

Is Israel a Racist Apartheid State?

Amnesty International recently issued a report accusing Israel of being an apartheid state. The allegation is a critical issue because Israel is increasingly being accused of being racist.

If the accusations are true, Christians who support Israel are thus supporting racism. We must understand if this is true or not.

What is an apartheid state?

“Apartheid” is an Afrikaans word that means “apartness” or “separateness.” It describes the former legal system in South Africa that enforced racial segregation and discrimination of the black majority by a white minority government. However, significant international and domestic opposition brought this racist system to an end, and in 1994 Nelson Mandela became the first black president.

Why is Israel accused of being apartheid?

The accusation of apartheid regarding Israel is false. However, before we look at the facts to refute this, let’s consider what is behind the charge.

While classic antisemitism blames Jewish individuals for the world’s ills, a new antisemitism blames the Jewish collective—the Jewish State—and is called anti-Zionism. This anti-Semitic movement demonizes Israel, questions her right to exist and calls the world to act through boycotts and sanctions.

It’s a dangerous campaign, and if they succeed in making Israel look so bad that the international community believes

it needs to take action, the future of the Jewish state could be threatened. Israel's enemies have found a politically correct and sophisticated way to follow the South African apartheid precedent and force Israel to be dismantled.

This campaign is making headway in the United Nations, other international bodies, left-wing organizations and college campuses. Every March, universities in over 150 cities worldwide participate in activities to mark "Israeli Apartheid Week." The event calls for boycotts, divestments and sanctions against Israel until "apartheid policies against the Palestinians" end. The week has become known for its antisemitism and a dangerous atmosphere for Jewish and pro-Israel students.

Facts about Israel and the Arabs

When discussing Israel's treatment of the Arabs, we must first differentiate between the three groups of Arabs who live in very different situations.

Israeli Arabs: 20% of Israel's population is Arab. They are Israeli citizens with full rights and opportunities as such. Every country has its minorities, and every minority struggles to have full rights—it's just a part of life. The Israeli Arab minority, however, has an extra challenge that complicates their lives, and that is the security situation. They are part of the larger Arab world, some of which is in a state of war with Israel. Most are Muslim, and Muslim jihadist groups outside of Israel are using mosques to radicalize them and urge them to attack Israel from within.

Nevertheless, most Israeli Arabs are loyal and appreciative of their life as Israelis. They vote, have Arab representatives in the Knesset and have a party that has been part of a governing coalition. They serve in Israel's foreign service and on the Supreme Court. They are not required to serve in the army, but a growing number of them are volunteering

anyway. Despite their challenges, they have full rights as Israeli citizens and more opportunities to excel than they would in most Arab countries.

Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank: These Arabs live in the area known as the “West Bank,” and the Oslo Peace process established the Palestinian Authority government that rules over their population centers. That plan included negotiating their full statehood and sovereignty, but the process stalled and for the most part is dead. Therefore, Palestinian Arabs do not have a state, even though they have a government.

Their government leaders have pocketed billions of dollars sent to aid their people. Their capital city of Ramallah reflects great affluence with magnificent mansions and nice shopping centers. However, their government has kept Palestinians in refugee camps in the West Bank with high poverty and unemployment levels—a travesty and unjust situation—the blame for which should be laid on their own leaders and not upon Israel.

Palestinian Arabs in Gaza: The Palestinian Arabs in Gaza are a little different because they overthrew the Palestinian Authority government and put into place a terrorist organization to rule over them—Hamas. Hamas could have built a beautiful city like Singapore or Hong Kong or a luxury resort on the Mediterranean coast with the money flowing into Gaza. Hamas leaders have had every opportunity to build a life for their people. Instead, they have spent all the money that was supposed to help the Palestinian people on weapons and building underground bunkers and tunnels to destroy Israel.

Today most Palestinians would like to leave Gaza.

When addressing the injustices and hardships of the Palestinian Arabs, we must place blame where blame is due—on their own corrupt leaders. When it comes to Israel’s treatment of the Arab people, one need only to look to her Arab citizens

to see Israel is clearly not a racist, apartheid state. {eo}

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