



Promoting critical debate and accountability of human rights NGOs in the Arab-Israeli conflict

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**Prepared for Submission to the UN Committee on the
Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**

NGO Monitor is pleased to present this submission to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (“CERD” or “Committee”) in advance of its review of Israel’s Combined 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Periodic Report (CERD/C/471/Add.2) on 22-23 February 2007. Our submission details the problems associated with reliance on politicized NGOs which claim to promote universal human rights, but instead, advance biased political agendas based on a highly distorted narrative. Several of these NGOs, including Adalah, ICAHD, Al-Mezan, Ittijah, Amnesty International, and Badil have presented statements to CERD. Rather than provide objective information regarding Israel’s compliance with the ICERD, some statements include highly inflammatory rhetoric and even anti-Semitic material such as comparing the State of Israel to Nazi Germany.

Given the impact of the Committee’s review, it is important that it be credible, accurate and impartial. NGO Monitor detailed analyses demonstrate reliance on these NGOs as sources of credible information regarding alleged discriminatory practices and other human rights issues in the context of conflicts involving terrorism and warfare is highly problematic. The obsessive condemnations of Israeli responses to Hezbollah attacks during the recent conflict, and the clear inaccuracies in the numerous reports issued by NGOs including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, further highlights this issue. Similarly, a recent study conducted by the Conflict Analysis Resource Center in Columbia reveals that the lack of reliability of NGO reporting is not strictly limited to the Israeli-Arab conflict. On this basis, we urge the Committee to carefully examine the credibility and biases in these reports.

NGO Monitor’s submission is organized as follows:

- I. NGO Monitor’s Mission Statement
- II. The “NGO Information Chain”
- III. NGO Methodologies
- IV. Examples of Politicized NGOs Submitting Statements to CERD
- V. Conclusion

We hope that this information will assist the Committee in its review and for its forthcoming Concluding Observations.

Respectfully Submitted,

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NGO MONITOR'S SUBMISSION TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION RELATING TO ISRAEL

I. NGO MONITOR MISSION STATEMENT

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) often provide valuable humanitarian assistance, including health services, education, and other basic requirements under many different and complex conditions. They can also play a beneficial role in developing civil society, democracy, environmental protection, and human rights. In many areas around the world in which governments fail or unable to fulfill their obligations, NGOs are able to step forward. And in midst of violent conflict, NGOs can promote dialogue, the principles of non-violence, tolerance, and reconciliation.

Unfortunately, however, NGO activity can become counterproductive – particularly in an environment of intense conflict or ethnic strife. In these cases, NGOs and their leaders actually can become part of the problem, and even serve to exacerbate conflict. This negative role is particularly evident in the Arab-Israeli conflict. NGOs have become extremely powerful and influential, particularly with respect to the realm of human rights and international law. Their reports, protests and lobbying activities have a dominant impact in shaping global attitudes and terms of reference. Until recently, however, these NGOs, have not themselves been subject to independent and critical analysis. NGO Monitor, therefore, was founded to promote accountability, and advance a vigorous discussion on NGO reports and activities.

Unlike democratically elected governments or publicly traded companies, no systematic framework exists for holding NGOs to rigorous standards of accountability for the statements and reports they produce. NGOs that claim to pursue "universal human rights" enjoy immunity from detailed scrutiny or criticism. The vast resources at their disposal allows for large staffs which produce an immense volume of reports, press releases and media interviews, turning them into primary sources for journalists, researchers, and government policy makers. The amplifying effect of these public pronouncements has often framed the terms of public discourse and strongly influences the crafting of policy. NGOs are in a dominant position, providing the supply to meet the demand for quick and focused information.

However, as NGO Monitor and others have documented, established human rights NGOs often produce reports and launch campaigns that stand in sharp contradiction to their own mission statements claiming to uphold universal human rights values. They regularly obscure or remove the context of terrorism, provide incomplete statistics and images, and disseminate gross distortions of the humanitarian and human rights dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The aim of NGO Monitor is to foster transparency and critical dialogue regarding NGO political agendas and the credibility of their reports.

