



**International Human Rights  
Instruments**

Distr.: General  
23 July 2021

Original: English

---

**Common core document forming part of the  
reports of States parties**

**Israel<sup>\*</sup> <sup>\*\*</sup>**

[Date received: 15 February 2021]

---

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

\*\* The annex to the present document may be accessed on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



## General information about the State of Israel

### I. Demographic, Economic, Social and Cultural characteristics

#### A. Geography

1. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 6.

#### B. Demographics

2. Israel is home to a diverse population from many ethnic, religious, cultural and social backgrounds. April 2020 statistics show that Israel has a population of 9.19 Million people, of which over 6.806 Million are Jews (74% of the total population), and 1.930 Million are Arabs (mostly Muslims, as well as Christians, Druze and Circassians who comprise about 21% of the total population). The number of Non-Arab Christians, persons without religious affiliation and persons of other religions stands at 454,000 persons (5% of the total population). For figures regarding the growth of population groups in Israel by religion, (Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze), between the years 2014–2019, please see Table No. 1 in Israel's Annex to this Report (Hereinafter: "the Annex").

3. In 2019, 91.4% of the population of Israel resided in urban areas and 8.5% in rural areas. For data regarding population density in Israel by district, please see Table No. 3 in the Annex to this Report.

4. The total number of Jewish immigrants to Israel ("Olim"), since 1989, is 1,457,483, of which approximately 1,114,552 are from the Former Soviet Union, 160,400 are from the Russian Federation and 75,592 are from Ethiopia. For additional information regarding sources of population growth between the years 2009–2019, please see Table No. 4 in the Annex to this Report.

5. In December 2018, there were approximately 4.407.3 Million males, and 4.475.5 Million females. In 2018, the total fertility rate was 3.09 and life expectancy for Israeli males was 80.9 years and 84.8 years for Israeli females (compared to 79.9 and 83.6 respectively in 2012). In the same year, 28.2% of the population was aged 15 or younger, while 11.6% of the population was aged 65 or older. For details regarding age compilation by religion, please see Table No. 2 in the Annex to this Report.

6. The crude birth rate in 2019 was 20.1 per thousand people, and the infant mortality rate was 3.0 per thousand. Out of 2,587,100 households, 8.8% (nearly 240,000) are single-parent households. Of the single-parent households, 161,600 are with children up to the age of 24, in addition 86.1% (158,600) of single-parent households with children up to the age of 24 are headed by women. The average size of the Israeli family as of 2019 was 3.8 persons (3.63 for Jewish families, 4.72 for Arab families) (not including one-person households).

7. As of 2018 Israel had a literacy rate of about 97.8% (Men – 98.6%, Women – 97.1%).

#### C. Culture and Religion

8. Israel is a rich mix of western and contemporary culture, together with Middle-Eastern and orthodox traditions. At its core, Israeli society is based on the Jewish ethos, traditions and culture in addition to being greatly influenced by other religions and cultural minorities.

9. As of April 2020, 45% of the world's Jewry resided in Israel, and was also home to followers of many other religions, including Muslims, Christians, Druze and Bahai, among others. As enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence (1948), Israel guarantees freedom of religion and conscience for all. Each religious community is free, by law and in practice, to exercise its faith and to observe its religious holidays and weekly day of rest.

10. Following the establishment of the State of Israel, the Knesset maintained the three (3) underlying principles of the status quo: religious law in matters of personal status, communal jurisdiction and preferential treatment of foreign nationals. Three (3) additional religious communities have been recognized since 1948 – the Druze (in 1957), the Evangelical Episcopal Church (in 1970) and the Baha'i faith (in 1971). Several other religious communities are not officially recognized – Anglicans, the Church of Scotland, Lutherans, Unitarians, Baptists, Quakers and others – and thus no local religious tribunal has jurisdiction over their members in matters of personal status. This lack of official recognition does not affect the ability of these communities to practice their religion freely or to maintain communal institutions.

#### **D. Languages**

11. On July 19, 2018, the Knesset legislated the Basic Law: Israel – National State of the Jewish People 5778-2018 (hereinafter: the “Basic Law”) by an absolute majority of 62 votes. According to this Basic Law, the official language of the State of Israel is Hebrew, as the historic language of the Jewish people and in accordance with its modern revival. Arabic is granted a special status and its use in state institutions shall be set in law, and the special status previously given to Arabic shall be maintained. This includes Arabic-speaking public schools, Israel’s television and radio stations broadcast in Hebrew, Arabic and, to a lesser extent, English, Russian and Amharic. Hebrew, Arabic and English are also used side by side on intercity and local road signs. As formally declared by the Attorney General (AG), this Basic Law does not derogate in any manner from human rights protected under other basic laws of Israel.

12. The Israeli Government continues to translate the content of its Ministries’ internet sites into Arabic; a well-developed and ongoing project. Both the main and individual Ministries websites contain a wide range of information, from assistance with government contracts and tax payments, to various services including driving licenses renewal, job vacancies and a guide to lodging complaints relating to violation of individual rights. The key idea behind this initiative is to ensure that Israel’s Arab citizens that are not fluent in Hebrew, have equal and easy access to governmental services and information online, in their mother tongue.

13. In regard to the Arabic Language Academy – In recent years, the Academy has conducted many important activities focused on the advancement of teaching the Arabic language, including holding professional seminars, providing scholarships for students who excel at Arabic language studies, and training Arab and Jewish pupils’ delegations and sending them to Spain, in order to study the Arab culture in Andalucía and its effects on both Arab and Jewish Cultures.

#### **E. Social Economic Indicators**

14. Israel’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018 was 1,330.6 Billion New Israeli Shekels (NIS) (approximately 369.6 Billion USD). The GDP per capita was 149,828 NIS (approximately 42,800 USD). The gross external debt was 93.8 Billion USD.

15. At September 2020, the NIS-USD exchange rate was 3.4175 NIS per every one (1) USD (an increase from the end of 1990, when it stood at 2.048 NIS per every 1 USD). Between 2015 and 2020 (hereinafter: “the update period”), the NIS was strongest in 2015, when the annual average of the NIS-USD exchange rate was 3.8869. The rate of inflation for the year 2019 was around 0.6%.

