



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL  
SUPPORTING  
FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Geneva Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

**ISRAEL STRIKES AGAIN BY REJECTING A BILL THAT DEMANDS EQUALITY!**



Israeli is not a democracy<sup>1</sup>. This has not been a point of contention amongst international human rights institutions and activists. In addition to the ongoing illegal occupation and willful massacre of Palestinian civilians, Israel uses institutionalized discrimination as a tool to promote its Apartheid policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Amongst many discriminatory legal frameworks, the law of return grants automatic citizenship to every Jew in the world, wherever he or she was born. This law in particular is a flagrantly undemocratic one, for it was accompanied by a total rejection of the Palestinian right of return — recognized internationally by the UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948. As per this law Palestinian citizens of Israel are prohibited from uniting with their immediate families or with those who were expelled in 1948. This law allows Jews from around the world come to the land and become privileged citizens in the state while native Arab Palestinians are relegated to second-class status It's 70 years of occupation and systemic oppression of Palestinians trumps any illusion of democratic state

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*“In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli forces committed unlawful killings of Palestinian civilians, including children, and detained thousands of Palestinians who protested against or otherwise opposed Israel’s continuing military occupation, holding hundreds in administrative detention. Torture and other ill-treatment remained rife and were committed with impunity.*

*The authorities continued to promote illegal settlements in the West Bank, and severely restricted Palestinians’ freedom of movement, further tightening restrictions amid an escalation of violence from October, which included attacks on Israeli civilians by Palestinians and apparent extrajudicial executions by Israeli forces. Israeli settlers in the West Bank attacked Palestinians and their property with virtual impunity. The Gaza Strip remained under an Israeli military blockade that imposed collective punishment on its inhabitants. The authorities continued to demolish Palestinian homes in the West Bank and inside Israel forcibly evicting their residents.”<sup>2</sup>*

More than 90 percent of land is owned by the Jewish National Fund (JNF). Landowners are not allowed to engage in transactions with non-Jewish citizens, Israeli occupation forces sweep large areas of agricultural land and demolish houses<sup>3</sup>, tanks and armored vehicles of the Israeli occupation forces are stationed to reinforce their presence throughout the occupied Palestinian territories. As every colonization project, Israelis occupation targeted land grabbing as a priority - in the occupied territories this was achieved only through the massive expropriation of land, deporting people from where they had lived for generations, and confining them in territories with difficult environments.

In keeping with its oppressive reputation, this week Israel's Knesset disqualified a bill that called for all citizens to be treated equally, rejecting the argument it must

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<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International 2015 annual report

<sup>3</sup> Israel demolished houses from almost the first day of its military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip  
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recognize the rights of its Arab minority as equal to the Jewish majority. Around 1.5 million Palestinian Arabs make up some 20 percent of Israel's population.

The spirit of the bill is "to anchor in constitutional law the principle of equal citizenship while recognizing the existence and rights of the two, Jewish and Arab, national groups living within the country", which must be a foreign topic for the occupying Israeli regime.

***"It is clear that Israel considers democracy, or even demanding it, a threat to its existence"*** said Haneen Zoabi, member of the Knesset and one of the bill's sponsors.

Further he remarked ***"The cancellation of our bill shows that democracy and equal rights do not go hand-in-hand with the way Israel defines itself as a Jewish state"***.

From the discriminatory legal infrastructure put in place at the outset, through the unquestioned absolute power of the military inside the West Bank and outside the Gaza Strip, to the humiliation of millions of Palestinians as a daily routine, Israel is the "only democracy" that behaves as a dictatorship of the worst kind. Thus, given its apartheid attitude towards the Jewish state cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be assumed to be a democracy.

The international community must stop the continuation of an illegitimate occupation and Israeli apartheid regime.

Democracy is simply not an Israeli value!