The Apartheid Libel to Destroy Israel

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<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/19218/israel-apartheid>

Many of Israel's adversaries, including the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), have long [attempted](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/15/world/middleeast/un-israel-palestine-apartheid.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article) to stamp Israel with the false label of "apartheid". Recently, however, with the UNHRC's persistent allegations that Israel is an apartheid state, that label is being pushed even further in an apparent effort to make it stick. The complicity of recent reports from NGOs such as [Amnesty International](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/02/israels-apartheid-against-palestinians-a-cruel-system-of-domination-and-a-crime-against-humanity/) and [Human Rights Watch](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/world/middleeast/israel-apartheid-palestinians-hrw.html) appear to be trying to ensure that their libel will be complete.

These allegations are part of an ongoing massive campaign of incitement waged by the Palestinians and anti-Semites around the world to invalidate the State of Israel and vilify Jews.

The campaign emboldens the radicals among the Palestinians, including the Iranian-backed Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), whose declared goal is to eliminate Israel and replace it with an Islamist state.

Terrorist groups such as Hamas and PIJ are undoubtedly happy to see non-Arabs and non-Muslims -- and even ostensible human rights organizations -- join their effort to falsely depict Israel as an apartheid state. Hamas and PIJ are hoping that such a libel -- with the UN and its agencies as a strategic ally -- will help them win worldwide support for their jihad (holy war) to destroy Israel.

The UN's obsession with, and its semi-daily condemnations of, Israel are music to the ears of all the terrorists and jihadis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Former UNHRC chief Navi Pillay, despite extensive [evidence](https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Request-for-Navi-Pillay-to-Recuse-Herself-on-Grounds-of-Bias.pdf) of massive anti-Israel bias, was recently appointed to chair the UNHRC's first and only open-ended Commission of Inquiry. Unsurprisingly, it is focused on Israel, as are more than a third of the UNHRC's [special sessions](https://unwatch.org/un-rights-council-calls-9th-urgent-session-on-israel/) criticizing specific countries.

Pillay's past [statements](https://twitter.com/HillelNeuer/status/1493168429188235264) and comments on the nature of the investigation itself belie a foregone conclusion and contradict any notions of impartiality:

"We're focusing on the root cause... part of it lies in apartheid. We will be coming to that. That's the beauty of this open-ended mandate, it gives us the scope."

The intention behind this united campaign to brand Israel as an apartheid state is best summarized by PBS News Hour in an [article](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/amnesty-international-releases-report-accusing-israel-of-apartheid) about Amnesty International's report:

"Their findings are part of a growing international movement to redefine the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a struggle for equal rights rather than a territorial dispute."

Apartheid is a visceral word, evoking shameful images of former South African oppression and segregation, of signs designating beaches for "members of the White race group" and train platforms for "Non-Whites" and so forth.

International media coverage of the UNHRC's claims has been smearing the libelous conflation of the words Israel and apartheid everywhere.

Social media has also gained a tremendous influence over public policy, and a hashtag of #Apartheid in a world of tweets can gain immeasurable traction. It also makes for an excellent [T-shirt](https://www.amnestyshop.org.uk/products/amnesty-international/amnesty-olive-tree-t-shirt/) slogan, which, along with other "End Israeli Apartheid" [merchandise](https://www.jpost.com/bds-threat/article-711795), Amnesty International evidently expects will be a best seller.

A *New York Times* [article](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/world/middleeast/israel-apartheid-palestinians-hrw.html) about Human Rights Watch's apartheid accusations proffers:

"...apartheid, with its connotations of forced segregation, police shootings and racist ideology, has a special sting, which is why most rights groups have avoided using it until now, and why H.R.W. in its report takes pains to separate its list of grievances from the horrors of South Africa."

Basically, this is saying that although the two countries cannot be equated, the comparison is being forced and twisted into place for the sake of furthering an alternate agenda which has little to do with the facts on the ground.

A comparison of the two countries will plainly demonstrate this.

The defining features of South African Apartheid were government laws deliberately designed to separate and discriminate against its Black residents. Israel's founding charter [pledges](https://m.knesset.gov.il/en/about/pages/declaration.aspx) to safeguard the equal rights of all residents:

"... It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

Among many of South Africa's Apartheid laws, the [Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bantu-Homelands-Citizenship-Act) effectively stripped all Blacks of their South African citizenship and of the right to vote.

Israeli Arabs, however, have full citizenship, including the right to vote and to public demonstration. They are represented in all levels of government, including positions as members of Knesset (parliament), in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as Supreme Court justices. Israeli Arabs hold positions as high-ranking [officers](https://www.aish.com/israels-highest-ranking-muslim-soldier/) in the Israel Defense Forces, including that of major-general in the Central Command.

Israeli Arabs are [deans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Karayanni), [department heads](https://neuroscience.haifa.ac.il/index.php/en/academic-staff/6-mouna-maroun-ph-d), [scientists](https://lnbd.technion.ac.il/team/prof-hossam-haick/), and [professors](https://ashrafbrik.technion.ac.il/) at prestigious universities and [hospitals](https://www.rambam.org.il/en/?catid=%7Bac12ae92-dead-404d-9feb-996fbf023975%7D&itemid=%7Ba63ab5a3-aae1-497a-ae48-96c3ef13dac4%7D). They are [news](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Aharish) [anchors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gadeer_Mreeh), journalists, [actors](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0007814/), athletes, and are represented in [every](https://www.jfedsrq.org/crconnect-section/is-israel-an-apartheid-state-like-south-africa) aspect of Israeli society.