16. The unemployment rate for 2019 was 3.8% (approximately), 3.8% among men and 3.9% among women.

17. In 2018 the proportion of households below the national poverty line was 18%. The number of poor families in 2018 was 469,400, encompassing 1,810,500 people, of which 841,700 were children.

18. For details regarding the ‘Gini’ Coefficient for the years 2014–2018 and household consumption expenditures on food, housing, health and education between 2014 and 2018, please see Tables No. 8 and 9 in the Annex to this Report.

19. In 2019, Israel’s major exports were the manufacturing of chemicals and chemical products, manufacturing of computers, electronic and optical products and processing of diamonds (comprising 20.1%, 19.5% and 16.5% respectively of the country’s total annual export). In 2018, Israel’s main imports were production inputs (61.8% of the country’s total annual import) (thereof: 13.7% diamonds (gross)) and consumer goods (19.2% of the country’s total annual import). Israel exports most of its products to the European Union and the USA, and imports most of its products from the European Union and other European countries.

20. Israel remains an active member in the OECD and continues to participate in many of its committees and working groups.

21. For statistics related to civilian labor force characteristics (population aged 15 and over) (2015–2019); civilian labor force characteristics (population aged 15 and over) (2019); employed persons by industry and gender (2019) and employed persons by last occupation and gender (2019), please see Tables No. 10 to 13 in the Annex to this Report.

## **F. Science and Technology**

22. Israel is at the forefront of high-tech, entrepreneurship, innovation, academic research and supportive government programs. There are numerous governmental programs and schemes which specifically aim to support the application of research conducted at universities and research institutes, to technology in the industry. Israel places a strong emphasis on the establishment of centers of excellence in fields such as biotechnology and nanotechnology, as well as various pure sciences. Compared to other countries, Israel has one of the highest rates of GDP investment in R&D (at 4.9% of the country’s GDP). For relevant indicators on this matter please see the Annex to this Report (page 9).

## **G. Health Care**

23. Israel enjoys a high standard of health services and medical resources, modern hospital facilities, and a high ratio of physicians and specialists to the general population. The country’s low infant mortality rate (3.1 per 1,000 live births, compared to 4.3 in 2006) and long life expectancy (84.8 years for women and 80.9 for men) can be strongly attributed to these factors. Every Israeli citizen is provided with national health insurance (as provided for by law) which includes access to various health care services required from infancy to old age. Israel’s national expenditure on health compares favorably with that of other developed countries.

24. For statistics relating to hospitalized pregnancy terminations (provided by law) (2010–2018); highest major causes of death; newly reported cases of HIV and AIDS by gender (2000–2019), and notified AIDS patients according to method of transmission (1981–2019) – please see Tables No. 14 to 17 in the Annex to this Report.

## **H. Education**

25. Education is a fundamental value in Israeli society and is recognized as an indisputable basis for ensuring the success of future generations. The educational system aims to prepare children to become responsible members of a democratic, pluralistic society in which people from different ethnic, religious, cultural and political backgrounds coexist. It is based on Jewish values and the principles of liberty and tolerance. Additionally, the education system in Israel seeks to impart a high level of general knowledge, with an emphasis on scientific and technological skills considered essential for the country’s continued development.

26. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is involved in an ongoing process of bringing educational standards in line with modern pedagogic practices such as mandating gender equality, broadening humanistic curricula and promoting scientific and technological studies, along with upgrading teacher status. A key focus of the Ministry's educational policy is to provide equal educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of socio-economic or cultural background, and to increase the number of pupils passing matriculation examinations, simultaneously whilst maintaining a high level of education.

27. For information regarding numbers of pupils and students in different levels of education; pupil-teacher ratio according to education level, national pupil numbers (grades 7–12) (including drop-out rates) and students in universities, academic colleges and academic institutions – please see Tables No. 18 to 21 in the Annex to this Report.

## **I. Indicators on Crime and the Administration of Justice**

28. Israel has strong law enforcement agencies, all well aware of the importance of human rights issues and the need to strike a balance between maintaining peace and order and upholding human rights.

29. On April 25, 2017, the Judicial Appointments Committee of the Sharia Courts appointed the first woman to serve as a judge – Qadi, in a Muslim Religious Court.

30. On September 28, 2016, the Minister of Justice announced the appointment of 26 additional judges among them, for the first time, two (2) women of Ethiopian descent, one currently resides in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa and the Central Magistrate Court and the other resides in the Transportation Court in the Haifa District.

31. For information concerning judges, police personnel and prison service personnel (2015–2019), inmates within Israeli Prisons Service (IPS) facilities (by type of offence) (2014–2020), comparison of male and female prison population (2016–2018), prison guards by district and number of facilities in each district (2018), court cases activity (2018), national expenditure for maintaining public order (2015–2018), and on legal aid requests and eligibility (2016–2018) – please see Tables No. 22 to 30 in the Annex to this Report.

## **II. Constitutional, Political and Legal Structure**

### **A. Events Preceding the Establishment of the State of Israel, and its Recent History**

32. Please see Israel's Initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008),<sup>1</sup> pages 25–29.

### **B. Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State**

33. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 30.

### **C. Indicators on the Political System and Structure of the Government**

34. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 31. For information regarding the number of recognized political parties at the national level and distribution of legislative seats by party in the 23rd Knesset (2020), please see Table No. 5 in the Annex to this Report. In addition, for general facts and background regarding the elections to the 23rd Knesset and the number and percentage of women in the Israeli Knesset, please see Tables No. 6 and 7 in the Annex to this Report.

<sup>1</sup> See: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/457/27/PDF/G0845727.pdf?OpenElement>.

