



17 February 2022

To:
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Amnesty International Board

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Dear Board Members,

As a group of former U.S. government officials, national security experts, and supporters of human rights, who have respected Amnesty International's past work regarding other countries, we are incensed by Amnesty's sloppy and unserious February 1st report condemning Israel. This report is untruthful, deceptive, and antisemitic. In "denying the Jewish People their right to self-determination," and "applying double standards" to Israel, [the report meets the definition of antisemitism as adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's \(IHRA\)](#), the Biden administration, the United Nations Secretary General, the European Union, and the European Parliament.

Moreover, [recent investigative reporting](#) reveals the virulent anti-Israel bias of Amnesty International's senior leadership—including Amnesty International Secretary General Agnes Callamard and Research and Advocacy Director and Senior Adviser Phillip Luther—who have supported violent attempts to eliminate Israel, opposed the idea of a Jewish state, and perpetuated anti-Semitic tropes.

In short, the Amnesty report is an anti-Semitic document written by anti-Israel activists. We call on Amnesty International's board of directors to denounce this report and open an investigation into how its publication was approved.



The Amnesty report argues that the creation of Israel in 1948 was a racist project, and falsely accuses Israel of crimes against humanity and "apartheid" while failing to hold other nations to similar standards. The report goes to great lengths to manipulate the definition of apartheid laid out in international law in order to apply it to Israel. In doing so, it creates a standard for apartheid that is substantively different—and significantly less stringent—than that which the organization applies to other countries, such as Myanmar. Only Israel is subjected to such an attack by Amnesty, raising serious questions about the motives and procedures which lie behind this report.

Since its founding, Israel has defended itself and its people against multiple attempts by Arab states and terrorist groups to commit genocide and wipe the Jewish homeland off the map. Yet Israel built and sustained a democracy, where Arabs are accorded more freedoms than in any other country in the Middle East. Israeli Arabs participate in elections, serve in the military, hold parliamentary seats, and serve as Supreme Court judges. Today, an Arab party is part of Israel's governing coalition for the first time in history. Arab men and women pursue a variety of professions freely without segregation of any kind. They participate fully in all sectors of Israel's liberal, democratic society. These are all indisputable truths, and their omission from the report is a telling indication of Amnesty's intentions.

The report's gross accusation that the creation of Israel itself reflects racism also distorts the reasons for Israel's founding. The State of Israel was established as the fulfillment of millenia of Jewish longing for a sovereign state in their lawful, historic homeland and was guaranteed to the Jewish people by the international community under binding international law. Israel has also served as a refuge for Jews fleeing severe persecution and murder in Europe and Arab lands. The Holocaust—the systematic murder of of 6 million Jews—was itself the tragic consequence of both violent antisemitism and a world without a Jewish homeland. Amnesty International's assertion that a Jewish state is by definition racist deliberately obscures this history.

The report's opposition to the existence of Israel is not limited to distorting Israel's creation, but also includes attacking Israel's right to self-defense. The report dismisses threats Israel faces from hostile neighbors and Palestinian terrorist groups, intentionally mischaracterizing Palestinian terrorism as "popular resistance." As just one example, during eleven days of fighting in May 2021, Palestinian armed groups indiscriminately launched more than 4,000 rockets into Israel. The purpose of these attacks was not "resistance"—it was to kill Jewish men, women, and children. Despite the best efforts of the Israeli Defense Forces, they were unfortunately successful. Amnesty International's transmutation of self-defense into a "crime against humanity" is a defense of the murder of Israeli civilians.



In sum, the clear recommendation of Amnesty International's report is nothing less than bringing an end to the existence of the Jewish state. We urge you, as board members who are charged with maintaining the operations and reputation of your institution, to condemn this report, withdraw these "findings," and examine the processes by which such a biased and untruthful document was approved.

The undersigned:

Elliott Abrams, Vandenberg Coalition

Gary Bauer, American Values

Peter Berkowitz, Fmr. Director, State Department
Policy Planning Staff

Matt Brooks, Republican Jewish Coalition

Amb. Samuel Brownback, Fmr. U.S. Ambassador-at-
Large for International Religious Freedom

Shoshana Bryen, Jewish Policy Center

Elan Carr, Fmr. U.S. Special Envoy for Monitoring and
Combating Anti-Semitism

Ellie Cohan, Fmr. U.S. Deputy Special Envoy to
Combat Anti-Semitism

Mark Dubowitz, Foundation for Defense of
Democracies

Amb. Eric Edelman, Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to Finland
and Turkey

Carrie Filipetti, Vandenberg Coalition

Reuel Gerecht

Lela Gilbert, Hudson Institute Center for Religious
Freedom

Richard Goldberg, Foundation for Defense of
Democracies

Rabbi Dr. Mark Goldfeder, National Jewish Advocacy
Center

Rob Greenway, Abraham Accords Peace Institute

Sandy Hagee Parker, Christians United for Israel

John Hannah, Jewish Institute for National Security of
America

Kim R. Holmes

William Inboden

James Kirchick

Morton A. Klein, Zionist Organization of America

Robert Lewit

Jane Lewit

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, former U.S. Senator from
Connecticut

Liz Berney, Zionist Organization of America

Mary Beth Long, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of
Defense for International Security Affairs

Michael Makovsky, Jewish Institute for National
Security of America

Earl G. Matthews

Clifford D. May, Foundation for Defense of
Democracies

Rabbi Yaakov Menken, Coalition for Jewish Values

Blaise Miztal, Jewish Institute for National Security
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Ari Morgenstern, Christians United for Israel

Henry R. Nau, Professor Emeritus, George
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Leo Nayfeld, Jewish Institute for National Security
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Rabbi Moshe B. Parnes, Coalition for Jewish Values

Amb. J. Peter Pham, Atlantic Council

Danielle Pletka

Dan Pollak, Zionist Organization of America

Jonathan Ruhe, Jewish Institute for National
Security of America

Jonathan Schanzer, Foundation for Defense of
Democracies

Gabriel Scheinmann

Nina Shea, Hudson Institute Center for Religious
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Nate Sibley

Rabbi Ze'ev Smason

Ray Takeyh

Morgan Viña, Jewish Institute for National Security
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Sharona Whisler, Zionist Organization of America

Roger Zakheim, Fmr. Gen. Counsel, House Armed
Services Committee

Boris Zilberman, Christians United for Israel

*All individuals named above have signed in their personal capacities.
Affiliations and government titles are listed for identification only.