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Human Rights Watch cites Israel for the crimes of Apartheid and Persecution

In its report released on April 27th, Human Rights Watch has cited the Israeli authorities for committing the crimes against humanity, apartheid and persecution. The report identifies an overarching Israeli government policy to maintain domination of Jewish Israelis over Palestinians, and grave abuses committed against Palestinians living in the occupied territory, including East Jerusalem.

The 213-page report, [A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#), portrays the present-day reality of a single political entity, the state of Israel, having primary authority over the area between the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea, an area populated by two groups of roughly equal size, and methodically privileging Jewish Israelis while repressing Palestinians, most severely in the occupied territory.

The 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the 1998 Rome Statute to the International Criminal Court (ICC) define apartheid as a crime against humanity consisting of three primary elements:

1. An intent to maintain domination by one racial group over another.
2. A context of systematic oppression by the dominant group over the marginalized group.
3. Inhumane acts.

The crime against humanity of persecution, as defined under the Rome Statute and customary international law, consists of severe deprivation of fundamental rights of a racial, ethnic, or other group with discriminatory intent.

Human Rights Watch found that the elements of the crimes come together in the occupied territory, as part of a single Israeli government policy. That policy is to maintain the domination by Jewish Israelis over Palestinians across Israel and the occupied territory. It is coupled in the occupied territory with systematic oppression and inhumane acts against Palestinians living there.

Across Israel and the occupied territory, Israeli authorities have sought to maximize the land available for Jewish communities and to concentrate most Palestinians in dense population centres. The authorities have adopted policies to mitigate what they have openly described as a 'demographic threat' from Palestinians. In Jerusalem, for example, the government's plan for the municipality, including both the west and occupied east parts of the city, sets the goal of 'maintaining a solid Jewish majority in the city' and even specifies the demographic ratios it hopes to maintain.

To maintain domination, Israeli authorities systematically discriminate against Palestinians. The institutional discrimination that Palestinian citizens of Israel face includes laws that allow hundreds of small Jewish towns to effectively exclude Palestinians and budgets that allocate only a fraction of resources to Palestinian schools as compared to those that serve Jewish Israeli children. In the occupied territory, the severity of the repression, including the imposition of draconian military rule on Palestinians while affording Jewish Israelis living in a segregated manner in the same territory their full rights under Israel's rights-respecting civil law, amounts to the systematic oppression required for apartheid.

Denying millions of Palestinians their fundamental rights, without any legitimate security justification and solely because they are Palestinian and not Jewish, is not simply a matter of an abusive occupation. These

policies, which grant Jewish Israelis the same rights and privileges wherever they live and discriminate against Palestinians to varying degrees wherever they live, reflect a policy to privilege one people at the expense of another. - Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch.

You can watch a video presentation of the main findings [here](#).

