

EQUALITY FOR ALL

A Rights-Based Vision for Palestine/Israel

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY FOR ALL

Palestinian citizens of Israel, an indigenous, homeland minority who make up 20% of the population of Israel, have long advanced a human rights-based vision for a future that would guarantee the **equal rights of all people**. Through social justice movements, Israeli legal and political channels, as well as international advocacy, the community and their representatives articulate clear demands for **equality and historical justice**.

ISRAEL'S NATION-STATE LAW ENSHRINES DISCRIMINATION

In July 2018, the Israeli Knesset (Congress) passed the **Basic Law: Israel - The Nation-State of the Jewish People (Nation-State Law)**. A law of constitutional status, the Nation-State Law codifies discrimination, explicitly privileges the rights of Jewish people and enshrines the principle of "**separate and unequal**". According to the law, self-determination is the exclusive right of the Jewish people throughout the "Land of Israel", and the promotion of Jewish settlement is a national value. **The law does not refer to non-Jewish citizens or residents of the state, and makes no mention of equality, human rights or democracy**. There is no country in the world today defined as democratic that determines constitutional identity by **ethnic affiliation rather than the principle of equal citizenship**.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE

While the Nation-State Law was being considered, Palestinian Members of the Israeli Knesset introduced an alternative constitutional law, the **Basic Law: State of All Its Citizens**. The law sought to **anchor the principles of equality and democracy and equal citizenship for all citizens of the State without discrimination** or any distinction on the basis of ethnic affiliation. The law would have ensured that that the State of Israel would not belong only to a certain group of citizens, but would rather be a **state for all citizens with full equality**. The Knesset Presidium (leadership) prohibited the law from being introduced and discussed on the grounds that the demand for equality "denies the existence of the state as the state of the Jewish People."

SECURING PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, ADVANCING GLOBAL JUSTICE

By enshrining discrimination, the Israeli government not only denies Palestinian rights, but also undermines human rights norms guaranteeing the fundamental equality of all people. In the era of rising global authoritarianism, progressives must promote a coherent **alternative vision that secures equal rights for Palestinians and advances global justice for all**.

