Human Rights Council
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Agenda item 6
Universal Periodic Review

Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

Israel
Addendum

Views on conclusions and/or recommendations, voluntary commitments and replies presented by the State under review

* The present document was not edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.
I. Methodology and consultation process

1. The State of Israel is deeply committed to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Following 18 months of suspension Israel appeared before the Council on October 29th, underwent its periodic review and effectively renewed its relations with the UNHRC. As noted by Ambassador Eviatar Manor, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office in Geneva: “Israel made its decision because we respect UN resolutions, human rights in general and human rights mechanisms in particular.” Moving forward, we wish to turn the page and commence a new chapter with the UNHRC, a chapter in which difficulties encountered in the past no longer arise, and where a positive and constructive dynamic to our relations can take shape.

2. In this vein we have carefully reviewed the 237 recommendations received and left to be examined by Israel during our second cycle UPR held on 29 October 2013, which were listed in the report of the Working Group on the UPR (A/HRC/25/15, para.136 hereinafter: the Working Group's Report).

3. All relevant Government Ministries were consulted during the process of drafting replies to all the observations and recommendations received. Working to incorporate the inclusive and participatory processes espoused in the goals of the UPR, we also made efforts to consider the views from civil society organizations at a meeting held on 19th February 2014, at the Minerva Center for Human Rights at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As a result of these consultations, we are pleased to report Israel has been able to adopt 105 recommendations, in whole or in part.

4. The present Addendum is structured in accordance with the themes used on Israel's National Report, submitted on 28 October 2013 (A/HRC/WG.6/17/ISR/1). When reviewing recommendations and observations, the State of Israel implemented the following methodology:

   (a) Recommendations that fully enjoy the support of the State of Israel are those recommendations that are either already implemented or which underlying spirit is supported by the State. We recognize, realistically, that we may never fully accomplish what is described in the literal sense of the terms of the recommendation but we remain committed to making serious efforts towards achieving said goals.

   (b) Recommendations that partially enjoy the support of the State of Israel are those recommendations with which we regard ourselves as partly compliant, or which are supported in principle, but where we nonetheless object to the suggestion that our current efforts are insufficient or fall short of good practice.

   (c) Recommendations that do not enjoy our support are those recommendations that we cannot commit to implement at this stage for legal, policy, or other reasons. These also include recommendations made, which we categorically denounce, based on gross misrepresentation or perversion of facts.

5. Certain countries chose to include in their recommendations inaccurate assumptions, inflammatory rhetoric, and false or misleading factual claims, some of which run contrary to the spirit of the UPR. However, even in those cases, we tried to determine whether we could still support the general ideas at the root of such recommendations, while doing our best to ignore the politicized oratory.

6. Due to space constraints, this Addendum will not reiterate issues that have already been raised in Israel’s National Report and therefore it is advised to review it in conjunction with the National Report.
7. As part of the consultations that led to the Working Group's Report, the State of Israel immediately dismissed seven recommendations that contained the term “State of Palestine”. These recommendations were referenced in numbers 137.1–137.7 of the Working Group's Report. In addition to these recommendations, Israel rejects three additional recommendations numbered 136.29, 136.118, and 136.156 which were raised by the so-called "State of Palestine". While Israel welcomes an open dialogue with delegates of the Palestinian Authority on matters of human rights, we categorically oppose the designation of the Palestinian entity as a State. We recognize that such a designation is used in the United Nations following a Palestinian request and subsequent adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 67/19. However, Israel wishes to reiterate that any usage of the term "State of Palestine" by UN bodies does not imply the existence of a sovereign Palestinian State, nor recognition as such, and is without prejudice to the resolution of all outstanding issues through direct bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

II. Review of recommendations by theme

A. International instruments and domestic legislative and structural human rights frameworks

8. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.13; 136.80.

9. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.12; 136.15; 136.22; 136.25; 136.26.

10. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.1; 136.2; 136.3; 136.4; 136.5; 136.6; 136.7; 136.8; 136.9; 136.10; 136.11; 136.14.

11. The protection of and adherence to human rights and international norms plays an important role in Israel, and has been an inseparable part of the State from its very inception, as is evidenced by the Declaration of Independence, Israel's Basic Laws, Supreme Court rulings, and the countless treaties, conventions and covenants to which Israel is a party. Israel complies with its international obligations as reflected both in customary international law and in treaty law.

