
Al-Haq's Antisemitic Submission to the UN's Permanent COI

July 18, 2022

On May 31, 2022, Palestinian NGO [Al-Haq](#), along with 90 co-signatories, submitted a flagrantly antisemitic report to the UN Human Rights Council UNHRC's permanent "Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel" (COI).¹ The submission presents a blatantly false historical account, denying Israel's right to exist and denying the Jewish people their right to sovereign equality. In this respect, Al-Haq and the other NGOs contravene the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, specifically its identification of "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor" as antisemitic.

Notably, much of the narrative repeats antisemitic arguments from Arab ideologues, such as the Syrian-born Fayez Sayegh who ran the PLO's propaganda center in Beirut in the 1960s. It also reflects the language used in the final declaration of the infamous NGO Forum of the 2001 UN Durban World Conference on Racism.

Terror, BDS Connections and Funding for NGO Signatories

The submission lists 90 signatories, including NGOs with links to terrorist organizations: [Al-Haq](#), [Addameer](#), [Union of Agricultural Work Committees](#) (UAWC), [Samidoun](#) – all designated as terrorist entities by Israel in 2021 over their respective ties to the PFLP terror organization, and [Al Mezan](#). BDS-supporting organizations such as the Okangan (British Columbia) branch of [Amnesty International](#) and other are also signatories.

Several signatories have received funding from the EU and European governments in recent years, including:

- [Al-Haq](#) (2018-2023, [EU](#), [France](#), [Sweden](#), [Norway](#), [Italy](#), [Denmark](#))
- [Addameer](#) (2019-2022: [Ireland](#), [Switzerland](#), [Spain](#))
- [Al Mezan](#) (2019-2022: [EU](#), [Sweden](#), [Netherlands](#))
- [Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem](#) (ARIJ) (2019-2022: [EU](#), [Spain](#), [Sweden](#), [Netherlands](#))

- NOVACT (Spain)
- Sodepaz (Spain)
- Paz con Dignidad (Spain)
- MIFTAH (2019-2020: EU, Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, Germany)
- Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) (2019-2022: EU, Norway)
- Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) (2019-2021: Canada, EU, France, Italy, Norway, Spain, Denmark)

The government funders – including Spain, Sweden and Norway – have adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism. Yet, they continue to fund NGOs, such as Al Haq and the others, that blatantly reject those fundamental principles. Similarly, the EU – whose parliament adopted a June 2017 resolution calling on member states to adopt IHRA – also funds some of the signatories to this submission. (Recent media reports suggest that the EU intends to renew funding to Al-Haq, following a year-long freeze over terror-financing concerns.)

Al-Haq’s Assault on Israel’s Right to Exist

In this COI submission, Al-Haq and its allies make a series of claims and demands, categorizing Israel’s very existence as illegal, and labeling Zionism as a form of racism (all quotes taken directly from the submission, all emphases added):

1. Israel is Inherently Illegal

“Colonised Palestine refers to the self-determination unit of the Palestinian people and territory of Mandate Palestine (prior to 1948), and which today constitutes the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and the territory recognized as the State of Israel in 1948.” (pg. 1)

“The 1948 Territory refers to the territory of the settler-colonial State of Israel, established by the displacement and dispossession of the vast majority (around 80 percent) of the indigenous Palestinian people during the Nakba and the **maintenance of a settler colonial and apartheid regime** over the Palestinian people since its creation.” (2)

“The Palestinian people argued that the incorporation of the Balfour Declaration was **illegal**.” (11)

“The partition of Palestine, as it stood at that time, **violated sacrosanct principles of international law**.” (13)

“This is notwithstanding that the UNGA does not have the power to enforce its recommendations,

specifically over a persistent sovereign objector to its proposal. In disregard of the wishes of the indigenous Palestinian people, the UN partition plan was adopted as a resolution, and it normalised the erasure of the Palestinian people and the continuation of a settler-colonial project in a so-called sui generis paradigm.” (13-14)

2. “Zionism is Racism”

“As early as the 1960s, Palestinian scholar Fayez Sayegh, explained that racism was ‘inherent in the very ideology of Zionism and in the basic motivation for Zionist colonisation and statehood.’ Sayegh went on to explain that Zionist colonisation produced ‘**racial self-segregation, racial exclusiveness, and racial supremacy.**’” (7)

“Instead of challenging the unjust persecution of Jews within their respective European states, the Zionist Movement called for the creation of a new ahistorical nation-state, as the ‘only’ solution to escape European anti-Semitism. To realize the objective of creating a Zionist nation-state, **the Zionist Movement adopted the combined ideologies of racialist self-identification of persons of Jewish faith and settler colonialism**, which involves not only the exploitation of indigenous people but, primarily, their elimination and erasure and the annexation of their lands to the benefit of the newly constructed colonising racial group...” (9)

“While the crime of deportation of civilians was prosecuted at the Nuremberg trials, **Israel was rewarded as a ‘peace-loving’ new member of the UN, disregarding its establishment by force and the atrocities it committed in Palestine** including the serious crime of population transfer... As such, the establishment of the State of Israel was the culmination of the Zionist settler colonial movement but not its end. The Israeli settler colonial state adopted the Zionist ideology of transferring and replacing the indigenous Palestinian people, and established an **institutionalized regime of Jewish racial domination and oppression** over the Palestinian people in order to achieve an exclusive Jewish majority state.” (16)

“As per its settler colonial logic, the return of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons is presented as a threat to the (sic) ‘the existence of Israel as a Jewish state, obliterating its basic identity as the homeland of the Jewish people and a refuge for persecuted Jews worldwide.’ To date, Israel continues to deny 8.7 million Palestinians refugees and internally displaced persons their right to return...” (18)

