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**Oral statement to the UN Human Rights Council, Item 3
Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues**

13 March 2019

Special Rapporteur,

In November 2018, four UN Special Rapporteurs, including yourself, wrote to Israeli authorities expressing their deep concerns about the Jewish Nation-State Law passed by the Knesset last year.

The experts found that the law does not apply the principle of equality and in fact creates a legal order that could enable further discrimination, in violation of Israel's international human rights duties.

Adalah welcomes this important letter. Among many consequences, the new Basic Law denies the history, identity, and collective rights of the Palestinian citizens of Israel, a national homeland minority who make up twenty percent of the state's population.

Of particular concern is Article 7, which promotes Jewish settlement as a national value. It encourages the state to consolidate Jewish demographic majorities and establish exclusive Jewish towns at the expense of Palestinian communities, including Bedouin citizens living in the Naqab desert.

The law thus makes land grabs, segregation, and racism a constitutional norm, while reducing Palestinian citizens' ability to challenge their inequality.

Special Rapporteur,

There is no democratic state in the world that defines its constitutional identity on exclusive racial grounds, and as serving one ethnic group.

As you noted, the Nation-State Law contains no commitment to democratic norms or equality, and no prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, or ethnicity.

For these reasons, this law bears the distinct characteristics of apartheid as defined under international law.

Adalah urges the Rapporteur and this Council to fully condemn the Nation-State Law, and to demand that Israel cancel the law and abstain from implementing it against Palestinian citizens and all Palestinians under Israel's control.