12. The State of Israel does not normally sign a treaty unless it supports its objectives, purpose, and wording. Moreover, Israel as a law-abiding country does not ratify treaties before ensuring that its own legislation is fully compliant with the treaty's requirements.

B. Cooperation with United Nations agencies and bodies

13. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.32; 136.34; 136.35; 136.37; 136.40; 136.42; 136.46; 136.47.

14. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.31; 136.36; 136.41.

15. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.30; 136.33; 136.38; 136.45; 136.48; 136.50; 136.51; 136.195; 136.196; 136.197; 136.198; 136.199; 136.201.

16. Since the UNHRC's creation in 2006, Israel has been the subject of institutional discrimination and unfair treatment which run contrary to the universal principles which lie at the foundation of the Council itself. The infamous item 7 still features on the agenda of every Council session, exclusively singling out Israel, while every other nation is reviewed under agenda item 4. The Council has continued to adopt dozens of partial, politically-
driven resolutions; dispatching committees of inquiry; convening emergency sessions; and renewing the mandate of a permanent prejudiced special rapporteur — all geared against the State of Israel. At the same time a vast array of systematic human rights violations worldwide fail to merit as much as a response.

17. Israel suspended its relations with the UNHRC and OHCHR in March 2012. Following broad internal consultations and external dialogues both with the Council and 'like-minded' countries, Israel renewed its relations with the UNHRC and OHCHR. Israel will continue its efforts to restore all diplomatic engagement in hope of opening a new era of equality and fairness regarding Israel in Geneva.

C. Combatting racism, discrimination, xenophobia and anti-discrimination

18. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.17; 136.18; 136.19; 136.21; 136.43; 136.59; 136.61; 136.82.

19. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.20; 136.44; 136.54.

20. Equality and non-discrimination are the cornerstones of Israel's democratic society. This commitment has been reiterated in a series of laws and court rulings. Public authorities and public institutions must fully adhere to the principle of equality and are prohibited from engaging in any act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups, or institutions. Israeli Courts have maintained time and again that the principle of equality is a constitutional principle.

21. The Israeli law enforcement authorities increased their effort to fight crimes with racist motives and formed new special investigations units to enhance their capacity. In 2013 the number of indictments and convictions increased significantly and Israel is fully committed to continue this effort.

D. Ensuring LGBT rights and gender-based equality

22. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.56; 136.60; 136.64; 136.81; 136.101.

23. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.23; 136.24.

24. Israel has been committed to gender equality since its inception, enacting the Equal Rights for Women Law 5711-1951 only three years after the State was founded. This is a testimony to the emphasis given to gender-related issues in Israel. Major progress has been made in recent years, in particular, pertaining to equality for women and the promotion and development of rights for the LGBT community, as discussed at length in Israel's national report.

25. The issue of civil marriages is a complex and delicate issue which many societies today are called to respond to, and Israel is no exception. This matter has spurred an active parliamentary debate within Israel which has already resulted in a number of proposals, including bills put forward by the current Government, relating to recognition of "domestic unions" within Israel. The matter is of utmost concern as it relates not only to same-sex couples but also to those who are not members of a recognized religion or are unable to marry in a religious ceremony for whatever reason. Public debate is still ongoing as we attempt to strike an appropriate balance between individual's right to marry and the need to protect certain religious values.
E. Minority rights

26. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.27; 136.53; 136.58; 136.90; 136.91; 136.92; 136.93; 136.94; 136.95; 136.96; 136.98; 136.99; 136.100; 136.103.

27. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.146; 136.63.

28. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.55; 136.57; 136.97.

29. The State of Israel is sincerely committed to the promotion and protection of human rights for all religious and ethnic minority groups, including but not limited to, its Arab, Druze, Circassian, Bedouin, and Ethiopian communities. Much like other societies, Israel is experiencing objective challenges and difficulties in reaching these goals. Unfortunately and on occasion, these typical challenges are exploited by some in the international community to advance political goals and smear Israel without any real desire to affect change or to promote the actual well-being of those minority groups.

30. Israel’s national report lists numerous programs and frameworks which are already implemented, and the State of Israel remains committed to take further actions to reduce inequality, and improve the economic, and well-being of those minority groups.

F. Immigration and asylum matters

31. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.62; 136.104; 136.105; 136.106.

32. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.16.

