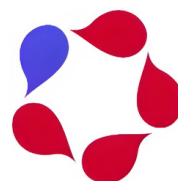


2024

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT Israel

Prepared By:



**Washington Center
For Human Rights**

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Executive Summry

In 2024, Israel faced significant human rights challenges, with severe violations primarily revolving around the ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This expansion, in violation of international law, led to the displacement of Palestinians from their homes and lands, exacerbating the situation. Palestinians were subjected to forced evictions, demolitions of their homes, and restrictions on movement, while settler violence against them continued with impunity. Additionally, institutional discrimination against Arab citizens of Israel, Ethiopian Israelis, women, and non-Orthodox Jews remained a critical concern, further highlighting systemic inequalities.

Despite these issues, the year saw limited progress in addressing the rights of marginalized communities. However, ongoing concerns persisted, particularly regarding the selective government outrage and transactional diplomacy that undermined the universality of human rights. The continued transfer of arms to Israel by some governments, despite the likelihood of their use in serious violations of international law, remained a contentious issue. Moreover, the defunding of civil society organizations and UNRWA by Western states appeared to be an attempt to silence human rights defenders and undermine the Palestinian refugee issue.

Recommendations for addressing these challenges include urging the Israeli government to cease settlement expansion and displacement of Palestinians, ensure accountability for settler violence, lift movement restrictions, and end institutional discrimination. International bodies are called upon to investigate the root causes of the situation, ensure accountability for human rights violations, and implement a two-way arms embargo on Israel. Civil society organizations are encouraged to continue documenting violations, supporting the Commission of Inquiry, and providing humanitarian aid to marginalized communities.

Methodology

The human rights report on Israel utilized a comprehensive methodology to gather data from a variety of sources:

Sources of Information

- Open-source material such as media reports, social media content, and satellite imagery .
- Submissions from States, individuals, groups, and organizations in response to the Commission's call for information .
- Geospatial analyses conducted by the United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT)
- Information requests sent to various organizations and entities .

Data Collection Methods

- Remote interviews with over 70 victims and witnesses, more than two-thirds of whom were women .
- In-person interviews with three children evacuated from Gaza, conducted with appropriate safeguards and consent .
- Consultations with representatives of women's rights organizations .
- Meetings with stakeholders to gather necessary information and data .
- Forensic analysis of verified digital content related to sexual and gender-based violence .

Limitations and Challenges

- Lack of direct access to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory due to restrictions imposed by the authorities .
- Reliance on remote interviews and consultations with stakeholders outside the region .
- Challenges in verifying the authenticity and reliability of open-source material, necessitating cross-referencing with reputable sources and advanced forensic examination .

The Commission applied a consistent methodology and standard of proof in line with OHCHR guidelines for investigating human rights violations and international crimes by international mechanisms without direct access to the locations where the crimes occurred . The collected data was carefully examined, assessed, and preserved to ensure its integrity, authenticity, and reliability .

Citations:

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Human Rights Overview

The human rights situation in Israel for 2024 is deeply intertwined with ongoing political, economic, and social contexts, particularly in light of recent conflicts and government policies. The landscape has been significantly affected by the escalation of violence, particularly following the October 2023 Hamas attack, which led to a severe military response from Israel and exacerbated existing humanitarian crises in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT).

Political Context

The political environment in Israel has been marked by the leadership of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose coalition government includes far-right elements that have influenced policies regarding Palestinians and civil rights. This coalition has faced criticism for its approach to judicial reforms, which many argue threaten the independence of the judiciary and could undermine democratic norms. The government passed a law in July 2023 limiting judicial oversight, which has sparked widespread protests and concerns about the erosion of checks and balances within the Israeli political system[4][5].

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains a central issue, with the International Court of Justice ruling in July 2024 that Israeli policies amount to violations of international racial discrimination conventions. This ruling aligns with findings from various human rights organizations that characterize Israeli actions as constituting apartheid against Palestinians[3][4].

Economic Context

Economically, Israel is a high-income country, yet the ongoing conflict and military actions have severely impacted the Palestinian economy. Restrictions on movement and access to resources have led to significant economic challenges in the OPT, with many Palestinians facing high unemployment rates and poverty. The blockade of Gaza and military operations have further deteriorated living conditions, leading to widespread food insecurity and health crises[2][5].