**The Knesset (Parliament)**

35. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 31.
36. Note, however, that a party running for parliament must now pass a 3.25% qualifying threshold in accordance with Amendment No. 62 of 2014 to the Elections Law [Consolidated Version] 5729-1969. The explanatory notes further state that such a rate for this threshold is common in other countries as well, and that several parties may run in a unified list – but still remain separate parties in the Knesset – provided that an advanced notice is provided to the Knesset Chairperson.
37. On December 9, 2014, the Knesset approved Election Law (Legislative Amendments) 5775-2014, which, inter alia, amended the Knesset Election Law [Consolidated Version] 5729-1969. Among other things, the amending law revised Section 76(C) of the Knesset Election Law, clarifying that a blank note marked by a handwritten letter representing a list or marked by such a handwritten letter and the list's label, in Hebrew, Arabic or both, is sufficient to be regarded as a legal note. Prior to this amendment, the Knesset Election Law was silent in regard to the languages in which such a vote may be cast.

**The Government**

38. Following the general elections, the President must consult all Parties chairpersons and then choose one of the Knesset Members to form the Government. This Knesset Member who will serve as the Prime Minister forms the Government by appointing Ministers to head the various Ministries. The Government is then presented to the Knesset together with its basic principles in order to receive its approval. The Ministers may be removed from office by the Prime Minister.
39. The Government has a joint responsibility towards the Knesset, to ensure that all Government members stand united behind the Government's resolutions and actions.
40. On May 7, 2020, the Basic Law: The Government was amended (Amendment No. 8). This amendment enables the formation of a government that is characterized by its definition of division into two (2) equal political blocs, and by a statutory rotation of the prime minister that will take place at time that is pre-determined by law, between the acting and the alternate prime ministers. According to this new model, the alternate prime minister will have a special statutory status not only with regard to the very rotation of the prime minister's position. Among other things, the alternate prime minister will be sworn in before the Knesset plenary and will hold the official title of "alternate prime minister", he will influence the appointment or dismissal of government ministers associated with his political party in the Government and will be the acting prime minister's replacement. The acting Prime Minister will not be authorized to remove the alternate Prime Minister from office. The Basic Law further stipulates that even in the composition of the ministerial committees, a parity division will be guaranteed according to the affiliation of the two political blocs that make up the Government. It should be clarified that the authorities of an exchange government are no different from those of an ordinary government.
41. Currently, the Israeli Government is constituted by the following Ministries: the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy and Industry, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Aliyah and Integration Absorption, Ministry of Construction and Housing, Ministry of Transportation and Road Safety, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Higher Education and Water Resources, Ministry of Religious Services, Ministry of Intelligence, Ministry for Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage, Ministry of Strategic Affairs, Ministry for Community Empowerment and Advancement, Ministry for Social Equality, Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Settlement, and the Ministry of Cyber and National Digital Matters.

42. Please note that on December 22, 2020, the 23rd Knesset failed to agree on the budget for the year 2020 and thus was automatically dissolved. The Election for the 24th Knesset are scheduled for March 21, 2021.

#### **The Judiciary**

43. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 32.

44. Note that currently there are 29 Magistrates Courts situated throughout the country, the most northern in the town of Mas'ade, down to Eilat in the south.

#### **The Attorney General**

45. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 34.

#### *The Presidency*

46. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 34.

#### **The State Comptroller**

47. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 34.

#### **Inspector for Complaints against ISA Interrogators**

48. Please see Israel's update to the Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015), page 9.

49. For several updates concerning the Inspector, please see the Annex to this report (page 15).

## **General Framework for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights**

### **III. Acceptance of International Human Rights Norms**

#### **A. Integration of Human Rights Instruments into the National Legal System**

50. As part of its commitment to human rights values and the rule of law, Israel ratified in 1991, five (5) core UN human rights treaties (these treaties include: The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (and two of its protocols) and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). This joined its earlier ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1969 (CERD). In 2012, Israel ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007 (CRPD). Israel has submitted initial reports in accordance with its obligation under all these seven (7) core Human Rights Conventions and continues to provide the relevant periodic reports (such as this Core Document).

51. During the update period, Israel has also ratified the following additional treaties and protocols:

- On March 21, 2016, Israel joined the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Israel's accession to this Treaty expresses the importance that Israel attributes to the rights of persons with disabilities and the efforts it invests in promoting their rights;
- On October 11, 2018, Israel ratified the 2014 Protocol to the ILO Forced Labor Convention of 1930. This ratification is a part of Israel's continuous commitment to

the international efforts to combat and eradicate all forms of modern slavery, including forced labor. The Protocol entered into force for Israel on October 11, 2019.

## **B. Reservation and Declarations**

52. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008, page 37 and HRI/CORE/ISR/2015, Page 13) for previously noted reservations and declarations to relevant conventions.

## **C. Derogations, Restrictions or Limitations**

53. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008 (page 40 and HRI/CORE/ISR/2015 (page 13)) for previously noted derogations, restrictions or limitations to relevant conventions.

## **D. Incorporation of International Treaties into its Domestic Law**

54. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 41.

# **IV. Legal Framework for the Protection of Human Rights at the National Level**

## **A. Legal Basis for the Protection of Human Rights**

55. The protection of human rights forms an essential basis of Israeli society. This has been so since the State's inception, and is evidenced through various legal instruments including the Declaration of Independence, Israel's Basic Laws, various other key legislation ('ordinary laws'), and Supreme Court rulings.

### **The Declaration of Independence**

56. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 42.

### **Basic Laws**

57. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 42.

58. Please also see the update regarding Basic Law: The Government and Basic Law: Israel – National State of the Jewish People 5778-2018, above.

### **Ordinary Laws**

59. A substantial source for the protection of human rights can be found in the State's ordinary laws. In addition to the laws that were detailed in Israel's initial Core Document (please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008, (page 44)) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015), the following paragraphs describe several new laws and notable amendments to existing laws as well as the introduction of new laws, all which aim to further protect human rights in Israel.

60. In January 2019, The Knesset approved Amendment No. 137 the Penal Law 5737-1977. This amendment set a motive of racism or hostility toward a public as an aggravated circumstance in a murder offence. In the explanatory notes of this amendment, the Knesset noted that murder that is committed out of racism or hostility toward a public justifies severe treatment in the form of mandatory life imprisonment.