33. Despite Israel’s complex geostrategic situation and the dramatic impact illegal immigration has already had on the Israeli society, the Israeli Government has nonetheless committed itself to adhere to its international obligations, including the principle of non-refoulement. This was recently reaffirmed in the High Court of Justice ruling 7146/12 Naget Serg Adam et. al. v. The Knesset et. al. (16.9.2013).

34. Israel continues to conduct individual refugee status determination assessments for asylum seekers of all nationalities, while providing them with their human rights. Israel will not tolerate any discrimination against asylum seekers and immigrants.

G. Fighting terrorism within the law and investigatory safeguards against abuse

35. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.133; 136.65; 136.66.

36. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.28; 136.144.

37. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.49; 136.107; 136.120.

38. With respect to our counter terrorism operations, the State of Israel works tirelessly to strengthen compliance with the relevant applicable international law standards. The Government of Israel stands firmly against torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. The practices of our military and security agencies are under constant legal review and are the subject of lively public debate within Israeli society.
39. While an overwhelming majority of Israel's military and security officials conduct themselves in accordance with the law, we accept that at times there may be occasional lapses in the context of the ongoing violent conflict the State of Israel is facing. Nonetheless, Israel remains committed to the principle of accountability and will continue to conduct investigations regarding any alleged violation of domestic or international laws. A reflection of that commitment can be found in the recent decision of the Government to nominate a high-level team that will examine the implementation of the recommendations put forward in the 2013 report of the Turkel Public Commission of Inquiry.

H. Religious freedoms

40. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.68; 136.69; 136.70; 136.71; 136.72; 136.74; 136.75; 136.76; 136.77.

41. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.39; 136.52; 136.73; 136.78; 136.218; 136.219.

42. Israeli Law provides for freedom of worship and ensures free access to holy places and cultural institutions by members of all faiths. The Protection of Holy Places Law 5727-1967 protects all holy places from desecration and subject violators to significant prison sentences.

43. The Israeli Antiques Authority does not prohibit the restoration or maintenance of any Islamic holy shrine, but rather does its utmost to protect all religious sites. Israel maintains close dialogue with the Islamic Waqf which carries out restoration and other construction projects on the Temple Mount.

I. Rights of persons with disabilities

44. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.87; 136.88; 136.89.

45. Israel prides itself in being a world leader in the promotion of a disability rights agenda and continues to stand at the forefront of the protection and promotion of human rights of all people with disabilities.17

J. Economic, social and cultural rights

46. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel: 136.67; 136.83; 136.84; 136.85; 136.86; 136.102.

47. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Israel in part: 136.79; 136.110; 136.213.

48. The following recommendations do not enjoy the support of Israel: 136.211; 136.212; 136.230.

49. Israel has already taken effective actions towards a progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights for all its citizens, in line with the ICESCR. As discussed at length in Israel's national report, the State remains committed to developing policies and legislation which aim to close the gap between those facing disadvantage and their peers. These programs focus on improving the standard of living and access to social services such as healthcare and education, particularly for Israel's most vulnerable groups.

50. The rate of infant and maternity mortality in Israel is among the lowest in the developed world. The Ministry of Health introduced new policies to close the gap in the
infant and maternal mortality rate, which are designed to overcome the cultural and socio-economic differences between the different populations.

51. Permanent Residents receive the same rights as citizens, excluding an Israeli passport and the right to vote in the national elections to the Knesset. Although a citizenship was offered to all inhabitants of Jerusalem, in 1967 the vast majority of them chose to receive only permanent residency. However, it should be stressed that residents have the right to participate in the municipal elections. Since 1967, over 15,000 permanent residents of the eastern neighborhoods in Jerusalem asked to receive an Israeli citizenship and received it.19 Israeli policies in this regard have been reviewed and reaffirmed by the Israeli Supreme Court in H.C.J 282/88 Mubarak Awad v. The Prime Minister et. al. (5.6.1998).

K. The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

52. The recommendations below relate to final status issues which are currently being negotiated by Israelis and Palestinians under the auspices of the U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry. As noted in Israel's national report, Israel continues to seek an historic and comprehensive compromise with our Palestinian neighbors through direct negotiations conducted on the basis of mutual recognition, signed agreements and the cessation of violence and incitement.