The Israeli government's withholding of tax revenues from Palestinian authorities has compounded these issues, resulting in critical shortages of medical supplies and healthcare services in the OPT. Reports indicate that nearly 93% of people in Gaza faced starvation by the end of 2023, exacerbated by the destruction of health facilities during military operations[2][5].

Social Context

Socially, the situation for various marginalized groups, including Palestinians and LGBTQ+ individuals, remains precarious. The Israeli government's policies have often incited discrimination, particularly against Palestinians and LGBTQ+ communities. In December 2023, the Israeli High Court ruled against discrimination in adoption for same-sex couples,

marking a rare positive development for LGBTQ+ rights within a broader context of social challenges[2].

The humanitarian situation has been dire, especially in Gaza, where the aftermath of military actions has left many without adequate shelter, clean water, or sanitation. The use of advanced surveillance technologies to restrict Palestinian movement has also raised concerns about privacy and civil liberties[2][5].

Significant Events

The October 2023 Hamas attack and the subsequent military response by Israel marked a significant turning point, leading to unprecedented civilian casualties and widespread destruction in Gaza. This conflict not only heightened tensions but also drew international condemnation regarding human rights violations committed by both sides[1][5]. The Israeli government's actions, including collective punishment measures and restrictions on movement, have been criticized for their disproportionate impact on Palestinian civilians.

In summary, the human rights situation in Israel for 2024 is characterized by a complex interplay of political extremism, economic hardship, and social discrimination, all exacerbated by ongoing conflict and military actions. The international community continues to grapple with these issues, seeking pathways to address the humanitarian crises and uphold human rights standards in the region.

Citations:

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[2]

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/>

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli%E2%80%93Palestinian_conflict

[4] <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44245>

[5] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/israel-and-palestine>

[6] <https://freedomhouse.org/country/israel/freedom-world/2024>

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<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/religion-and-israel-palestinian-conflict-cause-consequence-and-cure>

[8]

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/2/26/israels-war-on-gaza-live-man-made-disaster-as-israel-blocks-food-aid>

Civil and Political Rights

The civil and political rights situation in Israel during 2024 has been characterized by significant concerns, particularly in relation to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, arbitrary arrests, and reports of torture or ill-treatment. These issues have been exacerbated by ongoing conflicts and a political climate that increasingly prioritizes security over human rights, particularly in its treatment of Palestinians.

Freedom of Expression and Assembly

In 2024, Israel continued to impose restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly, especially targeting Palestinian citizens and activists. There have been numerous reports of individuals being arrested for their social media posts criticizing the government or its policies, particularly in East Jerusalem and among Palestinian communities within Israel. These arrests often occur without clear charges or due process, undermining the basic civil liberties of those affected .

Additionally, the Israeli government has intensified its crackdown on civil society organizations, labeling several as "terrorist" entities. This tactic has been used to delegitimize their work, stifle dissent, and curb public participation in civic activities. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has condemned these actions, noting that they have created a chilling effect on public discourse and have severely restricted freedom of assembly.

Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

The situation regarding arbitrary arrests and detention has deteriorated, particularly following the escalation of violence in late 2023. Israeli forces have conducted mass arrests in Palestinian communities, frequently without warrants or clear legal justification. Detainees have reported experiencing torture and ill-treatment, including physical abuse and psychological pressure aimed at forcing confessions .

The rise in arbitrary arrests has been further fueled by incitement from right-wing political figures, who have called for harsher measures against Palestinians and dissenters. This has fostered a climate of fear, with many individuals feeling unsafe to express their views or participate in protests due to the high risk of arrest and potential violence .

Instances of Torture and Ill-Treatment

Reports of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees in Israeli custody have been widespread in 2024. Human Rights Watch and other organizations have documented numerous cases where detainees were subjected to severe physical and psychological abuse, often in violation of both Israeli and international law. These practices appear to be part of a broader strategy to suppress Palestinian resistance and stifle political dissent .

In addition to reports of torture, there have been allegations of enforced disappearances and denial of medical care for detainees. Such practices have exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories, drawing widespread international condemnation, though accountability remains limited .

Government Responses and Impact on the Population

The Israeli government's response to these civil rights violations has often been framed as necessary for national security. This justification has been used to defend the increasing militarization of law enforcement and the suppression of protests, particularly those organized by Palestinians and their allies .

