**Appeal to the World Jewish Congress leadership**

The Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the US Treasury at the beginning of June published a new sanctions list of Russian citizens. This latest list of sanctioned individuals also included God Nisanov, a representative of my people known for his active charity work in various countries of the world, whom US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken called "one of the richest people in Europe and a close associate of several Russian officials".

A few hours after this statement, the World Jewish Congress (WJC), whose headquarters is located in New York, apparently out of fright, announced the exclusion of God Nisanov from the leadership of the organization due to sanctions. “The World Jewish Congress”, the statement said, “confirms that no one on any list of individuals subject to U.S., U.K., or European Union sanctions in connection with the conflict in Ukraine can hold any office or play any role in the organization. Accordingly, God Nisanov is no longer the vice-president of the WJC and has ceased work in the Executive Committee of the WJC”.

Where is the logic in that?

Now read the first phrase on the official website of the WJC:

*“The World Jewish Congress is the international organization that represents Jewish communities and organizations in 115 countries around the world. It advocates on their behalf towards governments, parliaments, international organizations and other faiths. The WJC represents the plurality of the Jewish people, and is politically non-partisan”.*

Instead of defending his vice president and trying to explain to the US Treasury that God Nisanov, being a major Jewish philanthropist on an international scale, has nothing to do with the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the WJC hastened to dissociate itself from a member of its own leadership.

The community of Mountain Jews in June last year elected God Nisanov as the "Person of the Decade". The businessman and philanthropist received wide public recognition for his great contribution to the development of the community life of Mountain Jews in different countries of the world.

A native of Azerbaijan, God Nisanov is perhaps the most prominent member of the Mountain Jewish community. As a community leader, he sponsored various events in support of his tribesmen and countrymen, including the creation of a museum in Krasnaya Sloboda in Azerbaijan and a cultural center in Moscow. He made donations to Jewish schools and other significant social projects, and is a member of the Presidium of the Russian Jewish Congress. In 2014, President Putin awarded him the "Order of Friendship" and this fact was mentioned in his biography, which was also removed on June 2 from the website of the World Jewish Congress.

I also note that during the most difficult period of the coronavirus pandemic, God Nisanov purchased a batch of ambulances to provide humanitarian assistance to fellow countrymen. So what is the reason for such fast and treacherous decision from the World Jewish Congress leadership?

I have long ago came to the conclusion, that the World Jewish Congress has lost its real political weight and authority that it had in its formative years. I will give an example from my personal experience. A quarter of a century ago, in January 1996, I, as a delegate from Russia, took part in the meeting of the 10th General Assembly of the World Jewish Congress in Jerusalem. I was then included in the delegation that participated in the meeting of the Knesset. Members of the Knesset answered numerous questions from members of our delegation. One of the members of the delegation, a very simply dressed elderly man, asked a question like this: “I constantly allocate significant amounts to help Israel. I would really like to know where my money goes?”. That is, he wanted to clarify whether the donations allocated by him went to important purposes. Knesset member Shulamit Aloni replied in a very disrespectful manner that she was not going to report, that Israel did not need this money and, if he did not want to, could not donate anything. Israel has long stood on its own feet, lives on its own means and does not need extraneous injections, she said. Humiliated by this answer, the old man sat down. Even then, it became clear to me how much the Israeli leadership “appreciates” the charitable activities of the WJC and is ready to deal with this organization.

Now the leadership of the WJC, for momentary reasons of political gain, is dissociating itself even from those on whose funds it and this entire organization exist. Interestingly, if the headquarters of the WJC were located not in the United States and not in the UK, but, for example, in Israel or South Africa, would it conduct itself the same way? I am also surprised, by the position of the Russian Jewish Congress, thanks to the membership in the leadership of which God Nisanov became vice president of the WJC. We saw no reaction, no official protest. Who, then, should protect the interests of Russian Jews?

Now imagine that President Biden or the US OFAC suddenly realizes that the decision to sanction God Nisanov was wrong and cancel it. After all, God Nisanov will not return to the WJC. Moreover, he, and all of us, will turn to influential Jews with an appeal not to have anything to do with the current leadership of the WJC. So apparently, you, who have committed such an obvious betrayal, should resign as soon as possible.

Studying the activities of the World Jewish Congress, I discovered that there are shameful moments in its history. Today you made another one.

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