L. The scope of mandate of the Universal Periodic Review Process

54. The Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1 summarizes the basis for review for the Council's Universal Periodic Review. Article 2 to that Resolution states that: "In addition to the above and given the complementary and mutually interrelated nature of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, the review shall take into account applicable international humanitarian law".

55. While we recognize that there is a profound connection between human rights and the laws of armed conflict, and that there may well be a convergence between these two bodies of law in some respect, it is the longstanding position of the State of Israel that in the current state of international law and state-practice, these two bodies of law, which are codified in separate instruments, nevertheless remain two distinct bodies of law, and apply in different circumstances. This distinction has become well-established under international law and it is still valid and reinforced today in armed conflicts over the world.20 We therefore question the relevance of examining matters which are governed by international humanitarian law in the context of a human rights review.

56. Moreover, the applicability of human rights conventions to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has been the subject of considerable debate over the past years. In its past periodic reports to the treaty bodies, Israel did not include details on the implementation of said Conventions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for several reasons, ranging from legal considerations to practical realities. Israel’s position on this issue has been outlined in detail in our previous presentations in various international fora. It is Israel’s view that the Conventions do not apply beyond its territory, including in the West Bank and the Gaza
Strip. This is especially true in light of the ongoing situation of armed conflict and hostilities in these areas.

57. We therefore consider some of the recommendations raised during Israel's second cycle UPR as falling outside the scope and ambit of the review process. Nonetheless, in the spirit of fruitful and productive dialogue, and irrespective of the aforementioned legal position of Israel, we attach, *ex gratia*, to this addendum an annex document which notes Israel's position regarding recommendations that relate to certain matters beyond the UPR's mandate.

**Notes**


2 For normative and institutional developments in Israel relating to the protection of human rights please refer to Israel's National Report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21 (A/HRC/WG.6/17/ISR/1), paras. 2-8; 17-20 (hereinafter: Israel's National Report).

3 For Engagement and dialogue on human rights issues with international bodies and NGOs, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 9–16.

4 For measures taken by Israel to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism please refer to Israel National Report, paras. 33–38.


7 For measures taken by Israel to ensure LGBT rights and gender based equality, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 21–26; 39–42.

8 In April 30th, 2013, Israel introduced a national "Equal Pay Day" as part of a national campaign by the Commission for Equal opportunities which consisted of awareness raising, filing civil law suit and providing legal opinions.

9 For measures taken by Israel to ensure minority rights, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 27–32.

10 On January 5th, 2014, the Government has appointed Minister Yair Shamir, the minister of agriculture and rural development to be the minister in charge of Government policy towards the development of the Negev and settlement of the Bedouins in the Negev. Minister Shamir and his teams are learning the various aspects of the issue and the legislation of a new law has been put on hold. Currently, the government implanted a 5 year development plan which allocates 1.2 Billion NIS ($300 Million) with a specific focus on women and children. The main goal of the Israeli Government is to regularize every Bedouin community and ensure that they receive all the services they are entitled to. It is in the Israeli interest that the Bedouin tradition flourishes and remains recognized all around the world. There are people who prefer a more modern way of life while other communities still live in a more traditional way. 10 teams of planners have recently been hired by the Authority for Advancement of Bedouin in the Negev and they are working on planning solutions in each area. The planners are guided to work with the community and maintain public participation procedures with the goal of achieving a balance between the people's preferences and the physical and planning constrains. According to the national policy, each Bedouin who is 18 and married or 24 and single, and about to be settled, is entitled to receive a developed plot free of charge in an approved town or village. That is a major affirmative action as no other youngsters in Israel in comparison receive plots free of charge. Promoting the Bedouin municipalities and promoting them to provide good services to their habitants are a top priority. In the last two years, 4 out of 7 Bedouin municipalities have progressed in their socio-economic status thanks to mutual efforts of the government and the local leadership.

11 The Government implements a 700 million NIS plan aimed at improving the access to the employment market of minorities, with a special program for women empowerment. The plan
includes center for employment direction, financial assistance and daycare nurseries, vocational training, support to small businesses, micro financing, awareness raising, etc. In regard to higher education, the government established a 300 million NIS program to improve the access to higher education in the Arab population.

12 For measures taken by Israel to combat illegal immigration while adhering to Israel asylum obligations, please refer to Israel's National Report, pars. 114–117.