II. "THE NGO INFORMATION CHAIN"

International NGOs, like many news agencies, tend to concentrate on conflict areas where information is plentiful and readily accessible. In this "information chain" it is important to distinguish between international and local NGOs. International NGOs include [Amnesty International](#),¹ [Oxfam](#)² and [Human Rights Watch](#).³ Although they have small on-the-ground teams, most of their information is garnered from other sources, mainly local NGOs. The information is then packaged on their websites, in press releases and disseminated through reports. Examples of local NGOs in the Palestinian Authority (PA) include [Miftah](#),⁴ [Palestinian Center for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#),⁵ [Physicians for Human Rights—Israel \(PHR-I\)](#),⁶ [B'tselem](#),⁷ [Al-Haq](#),⁸ [Adalah](#)⁹ and [LAW](#).¹⁰ The relationship between the two is a determining factor in how human rights issues are reported across the world.

Local NGOs have many advantages, especially in terms of acquiring primary information. However, their disadvantages include a tendency to advocate agendas that reflect only one side of the conflict. They run the risk of losing perspective. Mary Anderson terms this phenomenon, "mandate blinders,"¹¹ manifested when NGOs gloss over the competing interests of the Palestinian population to live normal lives and the moral right of Israel to defend itself.

International NGOs often fail to acknowledge the limitations of local NGOs and grant them inordinate influence, assuming that a "grassroots" perspective, *ipso facto* is accurate and reliable. The information may indeed be accurate, but it can also be misleading because (as often happens in conflict reporting) it reflects a narrow approach that ignores wider dimensions.

This situation is often reinforced by self-serving information networks, such as the [Palestinian NGO Network \(PNGO\)](#).¹² Local NGOs have an interest in international NGOs picking up on their material to increase their funding prospects. The larger and more established NGOs readily use this material because it is from "grassroots" sources. Even in cases where international NGOs send in their own teams, they usually lack the necessary language and access to work independently. Instead, they rely on local teams to show them around and to "find" the right people to "confirm" particular versions of events.

Another explanation for the close cooperation between local and international NGOs is fear that a more neutral political approach by international NGOs could result in alienation of Palestinian

¹ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#amnesty>

² See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#oxfam>

³ See http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/human_rights_watch_hrw

⁴ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#miftah>

⁵ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#pchr>

⁶ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#physicians>

⁷ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#Betsalem>

⁸ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#al-haq>

⁹ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#adalah>

¹⁰ See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#law>

¹¹ Mary B. Anderson, "Humanitarian NGOs in Conflict Intervention", in *Managing Global Chaos*, eds. Chester Crocker, Fen Hampson and Pamela Aall, (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996) at 343-4

¹² See <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#pngo>

organizations. Blacklisting would lead to a halt to the flow of information, with implications for visibility, power, and funding. There is a high degree of interdependence between local and international NGOs, which in the long term has a negative impact on the free flow of human rights reporting. Writing in the *New York Times Magazine*, David Rieff emphasized the absence of democratic legitimacy in the human rights movement. "Human rights workers sometimes talk of their movement as an emblem of grassroots democracy. Yet it is possible to view it as an undemocratic pressure group, accountable to no one but its own members and donors, that wields enormous power and influence."¹³ Mary Anderson points out how foreign aid workers can become unwittingly intertwined with the very forces that drive conflicts. Many of those engaged in aid work in the Palestinian territories include in their definition of aid blocking the path of tanks, using their bodies to prevent house demolitions and turning themselves into human shields. Foreign passports become a form of shield in the belief that no soldier will attack for fear of media and diplomatic repercussions. This has led to several tragic incidents.¹⁴

Many international NGOs are not aware of the full complexity of the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East and, as Rieff observed have become pawns of their own "human rights agendas."¹⁵ In many cases, therefore, NGOs become so committed to "predetermined conclusions" that fit their agendas that "[they] refuse[] to let the facts, as reported by objective sources, get in [their] way."¹⁶ Undemocratic NGOs are therefore contributing to a process promoting absolutist perspectives on events and norms of behavior with little accountability in their own activities or methodologies.