61. On January 10, 2019, the Knesset legislated the Prohibition of Consumption of Prostitution Services Law (Temporary Provision) 5779-2018, which prohibits the consumption of sexual services. The Law was legislated as part of the ongoing efforts of the State to reduce prostitution and provide assistance and rehabilitation to persons in



prostitution. According to the Law, the offense of consumption of prostitution services, which includes the presence in a location which is used for prostitution, is an administrative offense that can be fined for 2,000 NIS (540 USD) for first time offenders and double the sum for repeat offenders, however under certain circumstances criminal charges may also be brought against the offender. The Law entered into force on July 10, 2020, for a period of five (5) years. Its extension, that requires further legislation, will be determined in accordance with research on its effects.

62. In October 2018, the Knesset enacted Amendment No. 22 to the Legal Aid Law (5732-1972). According to this amendment, the Legal Aid Administration (LAA) at the MoJ, will provide free legal assistance to any person who files a civil suit according to the Prohibition of Discrimination in Products, Services and in Entry into Places of Entertainment and Public Places Law 5761-2000, and who may not afford to pay for such services, without means or merit testing. This Amendment is, inter alia, the outcome of the implementation of the 2016 recommendations of the Ministry of Justice' Director General's inter-ministerial team charged with forming an action plan to deal with racism against persons of Ethiopian origin. The inclusion of the Prohibition of Discrimination Law to the Addendum of the Legal Aid law is important to the public interest and the implementation of rights by various population in the Israeli society. This Amendment is a provisional order for a period of three (3) years.

63. In March 2018, the Knesset enacted the Blocking of Telephone Numbers for the Prevention of Crimes Law 5768-2018, which authorizes a police officer to block a publicized telephone number, if he/she has reasonable grounds to believe that this phone number is used for the commission of crime, including by the internet of other technological applications. This further enables the blocking of telephone numbers publishing prostitution services, including that of a minor and drugs and dangerous substances offences.

64. In July 2017, the Knesset legislated the Authorities for Prevention of Internet Use for the Commission of Offenses Law 5777-2017, which authorizes courts to issue an order for blocking access to a website or for its removal from the internet. Such an order will be issued if it is crucial for the prevention of an ongoing offense set by the Law, such as offences relating to prostitution, child pornography, gambling and drugs and dangerous substances. This law enables courts to issue three (3) kinds of orders: order for restricting the access to the relevant website, order for restricting the possibility of locating the relevant website or an order for the removal of a website from the internet – provided that the relevant site is stored on a server in Israel or is under the control of a person present in Israel. The aim of the Law is to provide law enforcement authorities with additional tools to combat such offences in the virtual world, as part of the overall ongoing efforts on the matter.

65. The Prohibition of Discrimination in Products, Services and Entry into Places of Entertainment and Public Places Law 5761-2000, was amended twice in 2017 (Amendments No. 4 and 5) in order to add “place of residence” and “wearing uniforms of security and rescue forces or their symbols” to reasons by which discrimination is prohibited. The Law is presumed to be violated, where it has been proven that a person whose business is providing products or public service, or operating a public place, delays the provision of a public service or product in the place of business, or the entrance to a public place – on the basis of race, religion or religious affiliation, nationality, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, views, political affiliation, age, personal status, parenthood, place of residence or wearing uniforms of security and rescue forces or their symbols – while providing it without delay, in similar circumstances, to persons not related to that group.

66. Similarly, there are also several laws which have been specifically created to protect certain minority and groups in vulnerable situations, who have historically suffered from discrimination.

67. Amendment No. 19 to the Civil Service (Appointments) Law (December 2016), added the ultra-Orthodox population and the population of new immigrants (of all origins) to the population entitled to adequate representation within the Civil Service.

68. On June 15, 2016, as part of Israel's ongoing battle against terrorism, the Government enacted the Counter Terrorism Law 5776-2016. This detailed and carefully-designed new law is part of an effort to provide law enforcement authorities with more effective tools to combat modern terrorist threats while incorporating additional checks and balances necessary

to safeguard against unreasonable violations of individual human rights. The Law provides, among other things, updated definitions of “terrorist organization”, “terrorist act” and “membership in a terrorist organization”, detailed regulations for the process of designating terrorist organizations, and enhanced enforcement tools, both criminal and financial. The Law does not create discrimination on the grounds of race, color, descent or national or ethnic origin and does not subject individuals to racial or ethnic profiling or stereotyping.

69. For information on additional laws that incorporates and or refer to international human rights conventions, please see Israel’s 2014 update to its Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015), page 20).

### **Supreme Court Rulings**

70. The decisions of the Israeli Supreme Court (particularly sitting in its role as the High Court of Justice) are also an important mechanism for the protection of human rights. Their declaratory pronouncements of protections of such rights through interpretation of certain laws, ensures that the highest court in the country has for years provided a valuable safeguard for protection of such important rights.

71. The Supreme Court has ruled that every statutory norm should be interpreted according to the Basic Laws (C.A. 537/95 Ganimat v. The State of Israel [1995] P.D. 49(4), 589). In addition, many rights recognized by the Court in the past, have later become formal statutory norms, such as the freedom of occupation – the natural right of all nationals or residents to engage in any occupation, profession or trade which is not prohibited by law – which was recognized by the Court back in 1949 (H.C.J. 1/49 Bejerano v. The Minister of Police [1949] P.D. 2(1), 80). This right was later officially enacted in Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation (1994).

72. Please see Israel’s initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), and the 2014 update to the initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015), for examples of Supreme Court rulings protecting various human rights and related issues. For several recent, notable Supreme Court decisions in this regard please see the Annex to this Report (page 15).

### **Economic and Social Rights**

73. In regards to fundamental economic and social rights protected in Israel, please see Israel’s initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008, (page 48)) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015 (page 25)). In addition, below are several new developments within recent years, both in the legislative and judicial spheres, concerning the upholding of economic and social rights.

