Israel on the UN Front

AJC’s seven-year campaign to get Israel into a regional group at the UN has finally met with success. On May 26, the UN’s West European and Others Group (WEOG) invited Israel to join as a temporary member in New York, heralding the beginning of the end of Israel’s anomalous status in the world body.

Because Israel has been denied entry into the Asian Group, to which it geographically belongs, it has been ineligible until now to vie for a seat on many of the UN’s key deliberative groups, including the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

AJC has been the leading advocate for Israel’s temporary admission into WEOG with annual full-page ads in the New York Times and literally hundreds of diplomatic meetings with European and other diplomats. Israel and the United States—in particular Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright—have been vital allies in this historic effort.

“David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, which has led the campaign on behalf of Israel since 1993 through quiet diplomacy at the United Nations and European capitals, culminating three years ago in the sponsorship of full-page advertising in influential newspapers, said today that the fight is not over.”

The New York Times, June 1

AJC will continue to press for Israel’s admission to WEOG in UN offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Rome, and Vienna, and for fairer treatment in the Commission on Human Rights, which has been characterized by gross injustice in its dealing with Israel.