# Amnesty spreads virus of antisemitism

February 10, 2022

By [Clifford D. May](https://www.israelhayom.com/writer/clifford-d-may/)

Israel Hayom

<https://www.israelhayom.com/opinions/amnesty-spreads-virus-of-antisemitism/>

Antisemitism is an easily transmissible virus. Mutations are not necessarily less lethal. The latest variant: Amnesty International – an organization formerly committed to freeing political prisoners – has issued a "report" accusing Jewish Israelis of "apartheid."

That term, of course, is Afrikaans for separateness or segregation – the racial supremacist policy of the South African government from 1948 to 1994.

Amnesty's allegation is, as Tom Nides, the US ambassador to Israel noted, "absurd." I'll explain why in a moment but first I want you to appreciate the trap that has been set: To declare "Israel is not apartheid!" is akin to President Nixon insisting, "I am not a crook!" The effect is to reinforce the impression. When it comes to propaganda, Amnesty is no amateur.

This line of attack is not new. In 1975, the UN General Assembly passed – with support from the Soviet bloc and Muslim countries – the libelous Resolution 3379, equating Zionism with racism. US Ambassador to the UN Daniel Patrick Moynihan warned: "The United Nations is about to make antisemitism international law."

Zionism merely holds that the Jewish people, like other peoples, have a right to self-determination. The UN has no problem with nations declaring themselves Arab (the Arab League has 23 members) or Islamic (the Organization of Islamic Cooperation has 57 members).

Yet Jews living in a slice of their ancient homeland – you've heard of the Judean Hills, the Judean Desert, and the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem? – practicing the same religion and speaking the same language as did their ancestors were to be regarded as racists.

The ridiculousness of the resolution should be obvious also to anyone who has visited Jerusalem. Israelis come in all colors including black Jews from Ethiopia, and brown Jews from India. Most Israeli Jews are of Middle Eastern and Northern African descent.

What's more, of every 100 Israeli citizens, 20 are not Jews. They are Arabs, Muslims, Christians, Druze, Baha'i, Circassian. They enjoy rights and freedoms unavailable to minorities – or majorities – elsewhere in the region. Israel is not segregated: not its universities, hospitals, judiciary, beaches, or government whose current ruling coalition includes the Islamist Ra'am (United Arab List) Party.

"No matter how many times Amnesty International tries to erase my identity for trying to advance their political agenda, that doesn't make it the truth," wrote Yoseph Haddad, an Arab Israeli human rights activist. "I was also a commander of dozens of Jewish soldiers. What kind of an 'apartheid' would let Arabs give orders to Jews? The non-existent kind."

Perhaps you're thinking: Yes, but Israelis discriminate against the Palestinians of Gaza! Let's go over this again: In the defensive war of 1967, Israelis seized Gaza from Egypt – not from Palestinians. In 2005, Israelis withdrew from Gaza. Hamas, an ally of Tehran, took over and began waging war: building terrorist tunnels into Israel, sending incendiary balloons and kites to burn Israeli farms and forests, firing missiles at Israeli villages and cities. Hamas' intentions are explicitly genocidal.

Nevertheless, during periods of calm, Gazans are permitted to work in Israel and seek medical treatment not available elsewhere in the Middle East.

What about West Bank Palestinians? Under the Oslo Accords, they are governed by the Palestinian Authority. Ostensibly more moderate than Hamas, the PA nonetheless pays salaries to Palestinians convicted of murdering Israelis. There could have been a full-fledged Palestinian state by now if PA leaders had not rejected several generous Israeli offers, proposing no counteroffers.

Per Oslo, an Israeli military presence remains in parts of the West Bank. That prevents Hamas from sending suicide bombers into Israel. As the PA has acknowledged, it also prevents Hamas from overthrowing the PA as it did in Gaza.

When Resolution 3379 was repealed in 1991, even the Soviet Union – then led by Mikhail Gorbachev – called it "obnoxious," a "legacy of the Ice Age" and "an obstacle" to peace.

Before long, however, UN agencies resumed treating Israel as their whipping boy. Today, the UN Human Rights Council, dominated by the world's worst human rights abusers, spends much of its time and money defaming, demonizing, and attempting to delegitimize Israel. Unsurprising: Agnes Callamard, who currently runs Amnesty, formerly worked for the UNHRC.

Last month, the UN approved a so-called "Commission of Inquiry" that, as I wrote then, will propagate "the slander that Israel is an apartheid state, carrying the implication that Israel has no right to defend itself – indeed no right to exist."

The Amnesty report – whose authors are not identified – calls on the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly, and the International Criminal Court to take further steps to criminalize Israel, and "exercise universal jurisdiction to bring perpetrators of apartheid crimes to justice."

Amnesty is demanding rules for Jews that are different and harsher than those for other peoples. That is antisemitism by any definition, including the widely accepted definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

Simultaneously, Amnesty's self-assigned prosecutors are making it harder if not impossible for any Palestinian leader to consider making peace. They are effectively encouraging those who seek the extermination of the only large and viable Jewish community remaining in the Middle East. And they are providing justification for violence against anyone – Jewish or not Jewish, in America and Europe – who supports Israel's right to exist.

I'll close with an observation from Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, the British author, philosopher, and Templeton Prize winner: "We don't hate Jews, they said in the Middle Ages, just their religion. We don't hate Jews, they said in the 19th century, just their race. We don't hate Jews, they say now, just their nation-state."

Amnesty's leaders are spreading the virus of antisemitism. A generous interpretation: They're not motivated by hate but only by willful ignorance. I'm not that generous.