Prime facie, the interventions of human rights and humanitarian NGOs help establish common ground and facilitate dialogue. However, in contrast to their apolitical declarations, there is an increasing phenomenon of exploiting international development assistance to serve strongly political interests. This has generated negative outcomes and has even served to contribute to violence.

Using their enormous power and influence, NGOs are able to impose narrow perceptions and ideologies on the international diplomatic and journalistic communities, particularly with respect to their interpretations of international law. Instead of the conflict resolution process that humanitarian relief NGOs claim to be supplying, they often become parties to the disputes, and actually exacerbate tension and violence.

Governments fund such NGOs due to a mixture of lack of accountability and a "halo effect" that human rights NGOs have managed to erect around themselves that obscures the insidious phenomenon of the politicization of humanitarian relief. Local NGOs influence international partners, who in turn inform the attitudes of their donors, including government agencies.

¹³ Rieff, David "The Precarious Triumph of Human Rights", *New York Times Magazine*, August 8, 1999.

¹⁴ One example is the tragic death of Rachel Corrie, an American aid worker who placed herself in front of a bulldozer destroying the house of a known suicide bomber.

¹⁵ Rieff, *Bed for the Night*, Introduction.

¹⁶ Allan Dershowitz, "First Word: What is Human Rights Watch Watching?" *The Jerusalem Post*, August 24, 2006, available at <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?apage=1&cid=1154525938961&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>. See also Joshua Muravchik, "Human Rights Watch vs. Human Rights," *The Weekly Standard*, September 11, 2006, Volume 011, Issue 48, available at, <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/012/649efea0.asp>, for a history of how an NGO's agenda can interfere with its reporting honestly on human rights issues.

In summarizing a major conference on the role of NGOs held by the US Institute for Peace in December 1994, Pamela Aall notes that the international community has ceded a great deal of power and authority to NGOs in restoring civil society and building peace during and after conflict. However, she also warns that this power can be used to affect the course of the conflicts themselves. As a result, "their work in relief and development affects not only the social and economic well-being of their target groups, but also the larger political situation."¹⁷

III. NGO Methodologies – Distorted Reports and Counterproductive Recommendations

NGOs with highly politicized and strongly ideological agendas use many of the techniques employed by commercial profit-making firms and political lobbyists in order to promote their products. Through professionally-styled reports and publications, many groups claiming to promote universal human rights often distort the history and context of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

NGO "evidence" frequently comes from non-verifiable Palestinian "eyewitnesses" whose credibility is questionable, and from selected journalists who reflect parallel ideologies and political views. Facts and figures that are published in NGO reports, such as casualty numbers, are incomplete and often disputed. But despite this weak foundation, their claims are given credence by repetition within the NGO and international communities.

The actions of the Israeli government take place within the context of ongoing terror threats and attacks, primarily from Palestinian groups, as well as from Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations located in the surrounding states. However, NGOs regularly remove this context, focus disproportionately on Israeli responses, and characterize Israel's actions as aggressive, "indiscriminate," and without cause or provocation, even in cases of clear self-defense or security needs. This focus is consistent with the ideology of an aggressor/victim dynamic between Israel and the Palestinians, in which the Palestinians are defined as victims, even when they initiate attacks, such as suicide bombings that clearly violate any definition of human rights.

In many NGO activities, the context of Palestinian terror attacks and the legitimacy of the Israeli response are dramatically underrepresented in NGO discourse. The NGO network does not argue against or refute the Israeli perspective of self-defense, but simply erases this central element. The result is a highly political and ideological campaign that removes the circumstances, and thus, the rationale for the Israeli actions.

While the NGOs that are active in the Arab-Israeli conflict zone claim that their numerous reports, press statements, and other publications are based on research and investigation, the evidence reveals this not to be the case. For instance, many Palestinian and Israeli NGOs frequently cite figures for casualties and damage with no explanation of methodology or sources to substantiate their claims. Many statistical claims are placed in the context of politics, ignoring the full range of factors that may contribute to a particular situation.

¹⁷ Pamela Aall, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Peacemaking," in *Managing Global Chaos*, eds. Chester Crocker, Fen Hampson and Pamela Aall, (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996) at 436.