“Israel’s persistent refusal to grant Palestinian refugees, displaced persons, and their descendants their right of return amounts to a core element in the establishment and maintenance of its apartheid regime... Discriminatory laws that have been designed to deny Palestinian refugees

their right to return include the 1950 Law of Return, which grants every Jewish person the exclusive right to enter Israel as a Jewish immigrant.” (19)

3. **Israel should be dismantled**

“Soheir Asaad and Rania Muhareb writing on the importance of framing apartheid within the broader context of settler colonialism observed that: ‘During the Unity Intifada in May 2021, we reclaimed our political will and agency in the streets of Palestine... What Palestinians want is not ‘reforms’ to our living conditions under the reign of Zionism, but the **dismantlement of its very foundations**. We do not want “liberal equality”—we want **decolonisation**, liberation, justice, and dignity.’” (8)

“Palestinians demand that the root causes of their oppression be addressed, and remedied, and ongoing settler colonialism and apartheid be dismantled.” (34)

“Call on Israel to repeal all legislation and end all **policies and practices enshrining apartheid**, including racial discrimination, domination, and oppression over the Palestinian people, including by repealing the Basic Laws and other statutes that directly or indirectly affect the enjoyment of human rights through racial or racialized distinctions. In particular, we urge the Commission to call on Israel to repeal the following laws, as foundational to Israel’s creation of an apartheid regime, including but not limited to: (a) **The Basic Law: The Law of Return** (1950); (b) The Citizenship Law (1952); (c) The Absentee Property Law (1950); (d) The Entry into Israel Law (1952) and its amendments; (e) Legal and Administrative Matters Law (1970); (f) The Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People (2018); and (g) Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) (2022).” (45)

4. **Justifying Terrorism**

“Israel’s violent suppression, **criminalization, and/or terrorization of Palestinian resistance** must be understood within the wider context.... People under colonial and foreign domination and alien subjugation, have the right to pursue their right to self-determination and freedom by **all available means**.” (emphasis added)

“The Unity Intifada [including the May 2021 conflict during which Palestinian terrorist organizations launched thousands of rockets at Israeli civilians] was sparked in Jerusalem during April 2021... the Palestinian people, across colonised Palestine, and Palestinian refugees in exile, mobilized in unity in an outpouring of demonstrations against Israel’s almost century long colonisation and apartheid, and their subjection to an ongoing Nakba since 1948.”

5. Opposition to IHRA's Definition of Antisemitism

"Further attempts to further limit the already shrinking space for civil society around the world and limit the rights to freedom of expression, opinion and association" is the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Anti-Semitism. The definition lists criticism of the State of Israel, and claiming its existence a racist endeavour, as manifestations of anti-Semitism. As condemned by more than 40 Jewish groups, the IHRA definition is worded in a way as to "intentionally equate legitimate criticisms of Israel and advocacy for Palestinian rights with antisemitism, as a means to suppress the former." (40)

Demands of the COI

The submission concludes with a series of demands of the COI, reflecting the intent to enlist international support to dismantle Israel. Such recommendations (pp 43-46) include:

- "Recognise and acknowledge that the **root causes** of Israeli laws, policies, and practices implicating systematic violations and crimes against the Palestinian people as a whole, **are Zionist settler colonialism and its apartheid regime.**"
- "Address the root causes of Israeli violations including by **calling on Israel to dismantle its settler colonial and apartheid regime...**"
- "Make recommendations for the effective exercise of the ongoing denial of millions of Palestinian refugees their right to return, and the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of the Palestinian people across colonised Palestine, including by calling on Israel to fulfil its obligation to enable the return of Palestinian refugees to their original homes, and ensure restitution of their property and compensation for the damages inflicted upon them, as a result of their displacement, as well as calling for the reactivation of the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine."
- "Apply the Apartheid Convention, the Rome Statute and ICERD, to address Israel's discriminatory laws, policies, and practices targeting the Palestinian people as a whole and apply the framework to all relevant issues pertaining to colonised Palestine, and Palestinian refugees."
- "Third states must take positive and effective steps to overcome the illegal situation, including through, inter alia... ending all trade in weapons with Israel through a two-way arms embargo and ending military-security cooperation, banning any economic relations that perpetrate the apartheid regime over the Palestinian people..."
- In relation to individual criminal responsibility, we urge the Commission to: i. Call upon the

Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to conduct a full, prompt, thorough, and comprehensive investigation into all suspected crimes committed against the Palestinian people, including **the crimes of apartheid, population transfer, and persecution**, and other associated crimes that fall within the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to the Situation in Palestine and accordingly prosecute relevant perpetrators. ii. Urge states to activate **universal jurisdiction mechanisms** to hold to account individuals and corporate actors responsible for **war crimes and crimes against humanity against the Palestinian people, including the crime of apartheid.**”

Footnotes

1. The extreme and absolutist nature of this document complements the structural failures of the COI. On June 7, 2022, the COI issued its first report targeting Israel. Consistent with the COI’s prejudicial mandate and the bias of commission members, its initial offering promotes outright falsehoods and largely relies on unverified NGO claims, many of which are terror-linked.

Topics in this Report

- 2021 UN Commission of Inquiry
- Antisemitism
- BDS
- IHRA
- Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
- Racism
- Terrorism

NGOs in this Report

- Al-Haq
- Samidoun
- Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights

- Amnesty International (AI)
- Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC)
- Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ)
- Addameer

Source: <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/al-haqs-antisemitic-submission-to-the-un-permanent-coi/>