74. Amendment No. 209 to the National Insurance Law 1995-5755 – This Amendment was approved by the Knesset on December 31, 2018. According to this amendment, the payment for home-care services for persons with disabilities is transferred directly to the care provider or to the person him/herself, if he/she is living with another family member who is taking care of him/her. In cases in which no nursing services are available in the patient’s area of residence, the payment will be transferred directly to the patient, regardless if a family member lives with him/her. The amendment also shortened the payment waiting period from 60 to 30 days.

75. In December 2018, the Knesset legislated the Installation of Cameras for the Protection of Toddlers in Day Care Centers Law 5768-2018. The Law aims to protect the safety of toddlers who are placed in a day care by installing cameras, while preserving, to the extent possible, the dignity and privacy of the toddlers, the employees and any other persons in these facilities. The Law provides that the footage will be kept by the manager of the day care for a period of time that will not exceed 30 days, while taking reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access to the footage. Furthermore, viewing the footage, transferring or using it, is allowed only in accordance with a court order.

76. On October 29, 2018, Amendment 33 to the Compensation for Termination of Employment Law 1963-5723 entered into force. This amendment recognizes the negative effect that may be caused to vulnerable population of workers employed through manpower companies (MPC), when the contract between the client and the MPC terminates, and a new

MPC is hired to provide the same services to that client. The aim of the amendment is to enable the worker to continue to provide the same services to the client by working for the new MPC, without risking the loss of severance pay for his/her full term of employment at the former MPC and seniority rights. Under the new amendment, this will also apply to situations in which the former MPC has offered the employee a position elsewhere, but the employee chose to continue to work for the same client as part of the contract with the new MPC.

77. As of August 2018, (following Amendment No. 20 to the Legal Aid Law 5732-1972), the National Child Representation Unit also provides legal aid and assistance to children and youth victims of severe sexual abuse, both throughout the criminal law proceedings against the perpetrator, as well as during any legal or administrative proceeding connected to the penal proceedings (such as protection orders, civil tort suits, etc.).

78. On July 29, 2018 the Youth Employment (Prohibited and Restricted Employment) Regulations 5756-1995 were amended. The regulations provide a list of types of work where youth employment is prohibited. This amendment adds an overall prohibition on employment of youth in construction work (including work at construction sites), except for cases where the youth is employed as part of an internship or professional training.

79. The National Insurance Institute (Council of the Institute) Regulations were amended in July 2018, to as to include an adequate representation on the Institute's Council. Representation under this amendment includes the following populations: persons of both genders; persons with disabilities; members of the Arab population, including the Druze and Circassian populations; persons who were born in Ethiopia or who one of their parents was born in Ethiopia; members of the ultra-Orthodox population; and new immigrants. The amendment replaced a provision that included adequate representation only for women.

80. On February 12, 2018, Amendment No. 200 to the National Insurance Law 1995-5755 was approved by the Knesset. It intends to gradually raise the general disability allowance by 2021. It will be linked to the increase in the average salary. All related benefits are intended to rise concurrently. A plan for the implementation of Amendment No. 200 was prepared by the 23rd Knesset in the frame of the State budget discussions, however at the time of finalizing this update the budget is pending approval.

81. On December 6, 2016 the Children Foster Care Law 5776-2016 entered into effect. Section 1 of this Law stipulates its purpose: to establish the rights of children in foster care and the duty of the State to ensure their best interests and rights, pursuant to the CRC, in recognition of their unique vulnerability and their right to receive special protection and assistance, without derogating from the responsibility, duty and right of their parents to ensure their best interests. The Law places an emphasis on the best interests of the child and incorporates in Section 4 a broad and comprehensive definition, in accordance with Article 3 of the CRC, as interpreted by in General Comment No. 14 (2013) of the CRC.

82. The National Health Insurance Regulations (Registration to a Health Fund, Rights and Obligations of Persons Who Receive a Permit Pursuant to the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision) 5763-2003) 5776-2016, which entered into force on August 1, 2016, established a health insurance arrangement similar to that enshrined in the Health insurance Law relating to persons who hold temporary permits for stay in Israel pursuant to Sections 3, 3A(2) or 3A1(a)(2) of the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Provisional Order) 5763-2003. In August 2020, the registration period was extended until August 31, 2021. According to regulation No. 2, this arrangement will apply as long as the permit is valid. However, if the permit expires and later renewed, the Ministry of Health will inform the relevant Health Fund on the renewal and the permit owner will not be required to reregister.

83. Enforcement of the Minimum Wage Law – The Minimum Wage Law 5747-1987 was amended and strengthened several times. Its last amendment was approved by the Knesset in November 2017 through the Minimum Wage Law (Raising Minimum Wage Sums – Provisional Order) (Amendment) 5778-2017, in which minimum wage was set to 5,300 NIS (1,470 USD) starting from December 1, 2017 and until a higher minimum wage is set by the Minimum Wage Law.

84. The Right to Work While Seating Law 5777-2017, was amended in 2017 (Amendment No. 3) in order to provide suitable working conditions to security guards, including a roofed position that will allow protection from the sun or rain, suitable means for air condition or heating, access to water and electricity etc. The Law for Increased Enforcement of Labor Laws 5772-2011, was also amended accordingly.

85. The Women's Employment Law 5714-1954, was amended twice in in July 2016. According to Amendment No. 54, fathers will be able to be absent from work up to five (5) days following their child's birth, and to be absent on the day of the delivery (three (3) of these days at the expense of vacation days and the additional two (2) days at the expense of sick days). In addition, Amendment No. 55 amended the term "maternity leave" to "maternity and parenthood period" and introduced the ability to leave the work place one (1) hour earlier by allowing a "parenting hour" that can be shared by both parents. Also, according to Amendment No. 60 of 2018, the spouse of a women who gave birth to more than one (1) child in a single delivery, will be allowed to take between seven (7) and 14 days of leave for every additional child in that delivery for taking care of his children, instead of his spouse and with her consent.

86. The National Insurance Law (Consolidated Version) 5755-1995, was amended in March 2016 (Amendment No. 172). According to this amendment the definition of "birth" was expanded to the 22nd week of the pregnancy, and thus allowing delivery pay and grant to any woman who gave birth from the 22nd week of the pregnancy (previously 26th week).