IV. Examples of Politicized NGOs Submitting Statements to CERD Regarding Israel

This section provides several examples of politicized NGOs who have provided statements to the Committee and analyzes the lack of credibility of their reporting. These examples are meant to be representative and are not exhaustive.

ADALAH

One NGO that plays a major role in the Arab-Israeli conflict is [Adalah](#),¹⁸ an Arab-run NGO based in Israel. Adalah defines itself as an "independent human rights organization...non-partisan legal center that exists to protect human rights in general, and the rights of the Arab minority (in Israel) in particular." Although in certain cases Adalah has made a positive contribution to the mandate it set itself in its mission statement, for example [winning a more equitable distribution of funds in the budget of the Ministry of Religious Affairs](#), its international advocacy work betrays a consistent focus on highly politicized issues rather than the legal aspects of human rights. In its advocacy campaigns, in contradiction to its mission statement, Adalah 1) provides very carefully selected and incomplete evidence to support alleged discriminatory practices and other human rights issues in Israel; and 2) Adalah deliberately obfuscates the distinction between Arab citizens of Israel and the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The following are examples of how these practices are reflected in Adalah's CERD submission:

- Adalah minimizes steps by Israel to make its society more inclusive and attributes ulterior motives to the government's actions, based on subjective and biased factors. For instance, in 2004, the Israeli Government examined ways to incorporate the Israeli Arab population¹⁹ into the national service program. Such policies would provide Israeli Arabs with the same benefits as those Israelis who serve in the IDF. Instead of acknowledging this positive step by the government, Adalah claims, without providing corroborative evidence, that "national/military service in Israel is not neutral, but relates to difference: it constitutes the Jewish Zionist identity, as distinct from the Arab minority's identity." Adalah omits from its statement, however, that the Druze communities of Israel as well as many Bedouins and members of other Arab groups participate in national/military service. Adalah further claims without basis that by participating in national service, Israeli Arabs would be forced "to submit to a rationale that further grounds discrimination and oppression." Adalah ignores the government recommendations that such service would take place in projects within the local Arab communities.²⁰
- Adalah attributes racist motives to Israeli policies that are necessitated by the security situation. Adalah argues that the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law is "a racist, discriminatory law that denies a person's basic human rights on the basis of his or her national belonging." Adalah fails to mention, however, that this law was not enacted for discriminatory purposes but rather, because of persons "who were granted legal status in Israel based on their marriage to an Israeli citizen, and took advantage of

¹⁸ <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/adalah>

¹⁹ The Druze and many Bedouins already serve in the IDF.

²⁰ Israeli Government Submission to CERD at 44.

their Israeli ID to pass checkpoints and carry into Israel either suicide bombers or explosives.” Twenty-three terrorist attacks resulted from an abuse of this law.²¹ Moreover, Adalah distorts international law by claiming that there is a “basic human right” to live in any country one wishes. Many countries do not grant automatic citizenship rights as a result of marriage. Adalah also fails to inform that this law is temporary and can be repealed should the security situation in Israel improve.

- Adalah’s characterizations of Israeli policies create more divisiveness in Israeli society, thereby erasing the context of the intense ethno-national conflict that has continued for decades, including the denial of the right of the Jewish nation to self-determination. Instead, Adalah’s commentary on the Citizenship and Entry Law reflects attempts to further inflame tensions between Israeli Jews and Arabs by eliminating the distinction between Israeli Arabs and Palestinians living in the Palestinian Authority as well as Arabs from other countries. Adalah complains that Israel does not have a right to expand the Law to include spouses who may be residents of Lebanon, Syria, Iran or Iraq – despite the clear security risk such people may pose. Instead, Adalah alleges that the law “[cuts off] Palestinian citizens of Israel from the Palestinian people and from the Arab nation to which they belong.”
- Adalah distorts and provides misleading information regarding Israeli government policies, particularly in regards to the Bedouin. Adalah alleges, again without sources to back up its claims, that the Israeli government has allocated “no money” for its proposed development of Bedouin towns in the Negev and “ignores the dire socio-economic situation” of their populations. It alleges Israel is purposely engaging in discrimination by “seeking to concentrate the Arab Bedouin on the smallest possible land area” and “gives no solutions to the existing harsh situation and housing problems, and does not allocate resources to or allow for spatial development for the benefit of the Arab community.” In fact, the Israeli government has allocated NIS 325 million to the Bedouin communities and provides vocational training and subsidized employment to many Bedouin.²² Adalah further attempts to create alienation between the Israeli Jewish and Arab populations by referring to the Negev as the “Naqab”.

