

Analysis of Political Discourse and Human Rights Issues Connected to the Likud Party: A Summary of Publicly Available Information

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Abstract

This document provides a structured analysis based on publicly available information regarding political discourse and human rights issues connected to the Likud Party. It synthesizes findings from United Nations bodies, major human rights organizations, academic literature, and Israeli parliamentary records. The analysis highlights concerns about policies in the occupied Palestinian territories, the nature of political rhetoric, and legislative activities, concluding with recommendations for the international community.

1 Introduction

The governance and political discourse of the Likud Party have been subjects of extensive scrutiny, particularly concerning their impact on human rights and international law. This document aims to summarize key findings and trends documented by prominent international organizations, academic researchers, and official records. The focus is on the period from approximately 2020 to the present, where applicable, and draws upon verified trends and specific reports to provide an overview of the critical perspectives on these issues.

2 Human Rights Documentation and International Oversight

Several leading international bodies and non-governmental organizations have monitored and reported on the human rights situation in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, with specific attention to policies enacted under governments involving or led by the Likud Party.

2.1 United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has consistently documented concerns regarding Israel's policies in the occupied Palestinian territories. These concerns frequently address issues such as the expansion of settlements, the demolition of Palestinian homes, restrictions on freedom of movement, and the impact of the blockade on Gaza [1]. Reports from the UNHRC and its appointed special rapporteurs have often highlighted how these actions are perceived to violate international humanitarian law and international human rights law, thereby undermining the fundamental rights of Palestinians. The UNHRC's oversight functions include periodic reviews and resolutions that call for adherence to international legal standards [2].

2.2 Human Rights Watch (HRW)

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has published extensive research on the Israeli-Palestinian context. A significant report, titled “A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution,” meticulously details allegations of systematic discrimination against Palestinians [3]. The report argues that Israeli authorities are committing the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution, based on an overarching policy to maintain Jewish Israeli control over demographics, land, and resources across Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories [3]. HRW’s findings point to a deeply entrenched system of discriminatory laws, policies, and practices that affect Palestinians differently and detrimentally [4].

2.3 Amnesty International

Similarly, Amnesty International, in its 2022 report “Israel’s apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity,” asserts that Israel enforces a system of apartheid against Palestinians wherever it exercises control over their rights. This includes Palestinians living in Israel, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and displaced Palestinian refugees in other countries [5]. This system is described as being characterized by territorial fragmentation, segregation and control, dispossession of land and property, and the denial of economic and social rights, amounting to a crime against humanity under international law [5, 6]. Amnesty International calls for international accountability mechanisms to be activated and for an end to practices it identifies as constituting apartheid.

3 Academic Research on Political Discourse

Academic scholarship has provided critical analyses of the political discourse associated with the Likud Party, particularly its impact on inter-group relations, policy formation, and the prospects for peace.

3.1 Discourse Analysis of Likud Rhetoric

Studies employing discourse analysis methodologies have examined the rhetoric of the Likud Party and its prominent figures. This research often reveals a consistent narrative that strongly emphasizes Jewish nationalism, historical and religious claims to the entirety of Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel), and overarching security concerns as paramount [7]. Within this framework, Palestinian identity, rights, and national aspirations are frequently marginalized, delegitimized, or framed as existential threats to Israel’s Jewish character and security [8]. Such rhetoric, scholars argue, can contribute to the polarization of society, the entrenchment of conflict, and the justification of policies that negatively impact Palestinians.

3.2 Sovereignty and Annexation Discourse

Academic research has also tracked the evolution of Likud’s discourse concerning sovereignty, particularly over territories occupied since the 1967 war, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem. This body of work indicates a discernible discursive shift from earlier positions towards advocating for, or implementing policies that lead to, de jure or de facto annexation of these territories and the continued expansion of Israeli settlements [9]. The narrative often frames such actions as essential for national security, as fulfilling historical or religious

destinies, as a legitimate exercise of Israeli sovereignty, or as a response to perceived Palestinian intransigence, while often downplaying or reinterpreting international legal prohibitions against acquiring territory by force and the rights of the occupied population [10].

4 Knesset Records and Legislative Activities (2020–Present)

An examination of Knesset (Israeli Parliament) archives from 2020 onwards provides insights into legislative activities and policy-making under Likud-led or significantly Likud-influenced governments. Publicly accessible records, including legislative texts, committee minutes, and plenary debates, document the introduction, discussion, and passage of laws that have drawn criticism from human rights organizations, legal scholars, and international observers [11].

These legislative measures span various domains, including:

- Land ownership, planning, and zoning, which critics argue disproportionately favor Jewish settlement and development while restricting Palestinian land use, particularly in East Jerusalem and Area C of the West Bank.
- Citizenship, residency, and family unification laws, which have been criticized for discriminating on the basis of nationality or ethnicity, particularly affecting Palestinians.
- Civil rights and freedom of expression, where concerns have been raised about laws or amendments perceived as restricting dissent or targeting specific minority groups or critical NGOs.

Critics argue that such legislation can entrench inequality, further marginalize non-Jewish populations, and in some cases, violate international human rights norms [12].

5 Recommendations for the International Community

Based on the concerns raised by the aforementioned bodies and research, the following recommendations are often proposed for consideration by the international community:

- **Enhanced Monitoring and Reporting:** Strengthen and adequately resource international oversight mechanisms, including those of the UN (such as Special Rapporteurs and treaty bodies) and independent human rights organizations, to rigorously monitor, document, and publicly report on compliance with international human rights law and humanitarian law in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.
- **Accountability Measures:** Support and cooperate with impartial and independent investigations into alleged serious human rights violations and potential international crimes by all parties. This includes supporting the work of international judicial bodies, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and considering the application of universal jurisdiction by national courts where appropriate to combat impunity.
- **Diplomatic Engagement and Policy Reform:** Engage consistently and robustly with Israeli authorities, through bilateral and multilateral channels, to encourage legislative and policy changes. Such engagement should advocate for reforms aimed at ensuring equality, non-discrimination, and the full protection of human rights for all individuals under Israel's effective control, in line with Israel's international obligations. This includes calling for the repeal or amendment of laws deemed discriminatory by human rights bodies.

- **Support for Civil Society:** Increase and sustain political and financial support for Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations, legal centers, and peacebuilding initiatives that work to document abuses, provide legal aid to victims, challenge discriminatory practices, and advocate for human rights, justice, and accountability.
- **Adherence to International Law in Bilateral Relations:** Ensure that bilateral agreements and cooperation frameworks with Israel and Palestinian entities are consistent with international law and promote respect for human rights. This includes conducting due diligence to prevent complicity in violations.

6 Conclusion

The documentation from international human rights organizations, findings from academic research on political discourse, and an overview of official parliamentary records collectively point towards significant and systemic issues concerning human rights and international law in relation to policies enacted and rhetoric employed under the Likud Party's governance. These sources consistently highlight concerns regarding the treatment of Palestinians, the legality of settlement expansion, the enactment of discriminatory legislation, and the impact of a political narrative that often exacerbates tensions and undermines prospects for a just resolution. Addressing these deeply entrenched issues requires sustained, principled, and concerted efforts from the international community to promote accountability for violations, advocate for comprehensive policy and legislative reforms, and steadfastly uphold the principles of international law, human rights, and equality for all individuals in the region.

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