat requires membership in a regional group, for it is these groups that select the one or more countries that will represent them on the Security Council for the rotating terms.

Iceland, as a member of the West European and Others Group, could at least in theory be selected. The Caribbean nations, being members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, and the African nations, as members of the African Group, have the same opportunity.

Israel has been rejected, for overt political reasons, by the Asian Group, its natural geographic home. And its efforts to gain temporary membership in the West European and Others Group have been unsuccessful to date.

A majority of United Nations member states have begun to rectify the pattern of unfair treatment of Israel, especially in annulling the infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution.

Solving Israel's situation as the only member nation denied any regional group membership would be another important step forward in normalizing Israel's status at the United Nations. 

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