



## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

### ISRAEL LEGALIZED APARTHEID BY PASSING THE JEWISH NATION STATE LAW



The Jewish nation-state law entrenches the creation and maintenance of Jewish-only towns across Israel

Israel's Knesset overnight Wednesday-Thursday approved a law that defines Israel exclusively as a nation of Jewish people, marginalizing over 1.8 million Palestinians with Israeli citizenship, and other other minority communities<sup>1</sup>. To add injury to insult, this bogus law also declares that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, downgrades the Arabic language from official to “special”, sets the Hebrew calendar as the official calendar of the state, and recognizes days of remembrance

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<sup>1</sup> First proposed in 2011 by Avi Dichter, then an opposition Knesset member with the centrist Kadima party and now a prominent Likud MK, the bill has seen numerous rewrites and parallel proposals.



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and Jewish holidays. In general terms the law legalises the upholding of Jewish-only communities.

As expected Israeli's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the new law as "a pivotal moment in the annals of Zionism and the State of Israel." He further remarked "Israel is the nation state of the Jewish people that respects the individual rights of all its citizens. This is our state — the Jewish state. In recent years there have been some who have attempted to put this in doubt, to undercut the core of our being. Today we made it law: This is our nation, language and flag."

During a Knesset debate on the bill in April, Avi Dichter (MP from Netanyahu's Likud party and sponsor of the bill) said: "Anyone who does not belong to the Jewish nation cannot define the state of Israel as his nation-state."

"The Palestinians will not be able to define Israel as their nation-state. The nation-state law is the insurance policy we are leaving for the next generation," he said.

"The state of Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people," Dichter added.

Arabic law maker at the Knesset MK Jamal Zahalka ripped a printed text of the bill to shreds from the podium and said

**"I declare with astonishment and sorrow the death of democracy... The funeral will take place today in the plenum,"**

This law introduces a two-tier ethnic system in Israeli law known as Clause 7b, is part of the highly controversial "Nation-State" law, which seeks to enshrine Israel's Jewish identity in the Basic Law (Israel's equivalent of a constitution). The law is nothing but a Zionist flagship bill.

Clause 7b says the "state can allow a community composed of people of the same faith or nationality to maintain an exclusive community". Meaning if you are not a



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“Jew you don't belong in the country. Palestinians are treated as “incompatible with the social and cultural fabric.”

This law features key elements of apartheid, such as housing segregation and the creation of two separate tracks of citizenship based on ethno-religious identity. The Jewishness of the Israeli state would override any other constitutional principle or law and is even above the Knesset itself.

This law allows the expansion of the state's annexation of Palestinian lands in the occupied [West Bank](#) and East Jerusalem. It considers the expansion of the Jewish-only [settlements](#) a “national value.” It also encourages and promotes their construction.

Although this law legalizes the institutional discrimination of Palestinians, in reality Israeli's apartheid system has been tormenting Palestinians for decades. For seventy years, Israeli violence has permeated every aspect of Palestinians' lives in abhorrent violation of international law. Palestinians are prevented from returning to their homes through the use of direct violence - use of excessive force and massacre with complete impunity- and systemic discrimination with decisive help from the USA. This discriminatory denial of basic human rights extends to Palestinians across the globe, whether they live as second class citizens of Israel, under occupation, in the diaspora or in refugees camps. What this law does is remove the mask so as to reveal the ugly face of ultranationalist Israel in all its repugnance.

Even Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin expressed his opposition of this apartheid law that promotes segregation in the twenty first century.

Jamal Zahalqa, a Palestinian of Israeli citizenship and MP who was part of the committee discussing the article, asked: **"If this is not apartheid, then what can you call this?"**

Despite representing 1.8 million of Israel's 8.8 million inhabitants, Israeli continues to enact discriminatory legislation against Palestinians such as state zoning



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regulations, land distribution policies and budgets, effectively keeping Palestinian citizens of Israel crowded in segregated towns and neighbourhoods with access to far fewer services and infrastructure than their Jewish counterparts.

A constitution is supposed to guarantee a right for all its citizens. It must not explicitly exclude the Palestinian citizens, non-immigrant homeland minorities, who make up 20 per cent of Israel's population.

This law will create two different citizens in Israel, Jews and Arabs, where Jews will have priority over Arabs.

Certainly, the USA administration's blind bias in favor of Israel and its total disdain for international law have emboldened Israel to persist with such unlawful and immoral policies.

ICSFT condemns in the strongest terms the discriminatory law and calls upon the international community to take measures in order to ensure that Israel is not capable to institutionalise apartheid once more in the world. It is our responsibility to stop this ongoing occupation and apartheid before it is too late. USA and allies must stop fraternizing with the occupying Israeli regime that is continuously dehumanizing Palestinian people and committing a war crime with complete impunity.

We deplore the Israeli government's passage of the Jewish nation-state bill into Israel Law and the multiple human rights violations it represents. We call upon the international community in particular the UN to specifically express opposition to the law by taking steps towards suspension of economic and diplomatic relations with the Israeli apartheid regime.