The National Committee for the Heads of
the Arab Local Authorities in Israel

# The Future Vision

## of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel

2006

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# Introduction

In order to collect various versions in the self-definition of our entity, our relation with the rest of the Palestinians and our relation with the State and to connect them to create a firm integral homogeneous vision, we, the Arab Palestinians in Israel, should have a clear self-definition that includes all the political, cultural, economic, educational and social aspects.

As the chairman of the High Follow up Committee for the Arabs in Israel, I have invited a group of Arab intellectuals (see attached list of names) to a discussion aiming at crystallizing a strategic future collective vision of the Palestinian Arabs citizens of Israel.

I express my gratitude to this group for its efforts and commitment in the march that lasted for more than a year during which four long meetings were held.

Documents attached to this paper are the outcome of this march. They are also the outcome of a collective effort during which its content was discussed and ratified. The core of the work was subject to summaries of researches written by some participants in the group, proposing general trends for a change required in the future of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel .

This outcome is a property of the group, the High Follow-Up Committee and the National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel.

These documents focus on affiliation, identity and citizenship of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. They also focus on the legal status, land and housing, economic and social development, educational vision for Arab education, Arab Palestinian culture and on the political and national work of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

It is worth mentioning here that the group did not have the chance to discuss

other major issues in detail.

The importance of this work lies within the discussion which will follow, as a publication of this document. It is not necessary for all representatives of political streams and parties, represented by the Follow-Up Committee, to approve of this document. Rather, the main goal is to spark the public discussion concerning the future of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

**Shawqi Khateeb**
Chairman
The High Follow up Committee for the Arabs in Israel
The National Committee for the Heads of the Local
Arab Councils in Israel

# View

We are the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, the indigenous peoples, the residents of the States of Israel, and an integral part of the Palestinian People and the Arab and Muslim and human Nation.

The war of 1948 resulted in the establishment of the Israeli state on a 78% of historical Palestine. We found ourselves, those who have remained in their homeland (approximately 160,000) within the borders of the Jewish state. Such reality has isolated us from the rest of the Palestinian People and the Arab world and we were forced to become citizens of Israel. This has transformed us into a minority living in our historic homeland.

Since the Al-Nakba of 1948 (the Palestinian tragedy), we have been suffering from extreme structural discrimination policies, national oppression, military rule that lasted till 1966, land confiscation policy, unequal budget and resources allocation, rights discrimination and threats of transfer. The State has also abused and killed its own Arab citizens, as in the Kufr Qassem massacre, the land day in 1976 and Al-Aqsa Intifada back in 2000.

Since Al-Nakba and despite all, we maintained our identity, culture, and national affiliation; we struggled and are still struggling to obtain just, comprehensive and permanent peace in the Middle East region, through achieving fair and lasting resolution concerning the Palestinian refugees' status and for reaching peace through the declaration of an independent Palestinian State.
Defining the Israeli State as a Jewish State and exploiting democracy in the service of its Jewishness excludes us, and creates tension between us and the nature and essence of the State. Therefore, we call for a Consensual Democratic system that enables us to be fully active in the decision –making process and guarantee our individual and collective civil, historic, and national rights.
In light of this modern complex history, we are moving towards a new era of self–recognition, where it is necessary to create our future path, crystallize

our collective identity and draw up our social and political agenda. The establishment of the High Follow up Committee for the Arabs in Israel was a pivotal point in the history of our community where such committee became the highest representative body for all other public and political organizations.

Based on this reality of collective internal changes, the project presented by this document is a continuation of our struggle towards crystallizing clear strategic future vision for the Arab Palestinians in Israel. The project aims at answering the question, "who are we and what do we want for our society?"
 In order to obtain this goal, the future vision will be followed by tangible practical steps and a concrete action plan with specific goals. We recommend such document to be a public reference. This document includes all streams of the Arab society, as this vision is an independent Palestinian rhetoric. We hope this future vision would yield unity between different and sometimes contradicting viewpoints and beliefs on the basis of our national collective principles and interests.

The National Committee of the Local Arab Authorities in Israel is responsible for implementing this project, a project which was presented to the High Follow up Committee of the Arabs in Israel.