The impact on the population has been profound. Palestinians, in particular, live in a state of constant fear due to the threat of arbitrary arrest and violence. The suppression of civil society and public dissent has led to a significant reduction in civic engagement and has left many communities feeling disenfranchised and powerless. The ongoing conflict and the government's heavy-handed responses have also deepened divisions between different communities within Israel, further destabilizing the region .

In summary, the civil and political rights situation in Israel during 2024 has been marked by increasing repression, particularly against Palestinians. The combination of restrictive laws, arbitrary arrests, and reports of torture reflects a troubling decline in the protection of human rights within the country.

Citations:

[1]

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<https://www.diakonia.se/ihl/news/2023-hostilities-in-gaza-and-israel-factual-account-of-events/>

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<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/>

[4] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/israel-and-palestine>

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<https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/07/17/i-cant-erase-all-blood-my-mind/palestinian-armed-groups-october-7-assault-israel>

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<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/israel-must-end-mass-incommunicado-detention-and-torture-palestinians-gaza-enar>

[7] <https://freedomhouse.org/country/israel/freedom-world/2024>

[8]

<https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/israel-west-bank-and-gaza/>

Rights of Specific Groups

The human rights conditions for various groups in Israel during 2024 reflect a complex and often troubling landscape, particularly concerning women, children, LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic or religious minorities. Below is a detailed examination of the situation for these groups, highlighting rights violations, legal protections, and any progress made.

Women

In Israel, women enjoy legal protections under various laws, including the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, which aims to safeguard human rights and civil liberties. However, significant challenges remain, particularly for women from marginalized communities. Reports indicate ongoing issues such as domestic violence and discrimination in family law, where religious courts often govern marriage and divorce, leading to unequal treatment, especially for women in Jewish and Arab communities .

Additionally, women human rights defenders face unique challenges, including gender-based violence and harassment, particularly during protests. The UN Commission of Inquiry has highlighted that women activists experience distinct stigmatization and violence aimed at deterring their participation in civil society .

Children

Children's rights in Israel are generally protected under national law, with access to education and health services being prioritized. However, disparities exist, particularly for Palestinian children in the occupied territories. Reports indicate that Israeli military actions have resulted in the deaths of numerous Palestinian children, with 22 fatalities reported in just the first two months of 2024 due to military operations and confrontations . Furthermore, the conditions in Gaza have severely impacted children's well-being, with ongoing violence and blockade-related hardships contributing to a humanitarian crisis .

LGBTQ+ Individuals

Israel is recognized as one of the more progressive countries in the Middle East regarding LGBTQ+ rights. Same-sex relationships are legal, and the country allows same-sex couples to adopt children and serves openly LGBTQ+ individuals in the military. However, societal discrimination persists, particularly from more conservative sectors of society. Activists continue to call for broader legal recognition and protections against discrimination, particularly in areas such as housing and employment.

Ethnic and Religious Minorities

Arab citizens of Israel, making up about 20% of the population, face systemic discrimination and inequalities in various sectors, including education, employment, and housing. Reports from human rights organizations indicate that Arab communities often encounter barriers to

accessing resources and services compared to their Jewish counterparts. The Israeli government has been criticized for prioritizing Jewish citizens in resource allocation and land use.

In the occupied Palestinian territories, the situation is markedly worse. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion in July 2024, finding Israel responsible for apartheid against Palestinians, which has significant implications for human rights protections in the region . The ongoing violence and military operations have led to widespread violations, including extrajudicial killings and property destruction, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis facing Palestinian communities.

Case Studies and Examples

1. Extrajudicial Killings:

Reports of extrajudicial killings by Israeli forces have increased, with specific incidents documented in the West Bank where civilians, including children, have been killed during military operations. For instance, the shooting of Nizar Mahmoud Al-Hasaynah at a checkpoint exemplifies the lethal consequences of military policies in occupied areas.

2. Gender-Based Violence:

Women activists have reported heightened risks of violence and harassment during protests, with the UN highlighting the need for protective measures for these individuals .

3. Discrimination Against Arab Citizens:

The Arab community in Israel continues to experience institutional discrimination, with reports of inadequate access to public services and employment opportunities compared to Jewish citizens .

In summary, while there are legal frameworks in place aimed at protecting the rights of women, children, LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic minorities in Israel, significant gaps remain in practice, particularly for Palestinian communities. The ongoing conflict and political dynamics further complicate the human rights landscape, necessitating urgent attention from both local and international actors to address these violations and promote accountability.