87. The Sick Pay Law (Absence from Work due to a Child's Sickness) 5753-1993, was amended in February 2016 (Amendment No. 13). This amendment changed the term "malignant illness" by the term severe illness, and thus expanded the list of illnesses allowing the child's parents, the ability to be absent from work for 90 days each year for the purpose of providing health care for the child (provided that he/she have worked for at least one (1) year for that employer).

88. Association of Foreign Workers in Israel – In this regard please see Israel's Initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015).

89. In addition, according to the General Federation of Laborers in Israel's (the "Histadrut", the largest Representative workers Union in Israel) Constitution, any worker over the age of 18, who is a civilian or resident or migrant worker who is lawfully employed in Israel, and which undertakes to accept the Histadrut Constitution, its principles and the decisions of its institutions, may become a member of the Histadrut. So long as the Palestinian workers are working legally in Israel, there is nothing that prevents them from joining the Histadrut. The Histadrut's Tel Aviv-Jaffa District established a department for foreign workers that serve as a center for assistance and professional protection for this community. Palestinian workers legally employed in Israel in the construction field are entitled to legal aid in adjudicatory committees in order to discuss their employment legal claims and assistance in promoting their employment rights.

90. The right to strike and collective resignation – In this regard please see Israel's Initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015).

91. For several examples on the promotion of rights of senior citizens, see the Annex to this report (page 24).

#### **The Ombudsman (Public Complaints Commissioner)**

92. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 52.

#### **The Commission for Equal Employment Opportunities**

93. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 52.

#### **The Commission for Equal Rights for People with Disabilities**

94. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 52.

### **Unit for the Coordination of the Fight Against Racism**

95. In 2016, Government Resolution No. 1958 established the Unit for Coordination of the Fight Against Racism within the Ministry of Justice. The Unit is in charge of supervising the implementation of the recommendations of the inter-ministerial team to combat racism, as well as receiving complaints concerning discrimination and racism from all populations and forwarding them to the relevant authorities, safeguarding the handling of these complaints, composing an annual report regarding the Unit's responsibilities and actions, and examining required legal amendments. For information on complaints received and treated by the Unit, relevant government resolutions, representation and officers for the prevention of racism in Government Ministries, see the Annex to this report (page 23).

### **The Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women**

96. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 53.

97. For several recent notable examples of the Authority's work, see the Annex to this report (page 24).

### **Ombudsman of the Ministry of Health**

98. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 53.

### **The National Council for the Child**

99. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 53.

### **The Children's and Youth Complaints Commission for Out-of-Home Placed Children**

100. This commission was appointed in October 2017, in accordance with Section 56 of the Children Foster Care Law by the Minister of Labor Social Affairs and Social Services (LSAaSS). Any child placed in foster care or in out-of-home placement facilities may file a complaint to the Commission independently, discreetly and freely, without any fear of harm of consequences. The Commission is accessible to children and accommodated to age, language and level of maturity of the child, and in the case of a child with disabilities – also to her/his disabilities. The results of the inquiry of the complaint will be passed on to the complainant and a copy will be passed on to the supervisor from the Commission for follow-up on the necessary remedies.

### **The Early Childhood Council**

101. In August 2017, the Knesset passed the Early Childhood Council Law 5777-2017, a new Law which directs the establishment of an Early Childhood Council. This Law aims to further the care of infants and their physical and intellectual development, ensure their physical and mental health and the fulfillment of their educational, social, physical and emotional needs and to provide an appropriate environment which will enable them to enjoy equal rights in adulthood. The Council has been established and operates under the direction of the MoE.

### **Military Ombudsman**

102. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 53.

### **The Department for the Investigation of Police Officers (DIPO)**

103. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), page 53.

## **B. Equality before the Law**

104. Equality before the law is a basic tenet of Israel's legal system. The law applies not only to private people and to legal entities but also to every public authority. The courts are open and accessible to every person who believes that his/her rights have been infringed

upon. More so, every person has the right to be represented in criminal procedures taking place against him/her.

105. The Public Defender's Office (PDO) was established in 1995, in order to provide high quality professional legal representation to suspects, defendants, detainees and convicted persons in criminal proceedings. The PDO has an important constitutional role in safeguarding fair process and equality before the law in the adversary legal system in Israel. The right to be represented by the PDO is defined by law and depends, among various factors, on the severity of the offence, the economic status of the person requesting the service and on further characteristics. In 2018, the PDO employed 125 internal lawyers and about 860 additional independent lawyers in its six (6) districts throughout the country. In 2018, the lawyers of the PDO handled 454 cases in the Supreme Court, 7,269 cases in District Courts, 755 cases in Juvenile District Courts, 60,080 cases in Magistrate Courts, 7,010 cases in Juvenile Magistrate Courts and 33,924 cases in other courts (transportation, administrative, labor courts etc.).

### **C. Raising Human Rights awareness among public officials and other professionals**

106. The Institute of Legal Training for Attorneys and Legal Advisers in the Ministry of Justice – This legal training institute conducts many seminars, courses and vocational training days in order to raise their awareness to human rights issues. These training sessions are attended each year by hundreds of legal practitioners throughout the country. A non-exhaustive list of seminars run by the Institute includes: seminars on domestic violence (2015 and 2016), sex offences and trafficking in persons (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018), persons with mental disabilities (2015 and 2017), children's rights (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018), women in prostitution (2016 and 2017), refugees and asylum seekers' rights (2015). Other seminars include "meet the other" series, by which participants get a chance to learn about various populations in the Israeli society, including the Arab, Ethiopian, Russian, and ultra-Orthodox populations, seminars on prohibition of racism and discrimination and human rights within the criminal process.