Based on Adalah’s distortions of Israeli policies and its omission of the context and background regarding these policies, its information should not be considered credible by CERD.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

[Amnesty International](#)’s reporting contains numerous credibility deficiencies stemming from its political agenda and lack of independent research capabilities:

- A recent [study](#) conducted by the Conflict Analysis Resource Center ([CERAC](#))²³ examining Amnesty International’s activities in Columbia concluded that Amnesty

²¹ Israeli Government Submission to CERD at 67.

²² Israeli Government Submission at 89.

²³ <http://www.cerac.org.co/>

has “substantive problems in their handling of quantitative information.” The authors of the study found that “problems include failure to specify sources, unclear definitions, an erratic reporting template and a distorted portrayal of conflict dynamics The quantitative human rights and conflict information produced by these organizations for other countries must be viewed with scepticism along with cross-country and time series human rights data based on Amnesty International reports.”²⁴

- The [Capital Research Center](#) (CRC), based in Washington, D.C., and established in 1984 to study the advocacy activities of non-profit organizations, [issued a report in May](#) on Amnesty International (AI).²⁵ The study argued that under the leadership of Secretary General Irene Khan, AI has adopted "double standards on human rights, a leftist political agenda, an unrealistic view on armed conflict, and propaganda against America and Israel." The report included a statistical analysis of Amnesty's published material from the beginning of 2005 to May 2006. (The CRC approach is similar to the one developed and used by [NGO Monitor](#).) The results show that Israel is the subject of the greatest number of Amnesty publications per million people with fifty-six times more reports per million than North Korea and twenty-five times more than Egypt.

The same problems highlighted by the Columbian researchers and the Capital Research Center in their studies have been confirmed by NGO Monitor's own detailed research regarding Amnesty International's reporting on Israel. For example:

- During the 2006 Lebanon War, Amnesty falsely accused Israel of engaging in “indiscriminate” and “disproportionate” attacks against Lebanese civilians, claiming it found “no cases” of Hezbollah activity during their investigations. Amnesty's reports have been widely discredited by media accounts, the UN, and Israeli intelligence. NGO Monitor's analyses provide numerous examples [disproving](#) Amnesty's accusations.²⁶
- A recent [letter](#) sent by Khan to leaders of the EU, reflects Amnesty's one-sided approach. In the letter, [Khan blamed Israel for the economic crisis in the PA while ignoring Palestinian violence and corruption](#). Khan accused Israel of engaging in “deliberate and reckless” attacks on civilians. Rather than condemning the PA and calling for an immediate halt to Palestinian rocket attacks on Israeli civilians, Khan stated the “homemade rockets” are “creat[ing] a climate of fear, which is leading to a hardening of positions in favour of a harsh military response towards the Palestinians.” Khan called on leaders of the EU to “ensure that any peace process” includes the removal of settlements and dismantling the “fence/wall” as well as “ending closures” and “a fair solution to the refugee question.” Khan makes no call for an end to Palestinian violence, nor does she call on the Hamas-led PA to recognize Israel and abide by international agreements.

²⁴ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/data/images/File/evidencefromcolumbia_feb2007.pdf

²⁵ <http://www.capitalresearch.org/pubs/pdf/OT0506.pdf>

²⁶ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/amnesty_and_hrwc_claims_discredited_in_detailed_report

The recent studies conducted on Amnesty coupled with NGO Monitor's extensive documentation of Amnesty's political agenda shows that its reports are not credible.