Citations:

[1]

<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israels-crimes-and-violations-palestinians-rights-west-bank-january-and-february-2024>

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_rights_in_Israel

[3] <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/19/world-court-finds-israel-responsible-apartheid>

[4]

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/06/rights-civil-society-members-are-being-violated-all-entities-israel-and>

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

In 2024, the analysis of economic, social, and cultural rights in Israel reveals a complex landscape, particularly concerning the rights to health, education, and adequate housing. Despite advancements, significant disparities persist, especially between Jewish and Arab populations.

Right to Health

Access to healthcare in Israel remains a contentious issue, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict affecting Gaza. The right to health encompasses not only access to medical services but also the underlying determinants of health, such as nutrition and housing. Reports indicate that the healthcare system in Gaza has faced severe challenges due to military actions, leading to allegations of violations of international law. Pregnant women and children are particularly vulnerable, with many lacking adequate nutrition and healthcare, resulting in high risks of malnutrition and severe health consequences for future generations[5].

In Israel, the healthcare system is generally robust, providing universal coverage. However, disparities exist in the quality of care received by different communities. Arab citizens often report lower satisfaction levels and access to services compared to their Jewish counterparts, highlighting systemic inequalities that need addressing[2].

Right to Education

Educational opportunities in Israel have seen improvements over the years, with a notable decrease in dropout rates and an increase in matriculation candidates. However, disparities remain, particularly for Arab students, who often face systemic barriers in accessing quality education. The government has acknowledged these inequalities, yet progress has been slow. The percentage of Arab students completing higher education remains significantly lower than that of Jewish students, indicating a need for targeted interventions to promote equity in educational access and outcomes[1][2].

Right to Adequate Housing

Housing conditions in Israel reflect a significant challenge, particularly for low-income families and Arab communities. The government has made efforts to address housing shortages through various policies, but these often fall short of meeting the needs of all citizens. The Public Housing (Purchase Rights) Law has been criticized for potentially exacerbating the housing crisis by limiting the availability of public housing units[2][4].

The housing crisis is particularly acute in Arab communities, where residents often face discrimination in access to housing and urban development resources. Reports indicate that housing policies have not adequately addressed the needs of these communities, leading to overcrowding and inadequate living conditions[1][4].

Barriers and Improvements

While there have been improvements in the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights in Israel, significant barriers remain. The main challenges include:

Discrimination:

Systemic inequalities persist, particularly affecting Arab citizens in health, education, and housing.

Access to Services:

Geographic and socio-economic factors limit access to quality healthcare and education for marginalized communities.

Housing Policies:

Existing housing policies often do not adequately address the needs of low-income and Arab populations, leading to ongoing disparities.

Despite these challenges, there have been positive trends in the legal recognition of rights and increased awareness of social issues, suggesting a gradual shift towards more equitable practices. The Israeli courts have begun to play a more active role in addressing these rights, indicating a potential for future improvements in the socio-economic landscape[2][3].

Citations:

- [1] <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-179871/>
- [2] <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-180892/>
- [3] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/human-rights/economic-social-cultural-rights>
- [4] <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/9/4634>
- [5] <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/opinion-how-does-israel-target-the-right-to-health-in-gaza/3168786>
- [6] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/human-rights-and-health>
- [7] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17441692.2023.2171087>
- [8] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>

Refugees and Migrants

The situation of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers in Israel during 2024 remains precarious, characterized by inadequate living conditions, limited access to asylum procedures, and significant instances of exploitation and abuse.

Living Conditions and Access to Asylum Procedures

As of 2024, Israel hosts approximately 30,000 African asylum seekers, primarily from Eritrea and Sudan. Most of these individuals have not been granted formal asylum status, resulting in a precarious existence with minimal state support. This lack of legal recognition often leaves them vulnerable to deportation and severely restricts their ability to access formal employment and housing[1].

Living conditions for refugees and asylum seekers are generally poor. Many reside in overcrowded neighborhoods with inadequate access to essential services such as healthcare and education. The absence of legal status exacerbates their difficulties in securing stable housing and employment, pushing them into informal labor markets where they face significant exploitation and instability[1][5].

Exploitation and Abuse

Refugees and asylum seekers in Israel are particularly susceptible to labor exploitation. They frequently experience wage theft, unlawful dismissals, and workplace discrimination. Women, in particular, face additional challenges, including illegal termination during pregnancy[1].

