The Israeli government’s response to the Durban process was slow and inconsistent. In part, this reflected the general perspective at the time that although the United Nations is automatically hostile, the damage from its resolutions, conferences, and other soft-power activities is marginal compared to hard-power threats. During the buildup to the Durban conference, including the preparatory meeting in Teheran, Israeli involvement was very limited, and followed the American lead. The head of Israel’s delegation to the diplomatic forum was Deputy Foreign Minister Rabbi Michael Melchior, with no prior experience in diplomacy or UN issues. Melchior and the Israeli delegation followed the US in walking out of the forum after efforts to revise the final document failed. Regarding the NGO forum, there was no staff position in the Foreign Ministry for NGO issues and the resources focused on this dimension were very limited.

After Durban, as the damage became apparent, this situation began to change gradually. A low level position for NGO issues was established in the MFA, but the responses to the soft power warfare, including war crimes allegations, boycotts, and international law campaigns beginning with the Jenin operation were the responsibility of the IDF and Minister of Defense, and in some cases, the international law division of the Ministry of Justice. These frameworks did not have the capacity or experience in dealing with these campaigns. To the degree that there was a response, this was led by independent groups and institutes such as NGO Monitor, Machon Reut, and UN Watch, and also in the university system, including the Higher Education Council. It was only after the [2009 Goldstone report](http://www.ngo-monitor.org/data/images/File/The%20Goldstone%20Report%20Reconsidered.pdf) from the UN Human Rights Council with the emphasis on war crimes (later repudiated by Judge Goldstone) and the [2010 Gaza flotilla incident](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep10570.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A3fa4cddb5be1571c31adb8b5dfde1324&ab_segments=&origin=) that the IDF and the Israeli government recognized the need for strategic responses.

Under the heading of public diplomacy, the Foreign Ministry added positions and gave much higher priority to gathering information and attempting to counter demonization. Israeli diplomats and officials including the Prime Minister became centrally involved in persuading Western governments to boycott Durban follow-up conferences (as discussed below), and sought to limit the influence of additional UN Human Rights Council condemnations and reports. In 2015, responsibility was transferred to the Ministry of Strategic Affairs (MoSA), budgets were increased significantly, and staff members were added. The ministry’s priorities included pressuring European governments to end funding for the NGOs leading the demonization campaigns. The results were mixed – although the European funding and the NGO campaigns continued, it is likely that their impacts were reduced.