JOINT NGO SUBMISSION

Many of the most politicized and polarizing NGOs operating in the Arab-Israeli conflict have contributed to The Joint NGO Submission to the Committee, including ICAHD, Badil, Al-Haq, and Al Mezan. The negative role played by these NGOs is reflected in their submission. Several of the specific NGO contributors will be discussed in more detail below. The following are examples of inflammatory rhetoric found in their joint statement:

- Like Adalah, this group of NGOs exacerbates tensions between Israeli Jews and Arabs by eliminating the distinction between Israeli Arabs and Palestinians living in the Palestinian Authority. These NGOs also attempt to erase the fact of continual Jewish presence in this area and the long-standing religious and historical ties of the Jewish people to the land of Israel by characterizing Palestinians as “indigenous” and Jews as “colonizers”.
- The statement deliberately obscures the long history of Arab rejectionism, warfare, and terrorism. Instead, the statement alleges that Israel engaged in “forced expulsions” of the “indigenous population”, as if the conflict and attacks against Israelis did not exist.
- Rather than provide constructive evidence to CERD, the Joint NGO submission includes highly inflammatory and even anti-Semitic language. A 1991 pseudo-academic article submitted by these NGOs compares Israel to Nazi Germany. Such rhetoric does not help the Committee evaluate Israel's compliance with CERD.

Given the use of highly charge rhetoric, anti-Israel demonization, and distortions of both history and international law, the Joint NGO submission should be accorded little weight by the Committee.

ICAHD

The Israel Committee Against House Demolitions ([ICAHD](#)) is an extremely politicized NGO whose work can be considered neither credible nor objective.²⁷ ICAHD states that its goal is “to oppose and resist Israeli demolition of Palestinian houses in the Occupied Territories” but it is an extremely politicized lobbying group whose activities extend far beyond issues of housing.

[ICHAD campaigns](#) for boycott divestment and sanctions against Israel and has consistently labeled Israel an "[apartheid](#)" state, thus demonstrating an overwhelming political bias. Similar highly politicized anti-israel statements have been documented in detail in NGO Monitor reports.

ICAHD's submission to CERD claims to provide “statistics” on the numbers of Palestinian homes demolished in the West Bank. No sources for these statistics are provided making independent verification of ICAHD's allegations impossible. Moreover, ICAHD's claims that Israeli planning and development policies are founded in racism are opinions based on ideology, and

²⁷ <http://www.eu-del.org.il/english/Award%20notification%20for%20website.doc>

of no validity beyond this. [Independent and carefully documented research](#) conducted by Israeli attorney, Justus Reid Weiner, found for instance, that accusations that Israel's demolition of illegal Palestinian structures were based on "discrimination" or "racism" were without basis. According to Weiner, from 1996 to 2001, Jerusalem municipal inspectors reported nearly 4,000 building violations in Arab neighborhoods. Many experts, however, put this number at only 30% of the actual number of violations. Weiner's research found that "only when no other options exist, the city issues a demolition order that requires no fewer than five signatures, from the local inspector up to and including the mayor. A demolition costs the city an average of 50,000 to 60,000 New Israeli Shekels (approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 U.S.) each." For the years 1997, 1998, and 1999, for example, the actual number of demolitions was 28, 31, and 36 respectively. These figures were confirmed by the Palestinian Authority and show that ICAHD, along with other NGOs, greatly exaggerate the scope of Israel's demolition policy.²⁸

ICAHD's extreme agenda as well as its dissemination of unverifiable statistics remove it from the realm of a credible NGO. The Committee should place little to no credence in its submission.

BADIL

[The BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights](#), established in Bethlehem in 1998, is one of the most active NGOs in promoting [extremist Palestinian political positions in the context of the conflict against Israel](#). Its declared goal is to "provide a resource pool of alternative, critical and progressive information and analysis on the question of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons." Its actions, in contrast, focus on the use of the suffering of refugees as a political basis for maintaining the conflict with Israel. Examples of BADIL's activities include:

- BADIL also campaigns against recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, openly declaring the goal of using the "right of return" to "alter the demographic balance in Israel so much that it would destroy Israel's Zionist, exclusionist character... "
- BADIL uses UN Resolutions selectively in order to promote its agenda. It claims that UN Resolution 194 states: "refugees wishing to return to their homes...should be permitted to do so." Quoting selectively, BADIL purposely excludes significant parts of the resolution which contradict its message. The resolution actually [states](#) "that refugees wishing to return to their homes *and live at peace* with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property...Instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, *resettlement* and economic and social rehabilitation of refugees and payment of compensation..." (emphasis added).