The Deposit Law, enacted in 2017, compounded these issues by mandating employers to withhold a substantial portion of asylum seekers' salaries. This effectively reduced their earnings below the minimum wage. Although a recent court ruling has overturned this requirement, many aspects of the law continue to negatively impact the community[1].

Moreover, refugees and asylum seekers are often scapegoated in public discourse, leading to increased hostility and social exclusion. This environment of fear and discrimination further complicates their efforts to integrate into Israeli society[1][5].

International and Domestic Responses

Internationally, organizations such as the UNHCR and IOM have been vocal about the need for improved protections for refugees and asylum seekers in Israel. They emphasize the importance of adhering to international legal standards for treating these populations, including access to fair and efficient asylum procedures[4][7].

Domestically, advocacy groups like Kav LaOved work to address the rights of migrant workers and asylum seekers. They provide legal assistance, conduct awareness campaigns, and engage with governmental bodies to improve labor rights protections. Despite these

efforts, the political climate in Israel often prioritizes the concerns of local citizens over the rights of refugees, complicating advocacy efforts[1][6].

In summary, the situation for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers in Israel in 2024 is marked by significant challenges. Their living conditions are dire, access to legal protections is limited, and they face systemic exploitation. Both international and domestic responses underscore the urgent need for reforms to ensure their rights and dignity are upheld.

Citations:

- [1] <https://kavlaoved.org.il/en/areasofactivity-2/refugeesandasylum/>
- [2] https://mena.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl686/files/documents/2024-05/pub2023-047-l-world-migration-report-2024_1.pdf
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- [6] <https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/israel/>
- [7] <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/refugees-and-asylum-seekers>
- [8] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2388153?af=R>

Legal Framework and Accountability

The legal framework and accountability mechanisms for human rights in Israel have faced significant scrutiny in 2024. Recent legislative changes, judicial oversight, and issues of impunity highlight the complex dynamics affecting human rights in the region.

Legal Framework and Recent Legislation

In 2023, Israel's Knesset passed controversial laws impacting human rights. One significant change restricts the Supreme Court's ability to review the "reasonableness" of government decisions, a measure criticized for potentially undermining judicial independence and accountability[4]. Additionally, a new law permits the revocation of citizenship or residency for Palestinians involved in "terrorist acts" who receive compensation from the Palestinian Authority (PA), leading to their deportation[4]. These legislative shifts have raised concerns about their implications for Palestinian rights and judicial oversight.

Role of the Judiciary

The Israeli judiciary has historically played a pivotal role in upholding human rights. However, recent political tensions and legislative changes have tested its independence. The Supreme Court's capacity to review government decisions is currently under review, reflecting broader debates about its role in balancing national security with human rights protections[2]. The judiciary's ability to effectively address human rights concerns remains crucial, but it faces increased pressure from recent legislative changes[4].

Accountability Mechanisms and Impunity

Accountability for human rights violations remains a pressing issue. A UN report from February 2024 highlighted "entrenched impunity" for violations committed by all parties in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including unlawful killings, collective punishment, and destruction of civilian property[1]. The report emphasizes the need for independent investigations and robust accountability mechanisms, which are often lacking.

Examples of Human Rights Violations

Unlawful Killings and Military Operations:

The UN report details instances where Israeli military operations caused significant civilian casualties, raising concerns about adherence to international humanitarian law. For example, military strikes in Gaza's densely populated areas resulted in numerous civilian deaths, with inadequate evacuation efforts[1].

Lack of Accountability for Settler Violence:

There has been a notable increase in violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, with minimal legal repercussions for those responsible. This lack of accountability exacerbates regional tensions and contributes to a pervasive sense of impunity[4].

International Investigations:

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is investigating alleged war crimes related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including actions taken during recent military operations following the October 7 attacks by Hamas. This international scrutiny underscores the need for effective accountability measures[4].

Conclusion

The human rights landscape in Israel is shaped by significant legislative changes that challenge judicial independence and accountability. The judiciary's role remains critical, but it is under pressure from recent reforms. The ongoing issue of impunity for human rights violations highlights the necessity for robust accountability mechanisms both domestically and through international bodies. The effectiveness of these mechanisms will be essential in addressing human rights concerns in Israel and the occupied territories.