A good deal of the accusatory rhetoric and false allegations about "[systematic discrimination](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G21/114/96/PDF/G2111496.pdf?OpenElement)" derive from a misunderstanding of the cultural, religious and language factors that have shaped the Israeli social structure.

The false allegations also come from incorrectly confusing the nearly [two million Israeli Arabs](https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/mediarelease/Pages/2021/Population-of-Israel-on-the-Eve-of-2022.aspx) -- who make up about 21% of Israel's population and are full citizens of Israel -- with thousands of Arabs whose families left Israel when five Arab counties attacked Israel in 1948. After the Arab armies lost the war they had started, they were surprised to find that they were not welcomed back. They have since settled in other countries – such as Lebanon, Jordan, and the West -- as "Palestinians," but are*not* citizens of Israel and therefore, of course, not subject to Israeli laws*.* The [declared goal](https://palwatch.org/page/32420) of their leaders has been to take over all the land and replace the Jews. If all the Arabs in the area are called "Palestinians," however, it makes it easier to claim grievances, merited or not.

The West Bank (of the Jordan River), previously belonged to Jordan; Gaza previously belonged to Egypt. Both are now disputed territories where the Arabs totally run their own affairs, and have [officially committed](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/nov/27/usa.israel3) to direct, bilateral negotiations with Israel about "final status" issues, including where the borders should be. Lately, the Palestinians have [refused to negotiate](https://www.dispatch.com/story/opinion/letters/2018/09/17/palestinians-hamas-refuse-to-negotiate/10284128007/), apparently in the hope that the international community will hand them a better deal. They have been offered their own Palestinian state [three times](https://www.camera.org/article/palestinians-rejected-statehood-three-times-claim-frustration-with-israel/), and each time have [said no](https://www.jihadwatch.org/2019/04/plo-negotiator-in-2008-israel-offered-palestinians-state-larger-than-west-bank-and-gaza-abbas-said-no), without so much as a counteroffer.

According to a Pew Research Center report:

"When it comes to friendships as well as family relationships, Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze often stay within their own religious communities.... Even within Israeli Jewry, different subgroups... tend to be isolated from each other..."

As Navi Pillay herself conceded (in reference to the US, certainly not Israel), "There isn't a country in the world which has a perfect human rights record...". Israel is certainly no exception.

While South Africa's [Bantu Education Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bantu_Education_Act,_1953) mandated compulsory separation of Black and White schools, however, the Israeli Ministry of Education has attempted to bridge the mostly self-imposed community divides by establishing [Hand in Hand Schools](https://www.handinhandk12.org/about/) throughout Israel.

Although all public schools are open to Arabs, Jews, and all ethnicities and religions, these are public schools in which all classes are bilingual Arabic-Hebrew and feature a multicultural curriculum. Each class is co-taught by an Israeli Arab and an Israeli Jewish teacher, and social events are coordinated with students' families to facilitate cross-cultural friendship and understanding.

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word meaning "[apartness](https://www.translate.com/dictionary/english-afrikaans/apartness-1531167)". Unlike apartheid-era South Africa, Israel is actively trying to unite its citizens through funding and equalizing programs while maintaining the security of all of its citizenry.

At the beginning of the year, Israel's Department for the Economic Development of Minority Sectors at the Ministry of Social Equality invested USD $70 million in the "[Impact for Arab Society](https://innovationisrael.org.il/en/news/israel-launches-70m-program-promote-tech-entrepreneurship-arab-community)" program, designed to promote economic development via entrepreneurship and high-tech in the Arab sector.

This follows on the heels of Israel's approval of a $10 billion dollar [initiative](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/society/1635151799-israel-approves-10-billion-plan-to-assist-arab-sector) last year to assist the Israeli Arab sector with economic and social development, which Israeli Arab Knesset member Mansour Abbas affirmed, "...will go a long way to close the gaps between Jewish and Arab Sectors."

Many "pro-Palestinian" activists prefer to engage in battles of semantics against Israel rather than constructive measures to actually help Palestinians in any concrete way. Palestinian NGO [Al Shabaka](https://al-shabaka.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/EidClarno_PolicyBrief_Eng_Aug2017-1.pdf) (Palestinian Policy Network) best summarizes the strategy:

"Under international law, apartheid is a crime against humanity and states can be held accountable for their actions. However, international law has its limitations. One specific concern involves what is missing from the international legal definition of apartheid.... To address this concern, we propose an alternative definition of apartheid..."

If you are looking for real apartheid against Arabs, try [Lebanon](https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/wheres-the-international-outcry-against-arab-apartheid) or [Jordan](https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/982/we-are-property-the-jordanian-government-gets-paid-for-every-palestinian-living-here).

The "limitations" referred to above are actually the limitations of the facts. What is missing is that Israel does not fit the legal definition of apartheid; therefore, some are forcibly attempting to recreate the legal definition with an "alternative definition" to fit Israel, to ram a square peg into a round hole. The "alternative definition" is, sadly, just a political maneuver to gather unwarranted international cover for still another attempt to replace Israel.