107. The Institute of Advanced Judicial Studies – The Institute of Advanced Judicial Studies also holds lectures, seminars and courses on various human rights issues, specifically for judges of all instances. Hereinafter are several examples of seminars and training sessions relating to human rights that were conducted in 2019: sex offences and trafficking in persons (one (1) seminar), guardianship for family matters court judges (one (1) training), family affairs (one (1) seminar), minors and youth (one (1) seminar), training day for magistrate court judges on minors and youth, social security issues (one (1) training day), domestic violence (one (1) training day), a seminar on youth trials and training of district juvenile judges (one of each). Other seminars related to refugees and asylum seekers' rights, racism and discrimination and human rights within the criminal process.

#### **Training of Israel's Security Forces**

##### *The Police*

108. The Police Education and Information Section operates educational programs for police officers to ensure that important human rights values such as tolerance within a multicultural society, elimination of prejudice and awareness of values contained in the relevant human rights conventions, are constantly incorporated into their daily work. Special emphasis is given to training police commanders, in light of their direct influence on their subordinates.

109. The Police School for Investigation and Intelligence incorporates into its training the main provisions of the relevant human rights conventions and humanitarian law regarding procedures and investigation ethics, including "right and wrong" behaviors.

110. Police representatives also attend various international seminars and conferences abroad on various human rights issues, such as trafficking in persons, in order to advance international and regional co-operation about how to better address these problems. The

Israeli Police has representatives stationed abroad who are in contact and regularly cooperate with similar counterparts worldwide, including with Interpol.

111. On May 6, 2018, the Office of the Deputy to the Attorney General (International Law) in cooperation with the NGO “The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel”, had conducted a one-day training seminar for the Unit of Investigation of Wardens in the Israel Police and the Inspector in the MoJ on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as on the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (“Istanbul Protocol”).

*Police Programs Aimed to Promote Human Rights and diversity*

112. The Israel Police is operating to enforce the law, prevention of offences, preserving and protecting lives, property and public order, while respecting human rights and providing equal service to all persons and populations without discrimination.

113. The Unit for Gender Equality and Cultural Diversity – This new and important unit was established in October 2019, with the aim of coordinating all aspects of gender equality and cultural diversity within the Police. In addition, a special police officer position in charge of implementing the unit’s goals was added to each district.

114. The Unit is responsible, among other things, to advise the Police Commissioner on issues relating to gender equality and cultural diversity, both in times routine and times of emergency. The unit is responsible for collecting information and establishing raise-awareness policy the issues under its responsibility, on identifying barriers faced by its personnel from all populations and act to remove such barriers. The unit is also responsible to promote representation of all of Israeli populations within the Police in all ranks and positions, to ensure the existence of training and terms of service that are suitable to persons of all populations. The unit is responsible to develop professional knowledge and research. In addition, the unit operates to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination behavior through a variety of tools, including by providing information and making it accessible to all, writing and/or updating relevant procedures, setting persons in charge of handling sexual harassment complaints, providing organizational assistance framework to any person complaining on sexual harassment, discriminating behavior and more.

115. Recruitment – The Police sees great importance in diversity and is operating to recruit professional personnel of all of the Israeli society and populations. In order to find suitable recruits, working relations were established with representatives of the various populations in order to encourage and assist those who wish to join the Police. Special adaptations were also made to that end. One such example is that the entry examination may be taken in the candidate mother tongue, and the examination staff are trained on the topic of cultural diversity.

116. The Arab community – The Police has established a minimal recruitment rate of 7% for the Arab population and provides guidance and assistance towards the entry examination and later in the training courses.

117. In 2019, the Police began a pilot program aimed at locating recruits from the Bedouin population. In the frame of this program, 50 candidates who wish to join the Police study in a special preparatory course and are provided with tools that will help them go through the entry examination and later in the training courses.

118. Recruitment of Persons of Ethiopian descent – The Police invests great efforts in cooperation with representatives of the population of Israeli citizens of Ethiopian descent in Israel with the aim of locating suitable recruits, providing guidance and assistance towards the entry examination and later in the training courses.

119. Women – a special team was formed in order to examine barriers relating to gender in the recruitment process and encourage women to join the Police – all with the assistance of the new unit for gender equality and cultural diversity.

120. LGBTQI population – the Police has made several adaptations in its questionnaires and examinations to better suit this population, which led to the recruitment of the first transgender police officer in 2020.

121. For related statistical information, please see the Annex to this report (page 26).

#### **ISA – Israeli Security Agency**

122. The Legal Department of the ISA and ISA operational personnel have undergone detailed and specific training on international law, including human rights law, the core human rights conventions (including their direct implications in the unique Israeli context), and the work of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies. This is done through specialized seminars, both during preliminary and ongoing ISA training, which aim to instill the importance of principles of human dignity and fundamental human rights, together with the upholding of the rule of law and practices stipulated by the courts.

#### **IDF – Israel’s Defense Force**

123. The School for Military Law holds a variety of training activities for IDF forces regarding human rights and humanitarian law. These activities include exercises, lectures, specialized computer learning software and academic courses that provide both practical and theoretical applications of international law. The participants analyze real and fictional operational cases designed specifically for their position and their military specialty. In addition, commanders and the IDF’s International Law Department take part in operational exercises in order to provide the forces with the professional tools that will allow them to face such challenges in accordance with international law.

124. Every year, hundreds of lectures are given to IDF soldiers and commanders both in mandatory and reserve service (including combat forces, cadets of officers’ courses, military police investigators, security analysts and medical care personnel in detention facilities). The training specifically places an emphasis on issues concerning arrest and detention practices, the legal responsibilities of soldiers and their commanders, detainee’s rights, international humanitarian law and rules of conduct during an armed conflict.

#### **IPS – Israeli Prisons Service**

125. IPS personnel undergo regular training through courses held in the School for IPS Officers and Wardens, as well as in their respective units. Training regarding the relevant human rights conventions is an integral part of the general IPS training for all rankings, with more specific courses also given to officers and wardens. This training includes topics such as prevention of the use of force, warden’s ethics, human dignity and liberty values, and rights and liberties of the prisoner. These issues are also routinely addressed during training and guidance of other prison staff members. Additionally, specific ethics and values workshops are also held for the senior command staff in the prisons.