²⁸<http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=253&PID=0&IID=952>

- BADIL also publishes the "al-Majdal" magazine whose [September 2004 editorial](#) addresses the ICJ ruling on [Israel's security barrier](#), arguing that "Academic, consumer, cultural, and sports boycotts, divestment and a campaign for sanctions by states must all be considered." BADIL was also a signatory to an August 2002 [call to boycott Israel](#), including an endorsement of the NGO Program of Action conceived at the [2001 Durban conference](#). BADIL's statement emphasizes the Durban declaration's call for the "launch of an international anti-Israeli Apartheid movement as implemented against the South African Apartheid." As of January 2007, BADIL's webpage, press statements, and other activities continue to give prominent display to support for anti-Israel boycotts, divestment campaigns, and the attempt to label Israel as "an apartheid state".

As NGO Monitor research has shown with regards to Adalah and ICAHD, BADIL promotes a radical agenda which belies the accuracy of any claims it makes regarding supposed discriminatory practices in Israel.

OTHER NGOS

Other politicized NGOs that have submitted to CERD include [Mossawa](#),²⁹ [Ittijah](#),³⁰ and [Al Mezan](#).³¹ NGO Monitor's research has shown that the work of these NGOs also lacks credibility. For example:

- [Mossawa](#) claims to advocate for improved economic and social conditions for Israeli Arabs, but whose work is seen to actually deepen the rift between Israel's Arabs and Jews. This politicized NGO recently held a conference in which it called for the eradication of the Israeli flag and national anthem; the right of the Arab minority to have a veto over matters of national import; and the immediate implementation of the "Right of Return." A recent analysis in [Ha'aretz](#) characterized this activity as a sign that Mossawa intends to continue conflict within the State of Israel even after the establishment of a Palestinian state. Due to its one-sided agenda as well as its provocative political activities, this NGO cannot be considered as a credible source for accurately portraying the human rights situation in Israel.
- [Ittijah](#) claims it "strives to strengthen and empower the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel by promoting the development of Palestinian civil society." This NGO, however is an active supporter of the campaign to internationally isolate Israel and characterizes Israel as an "apartheid state". Ittijah was highly influential in shaping the outcome of the 2001 Durban Conference, "[where \[it\] gathered, facilitated and directed the vision and position of the Palestinian NGOs inside Israel on racism, particularly Israeli-state racism towards Palestinian citizens, and the apartheid...](#)" Ittijah's leading role at Durban and its current activities shows that it is not an objective source of information regarding alleged discriminatory practices in Israel.

²⁹ <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/mossawa>

³⁰ <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/ittijah>

³¹ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/al_mezan_center_for_human_rights

- [Al Mezan](#) claims to “promote, protect, and prevent violations of human rights in general.” This NGO, however, distorts international law, falsely labels Israel an “apartheid state” and accuses it of “war crimes”. Al-Mezan’s reporting frequently erases the context of Palestinian terror and corruption. Its website includes examples of incitement, such as statements that Israel is “[killing and abducting the Palestinian population](#)” or engaging in “ethnic cleansing”. it’s the website also contains numerous inflammatory images.

V. CONCLUSION

Given the impact of CERD’s review and Concluding Observations regarding Israel’s compliance with the Convention, it is important that its work is credible, accurate and impartial. These elements will be undermined by undue reliance on politicized NGOs that are in fact part of the conflict. Instead of documenting human rights abuses based on universal standards, these NGOs focus disproportionately on political attacks directed at the Israeli government and the IDF, and many do not refer to the context of Palestinian terror which provide the logic behind Israeli policies. Instead, the reactions to terror and ideological rejectionism are simply branded by these NGOs as “racist” or “discriminatory” without these organizations providing a complete analysis of all factors involved, or of universal standards. The uncritical acceptance and repetition of the claims and allegations of these NGOs by the Committee will greatly diminish the impact of CERD’s work and will harm the universal principles the international community sought to uphold when it adopted the ICERD.