Citations:

- [1] [UN Report on Accountability and Justice for Violations](<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/02/un-report-calls-accountability-justice-violations-all-parties-opt-and-israel>)
- [2] [EU Human Rights and Democracy Report 2023](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/2023%20EU%20country%20updates%20on%20human%20rights%20and%20democracy_2.pdf)
- [4] [Human Rights Watch World Report 2024](<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/israel-and-palestine>)

International Relations and Human Rights

Israel's international relations concerning human rights in 2024 have been marked by substantial engagement with UN bodies and increasing international pressure, especially in light of the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

Engagement with UN Bodies

In March 2024, UN human rights experts intensified calls for global action against Israel, urging compliance with international law amid escalating military operations in Gaza. These operations have resulted in significant civilian casualties and a severe humanitarian crisis. The UN experts described these actions as potentially constituting war crimes and crimes against humanity, reflecting a dire humanitarian situation affecting thousands, including women and children[1].

In response to allegations of genocide in Gaza, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued provisional measures in January 2024. This significant legal move highlighted the need for further investigations into alleged human rights violations, emphasizing the global legal challenge faced by Israel[1].

International Pressure and Sanctions

The international community has increasingly advocated for sanctions against Israel. A notable conference in May 2024 saw strong calls from countries such as South Africa and members of the Arab League for immediate sanctions to stop Israeli military actions and protect Palestinian rights. The conference participants expressed concerns over the potential for a humanitarian disaster reminiscent of the Nakba of 1948[3][4].

Additionally, over 250 humanitarian and human rights organizations have urged UN member states to halt arms transfers to both Israel and Palestinian armed groups. They argue that such arms could be used to commit severe violations of international humanitarian law, reflecting a growing international consensus on the need to address these issues[5]. This advocacy indicates a significant shift in public opinion and political discourse regarding Israel's actions in Gaza.

Impact on Domestic Human Rights Situation

The international scrutiny has affected the domestic human rights landscape in Israel and the occupied territories. The Israeli government is under increasing pressure to justify its military operations and address reports of human rights abuses, including allegations of torture and unlawful detention. This scrutiny has led to heightened calls for investigations and accountability from both domestic and international observers[3][4].

Furthermore, the global push for Palestinian rights has influenced political discussions within Israel and among its allies. Some Western countries have begun to reconsider their arms sales and military support to Israel, reflecting a growing recognition of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the need for a reassessment of international support[2][5].

In summary, Israel's international relations concerning human rights in 2024 are characterized by intense global scrutiny and mounting pressure from UN bodies and civil society. The ongoing Gaza conflict has intensified demands for accountability and sanctions, which are increasingly shaping the domestic human rights situation in Israel and the occupied territories.

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Recommendations

Recommendations for Improving Human Rights in Israel

Based on the findings from 2024, the following recommendations are directed towards the Government of Israel, international bodies, and civil society organizations to address identified human rights violations and enhance the human rights situation:

To the Government of Israel:

1. Immediate Ceasefire and Humanitarian Access:

- End all attacks resulting in civilian casualties in Gaza and immediately lift the blockade. Facilitate the delivery of essential supplies and provide reparations for destroyed property.
- Ensure that displaced Palestinians are allowed to safely return to their homes and assist in Gaza's reconstruction in compliance with international law.

2. Compliance with International Standards:

Strictly adhere to international standards in military rules of engagement. Investigate and prosecute violations of international law, and publish detailed reports on these investigations. Cease practices involving forced public stripping, nudity, intimate body searches, and other forms of abuse. Hold perpetrators accountable and address the structural issues enabling such violations.

3. Humane Treatment of Detainees:

Treat all detained Palestinians humanely, ensuring their access to family contact, medical care, and regular monitoring by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

4. Respect for International Court Judgments:

Fully comply with International Court of Justice (ICJ) orders regarding the provision of basic services and humanitarian aid to Gaza. Ensure that military actions do not violate Palestinian rights.

5. Facilitate Independent Investigations:

Grant the Independent Commission of Inquiry full access to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and Israel for impartial investigations, especially in Gaza, in accordance with ICJ directives.

To the International Community:

1. Support for Civil Society Organizations:

Reverse decisions to suspend or restrict funding to Palestinian and Israeli civil society organizations focused on human rights. Ensure that counter-terrorism and security measures do not unduly impede civil society and peaceful protests.

2. Reinstate Funding to UNRWA:

Immediately reverse the suspension of funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) following allegations against a few personnel. Avoid collective punishment and politically motivated decisions affecting Palestinian welfare.