126. In addition, IPS personnel have also undergone workshops regarding identification of, and sensitivity required for victims of trafficking in persons.

## **V. Information, Publication and Promotion of Human Rights**

### **A. Promotion of Human Rights Awareness through Mass Media**

127. In this regard please see Israel’s Initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015). In addition, here are several relevant legal amendments and updates.

128. In April 2020, the president of the Supreme Court, has announced a hearing of a petition filed in the HCJ against the emergency regulations allowing the police and the ISA to monitor the movements of the Covid-19 pandemic patients, will be broadcast live on a trial basis, and that other hearings will be broadcast in the future. The hearings were aired via the major news outlets and in full through the internet. The President noted, inter alia, that “the



courts system always strives to fulfil the principle that court hearings should be accessible to the public”. Note that several additional HCJ cases have been publicly broadcasted since.

## **B. Promotion of Human Rights Awareness through Educational Programs**

129. In this regard, please see Israel’s Initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015) and Annex No. I to Israel’s third periodic report the CRC committee ((CRC/C/ISR/5–6) of October 2019, page 37). In addition, here are several relevant updates.

130. Human Rights Education – School educational programs concerning human rights issues are routinely conducted throughout the country. Israel has developed a special program that is taught in relation to the annual “International Human Rights Day”. Each year a relevant curriculum and teaching materials are developed in both Arabic and Hebrew, which focuses on a specific human right topic chosen for that year’s curriculum. In addition, various activities are conducted in accordance to the pupils age. In 2018 for example, the relevant curriculum focused on human rights of equality, dignity, privacy, children’s rights, rights relating to citizenship and social rights such as housing and workers’ rights.

131. In addition, pupils in grades two (2) to four (4), receive the “Pupil’s Rights” booklet, which explains about their rights and their responsibilities towards others. In grades 3 and 4, pupils will watch an animated movie about the universal declaration on human rights and will discuss its significance in relations to aspects of equality. In grades five (5) and six (6), the pupils are taught about the CRC; about human rights in the society etc. Children and youth are also taught about democratic values and human rights, human rights in the face of international terrorism, the right to dignity and respect for others and more.

132. Domestic violence – Each year during December the “Combatting Domestic Violence Week” takes place and the Ministry of Education (MoE) publishes in the relevant website materials for teachers and educational staff. The issue is discussed during the domestic violence week and throughout the year as part of the “Life Skills program” provided to the pupils in the education system. In 2015, a booklet translated into Arabic titled: “Friendship and intimate relationship without violence” was published among education staff in the Arab and Bedouin populations, as part of a recommended program for grades 10–11.

133. Health Education – The MoE works together with the Ministry of Health as part of the national program “Possible and Healthy”, setting a joint goal: by 2020, all education institutions, schools and kindergarten, will act as health promoters. Also, in 2018, programs for preventing the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and dangerous substances were incorporated into the school program. At high school level, the program includes lectures for parents, pupils and educators.

134. The MoE conducts advanced professional courses on democracy, civil education and fighting racism for supervisors, principals, and school and kindergarten teachers, with a scope of approximately 2,300 hours every year.

135. For additional Educational Programs for the Promotion of Children Rights, including rights of children with disabilities, programs relating to meeting children and youth from different segments of the Israeli communities, and Arabs, programs on LGBTQI issues and more, please see Israel’s 3rd Periodic Report Concerning the implementation of the CRC and its Additional Protocols (CRC/C/ISR/5-6).

## **C. Promotion of Human Rights Awareness through Public Exposure**

136. Please see Israel’s initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008, (page 61)) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015).

## **VI. Reporting Process at the National Level**

### **A. Preparation of Treaty Specific Periodic Reports**

137. Please see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008), (page 61).

#### **Cooperation with the Civil Society in Preparations of Periodic Reports**

138. In regard to the drafting of periodic reports to all Human Rights Committees and on efforts to involve civil society in the process of articulating these periodic reports, see Israel's initial Core Document (HRI/CORE/ISR/2008) and its 2014 update (HRI/CORE/ISR/2015).

139. Please note that in the frame of the on-going project with the Minerva Center for Human Rights at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Faculty of Law, which aims to improve the cooperation between State authorities and civil society organizations with regards to the reporting process to the UN human rights treaty bodies, several such meetings took place during the present reporting period. These meetings include, inter alia, a round table with various NGOs on September 10, 2019, prior to the submission of the 3rd periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and a round table with relevant NGOs on September 9, 2019, prior to the submission of the 5th periodic report to the Human Rights Committee (ICCPR).

140. In 2017, the Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs, have initiated the "Round Tables" project. This project consisted of six (6) sessions, which took place in different academic institutes around Israel – South, Center and North. The sessions were a unique platform, creating a discourse and further cooperation between NGO members, academics and representatives from the Government, on core human rights issues: LGBTQI Rights, Israelis of Ethiopian descent, Bedouin population, women's rights, rights of persons with disabilities and social and economic rights in the periphery.

### **B. Inter-Ministerial Team for the Implementation of Concluding Observations**

141. The seriousness which the State of Israel attaches to human rights matters can be demonstrated by the establishment in 2011, of a joint inter-ministerial team, headed by the Ministry of Justice's Deputy Attorney General (International Law), for reviewing and implementing the concluding observations of the various human rights Committees. This inter-ministerial team meets to examine the U.N. human rights committees' concluding observations and following its work since its establishment has made several significant changes in regard to human rights legislations.

### **C. Other Information Regarding Promotion of Human Rights Awareness**

142. NGOs are an important factor with regard to raising awareness for human rights issues. In order to promote a variety of important social issues, such as civil liberties, social justice, minority rights, cultural education, equality for persons with disabilities and fighting trafficking in persons, an on-going dialogue is taking place on a regular basis between the State and hundreds of different NGOs. Several NGOs in Israel have also formed educational programs aimed to educate people (including government officials) and communities in Israel on these various social issues.

143. For information and details about 23 of the leading NGOs, including their purposes and key activities as based on information obtained from their web-sites, see the Annex to this report (page 26).