13 In December 2013 the Knesset legislated the Prevention of Infiltration Law (Offenses and Jurisdiction) (Amendment no. 4 and Temporary Provision) 5773-2013. The new legislation amends the 2011 legislation which was annulled by the Supreme Court. The purpose of the new legislation is to lower the financial incentive for migrants to enter Israel, while still granting protection for those in need in accordance with our international legal obligations. Therefore, the law set out two measures: (1) Limiting the maximum detention period for any migrant who crossed the border since the enactment of the law to one year. In this time period, an assessment is made within 6 months regarding whether or not the migrant is a genuine refugee in accordance with international standards; (2) establishing an open facility to accommodate migrants who crossed the border from Egypt illegally. The facility allows coming and going during most of the day while providing all basic services and needs including healthcare, welfare, food, and clothing.

14 For measures taken by Israel to ensure the protection of the rule of law in the fight against terrorism, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 106–113.

15 For measures taken by Israel to ensure the protection of religious freedom, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 58–63.

16 For measures taken by Israel to ensure the protection of rights of persons with disabilities, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 2–8.

17 As of 2014, the municipal public transportation is already accessible, for the most part. In our assessment, the vast majority of the municipal busses in Israel are already accessible to people with seeing, cognitive and mobility disabilities. This accessibility includes announcement of bus stops, ramps, accessible signage and wheelchair fastening belts. In addition, municipal bus stops, train stations and airports countrywide are about 70% accessible to mobility disabled people, based on sample inspections. We estimate that national parks and designated forests have already been made 20% accessible, and inspections show that work on accessibility of further sites is currently in progress. The Commission is currently funding an awareness campaign focusing on accessibility to services on the radio, newspapers and the Internet. In addition The National Insurance Institute funds work oriented training and education to people with 20% medical disability and over. Currently, about 12,000–13,000 disabled people received such assistance annually. Additional employment rehabilitation services are funded by the Ministries of Welfare and Health. The Ministry of the Economy subsidizes between 18% and 42% of the wage paid by certain enterprises to employees with disabilities, for a period of 30 months. The Ministries of Finance and of the Economy have begun to fund an innovative program to employ people with disabilities who are university grads as interns in Government Ministries. This employment lasts between 9 and 15 months, and is intended to enable them to network and obtain both work experience and recommendations for future employment. The Ministry of the Economy has recently established three support centers for employers of people with disabilities, around the country. These centers will include all forms of employment related assistance provided by the Ministry, and refer to any other available resources. Some 600 disabled persons have already found jobs due to this assistance. Looking ahead, 45 Civil Service jobs will be designated for employees with disabilities in 2014, thus implementing a Government Resolution on this matter. In April 2014, the Inter-Sectoral Partnership for Disability Employment will publish an innovative website, intended to assist placement of disabled jobseekers with interested employers. Employers will be able to post job openings intended for people with disabilities, and disabled jobseekers will be able to apply for these jobs through the website.

18 For measures taken by Israel to ensure the protection of economic, social and cultural rights, please refer to Israel's National Report, paras. 64–91; For a detailed response as to the issue of Conscientious Objectors see Israel's National Reports, paras. 96–98.

19 The status of a resident can expire in case the person leaves Israel for a period longer than seven years or acquires citizenship or residency in another country. Expiration of residency is relevant only with regard to residence abroad for a period longer than seven years, rather than temporary stay as required, for example, in order to participate in academic studies. It should be mentioned that this
procedure applies to every resident leaving Israel, and does not target any specific population. Since 2000, the policy regarding permanent residents of the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem that resided outside Israel is: 1) the residency will not be revoked if the person has kept an affinity to Israel; or 2) if certain conditions are met, a person who keeps an affinity to Israel, despite of his/her life abroad, and lived in Israel for two consecutive years can receive back residency. Currently there are pending petitions before the High Court of Justice on the matter of revocation of residency of residents of eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem. For example a petition by Haled Abu-Arfa, a minister in the Hamas government and 25 other individuals including three members in the Hamas legislative counsel, against the Minister of Interior's decision that cancelled permanent residence permits given to the minister and the three members in the Hamas legislative counsel (H.C.J. 7803/06 Haled Abu-Arfa et. al. v. The Minister of Interior et.al). On 2008, due to an initiated examination of the Ministry of Interior the number of revocation of residency of residents of eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem was irregularly high: 4,677. In the following years the numbers decreased dramatically; in 2009 there were 720 revocations of residency of residents of eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem, on 2010 there were 191 and 2011 there were 98.