3. Protect Peaceful Protests and Rights Movements:

Facilitate and safeguard peaceful protests and movements advocating for human rights and international criminal accountability. Ensure that rights movements can operate without undue restrictions.

4. Corporate Responsibility:

Ensure that business enterprises cease activities in or related to Israeli settlements in the OPT. Withdraw from settlements and halt activities contributing to settlement expansion or exploitation of natural resources.

To Civil Society Organizations:

1. Adapt to Crisis Situations:

Transition rapidly from protest to disaster aid as necessary, adjusting strategies to meet the evolving needs during crises [4].

2. Strengthen Democratic Values:

Uphold and promote democratic values, equality, and human rights. Collaborate with the public to enhance democratic institutions, including constitutional and educational reforms.

3. Mobilize Citizens for Democracy:

Build a "serving elite" of citizens, including those with military and security backgrounds, dedicated to preserving democratic values and societal security.

4. Leverage Technology:

Utilize high-tech tools and skills to organize and amplify protest movements and aid efforts, enhancing the effectiveness of advocacy and support initiatives.

By following these recommendations, the Government of Israel, international bodies, and civil society organizations can take significant steps towards addressing human rights violations and improving the overall human rights situation. Collaboration among all stakeholders is essential for fostering a just and sustainable resolution.

Conclusion

The 2024 human rights report on Israel underscores the persistent and severe human rights violations affecting both Palestinians and Israelis, presenting a situation fraught with humanitarian crises and systemic injustices. The report reveals extensive breaches of international human rights and humanitarian laws by Israeli forces, particularly in Gaza. These violations include unlawful killings, forced displacement, and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, which have intensified the already dire humanitarian conditions in the region.

The impact of military operations on civilians, especially women and children, is particularly concerning. The report details numerous incidents where attacks on civilian targets have resulted in significant casualties, raising serious concerns about adherence to the principles of distinction and proportionality in military engagements. Additionally, the report addresses the violence committed by Palestinian armed groups, including hostage-taking and attacks on civilians, which are considered war crimes. The ongoing conflict has perpetuated a cycle of violence, leading to human rights abuses on both sides.

Emphasizing the necessity for independent investigations, the report urges both Israeli and Palestinian authorities to engage with international accountability mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. Holding perpetrators accountable is crucial to preventing future violations and ensuring justice.

In conclusion, the report highlights the urgent need for continued monitoring and international engagement to address the human rights situation in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. The entrenched patterns of violence and impunity necessitate a unified global effort to advocate for justice and uphold human rights standards. Sustained action is essential not only for protecting individuals affected by the conflict but also for working towards a long-term resolution that respects the rights of all parties involved. This report serves as a call to action for all stakeholders to prioritize human rights in their diplomatic and humanitarian efforts, ensuring that the voices of those impacted are heard and addressed effectively.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Statistical Data on Human Rights Issues in Israel and the OPT in 2024

Killings and Violations of the Right to Life

- 98 Palestinians killed in the West Bank, including 22 children and 2 women
- 5 Palestinian detainees and prisoners reported dead in Israeli prisons
- 1 Palestinian killed at a checkpoint near Bethlehem

Forced Displacement

Approximately 1.9 million Palestinians forcibly displaced within Gaza

Destruction of Property

Extensive destruction of homes and civilian objects in Gaza

Restrictions on Movement

Severe restrictions on the supply of basic services and humanitarian aid imposed on Gaza
Significant increase in disproportionate restrictions on movement in the West Bank

Appendix B: Glossary of Legal and Human Rights Terms

Apartheid:

An institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.

Collective Punishment:

The imposition of sanctions on a population as a whole for acts committed by individuals or small groups.

Crimes Against Humanity:

Certain acts, such as murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, torture, sexual violence, persecution, apartheid, and enforced disappearance, when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

Ethnic Cleansing:

Rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons of another ethnic or religious group.

Genocide:

Acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, such as killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, imposing measures intended to prevent births, and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Persecution:

The intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity.

War Crimes:

Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, such as willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer, unlawful confinement, compelling service in hostile forces, denying a fair trial, taking of hostages, extensive destruction and appropriation of property not justified by military necessity, attacking civilians and civilian objects, disproportionate attacks, attacking protected objects, attacking undefended places, using human shields, using prohibited weapons, mutilation, treacherous killing or wounding, denying quarter, pillaging, outrages upon personal dignity, apartheid, and deportation or transfer of the civilian population.