

Israel's Minorities

"Since its founding Israel has been committed to democracy, while we refuse to even speak of it, let alone adopt it....Israel has given its minorities rights that most citizens in most Arab countries do not even dream of".

Kuwaiti columnist in Al-Qabas (Kuwaiti) 1/1/2016

"I identify myself as an Israeli, Zionist, Arab secular Muslim.... I really believe that I'm a lucky Arab and a lucky human being and a lucky Middle Eastern[er] that I was born in this tiny piece of land....I'm lucky I was born in a democratic country....They are treating everyone equally....We are living in freedom".

Mohammed Zoabi, Nazareth,

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vv4Qq81Yew) 7/4/2014

"If Israel were an apartheid state, I, for example, would not be allowed to work for a Jewish newspaper or live in a Jewish neighbourhood or own a home. The real apartheid is in Lebanon, where there is a law that bans Palestinians from working in over 50 professions. Can you imagine if the Knesset passed a law banning Arabs from working even in one profession? The real apartheid is also in many Arab and Muslim nations, like Kuwait, where my Palestinian uncle, who has been living there for 35 years, is banned from buying a house. The law of Israel does not distinguish between a Jew and an Arab".

Khaled Abu Toameh, Arab journalist, talk in Jerusalem, November 2010

"The army encourages Arabs to join . . . It all depends on us as citizens. We can hold out our hands in peace and get rid of the discrimination, or let it go on and on....I feel I am example to anyone who wants to join the army....The Arab sector never believed there'd be an Arab officer, they never believed they would accept us, and they do".

Lieutenant Abu Rayya, first Arab-Israeli from his community to reach officer status in the IDF, (The Times, Australia, 12/11/2010)

"Do you think I could be deputy mayor of Haifa if Israel was an apartheid state?"

Elias Mtanes, former deputy mayor of Haifa, in "The Jew is not my enemy", p179, Tarek Fatah, Emblem, 2011

"We Israeli minorities live better than any of our counterparts throughout the Middle East".

*Ishmael Khaldi, Israel's first Bedouin diplomat, in "A Shepherd's Journey",
p85,
Pub. Ishmael Khaldi, 2011*

"It needs to be understood that many ... differences are cultural and Bedouin-specific. Our lifestyle and very conservative heritage is further constrained by tribal rules and customs. This creates a sort of self-imposed barrier to full integration into a modern life".

*Ishmael Khaldi, Israel's first Bedouin diplomat, in "A Shepherd's Journey",
p86,
Pub. Ishmael Khaldi, 2011*

"..One million Arabs living in Israel with the Jews, and they are not suffering like the Arabs who are controlled by Arabs".

*Tawfik Hamid, Egyptian doctor, Senior Fellow and chair for
Study of Islamic Radicalisation, Potomac Institute for Policy
Studies (www.algemeiner.com/tag/tawfik-hamid-moderate/
(13/4/2014)*

"Most Arab citizens (of Israel) are in favour of co-existence, cooperating and living in harmony with Jewish Israelis".

*Sahran Bader, founder of "Israeli-Arab Nationalist Party", (Jerusalem Post,
27/4/2012)*

"I work for the office of social insurance in Israel, so I can tell you confidently that Arabs have the same legal rights....I study in the same educational institutions, ride the same buses, shop in the same supermarkets. And I do feel that I belong to my country....In my own small village in the Galilee there are not only one but two mosques and two Imams who both get a monthly salary from the state".

Boshra Khalaila, Israeli Arab, (The Times of Israel, 17/10/2012)

"In Israel there are a lot of benefits and a modern way of life, as well as economic and political stability. You can't compare the lives of Arabs in the Galilee to that of Arabs in Palestine, Lebanon, or Egypt. There is also the element that in Israel there is no concern of an Islamist takeover."

Sammy Smooha, Haifa University Professor, (TIP) 8/6/2012

“I’m a proud Arab and a proud Muslim. I’m not Palestinian....Israel did not expel me. I kept my land. I have the right under the law to do whatever I want to do, even to become prime minister. We Arabs need to thank God that we live in this democratic country”.

Aatef Karinaoui, Israeli Bedouin, now forming first pro-Israel Arab party running for Knesset in elections, (The Times of Israel, 4/11/2012)

“Until I was eight years old, the Bedouins in my Galilee community lived in tents. Now, most Bedouins are living in concrete homes, attending college, holding positions in government, and more”.

Ishmael Khaldi, Israeli Bedouin, Counsellor for Civil Society Affairs, Embassy of Israel, London (blog October 2013)

“In our whole region consisting of over 350 million Arabs, there are only 1,658,000 Arabs who have complete political and religious freedom and have the right to vote in full democratic elections. It is no coincidence that all of these Arabs live as full and equal citizens in the one Jewish State.”

Hamad Amar, Druze MK, Deputy Speaker of Knesset, in The Hill (Amerian Congressional blog), 25/12/2013

"There are many regimes (in the region) that do not care about equal rights, they only care about catering to an elite that terrorizes the rest of the population, while brushing off the issue of human rights and dehumanizing others....In Israel, we [non-Jewish minorities] do not experience this....Israel is a shining example of human rights in the Middle East".

Father Nadaf, Greek Orthodox priest
www.israeltoday.co.il/NewsItem/tabid/178/nid/24329/Default.aspx,
25/12/2013