This project was implemented in two stages:
   1. A Steering committee was created. It contributed to the objectives and strategies of the project to include its actual implementation and check the scope of conformity of the goals with the mechanisms of the program.
   2. A future vision was crystallized by meetings of Arab intellects and activists throughout the year. This stage is concluded by holding a general conference and a presentation of a conference book that will include the final and complete version of the future vision.

We hope that our vision would contribute to change our reality and to impact the Israeli agenda, in an effective and positive way. This is a continuous process of the public action that the High Follow up Committee had been implementing since its establishment. We also hope to enrich the public discussion amongst us, Palestinians in the Diaspora, the Jewish society in Israel and the international public opinion.

# Work Process *

This future vision complements the works of a group of activists and researchers that met, during one year, in order to discuss the political, social, economic, and cultural reality of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

The work process has two stages: preparation of the program and articulation of the future vision.

**The preparation stage:**
A body was created to boost the program and steer its work. The steering committee has supported the track of development of the program from two aspects: the public aspect and the planning aspect. The committee met every month, since June 2005, to prepare the activities of the program.

**The articulation stage:**
After the preparation stage, the committee asked a number of intellectuals and community activists to attend four long weekend meetings held in Jerusalem. The Steering committee ensured that the members of the group represented different political beliefs and thought schools

The group had to determine the frameworks of discussion and dialogue agenda and to move from philosophical and ideological discussions to practical and applicable discussions.

The first meeting, held in September 2005, aimed at discussing the future vision of all participants and looking for points of connection between them.
The second meeting was held in December 2005. It discussed the points of strength and weakness of current situation for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

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* This document was written by Ms. Ghaida Rinawie- Zoabi, group moderator and program officer.

Mr. Shawqi Khateeb, Chairman of the High Follow-up Committee of the Arabs in Israel, and the steering committee met with seven researchers in order to develop a strategic plan concerning 8 subjects:

1. The relation between the Palestinian Arabs and the State of Israel.
2. The legal status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel
3. Land and housing.
4. Economic development.
5. Social development.
6. Strategic vision for Arab Education.
7. Arab Palestinian culture in Israel
8. Institutions and political work.

The steering committee asked the researchers to present their work plans to be reviewed by academics and experts, before submission for approval within the group .This step aimed at reinforcing and enriching the work plans.

The writers of the researchs presented a review of the strategic plans that were discussed and approved during the third meeting which was held on April 2006. During this meeting, the group wrote the future vision introduction. At the forth meeting on June 2006 the group was gathered to finally approve all written texts.

The program aims at having tangible results, that is, to conclude and publish the future vision in a conference book.

Members of the program aspire that political, media and academic groups promote and develop these action plans provided.

The future vision provides also basis for future uses including:

1. Think tank groups discussions for strategic development
2. Media campaigns in the Arabic, Hebrew and international media
3. Pressure means on the State ministries and institutions
4. Implementation development strategies to change the reality of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

# The Palestinian Arabs in Israel and their relation to the State of Israel *

Israel is the outcome of a settlement process initiated by the Zionist–Jewish elite in Europe and the west and realized by Colonial countries contributing to it and by promoting Jewish immigration to Palestine, in light of the results of the Second World War and the Holocaust. After the creation of the State in 1948, Israel continued to use policies derived from its vision as an extension of the west in the Middle East and continued conflicting with its neighbors. Israel also continued executing internal colonial policies against its Palestinian Arab citizens.

Israel carried out the Judaization process in various forms, beginning with the expulsion of the Palestinian People back in 1948; the demolition of more than 530 Arab villages; massive confiscation of Arab land and the creation of more than 700 Jewish settlements aiming the absorption of the new Jewish immigrants. This has led to the judaization of the land and erosion of the Palestinian history and civilization and the building of political and economical system that marginalized and weakened the Palestinian People especially in Israel.

Israel can not be defined as a democratic State. It can be defined as an ethnocratic state such as Turkey, Srilanka, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia (and Canada forty years ago). These countries have engaged their minorities in the political, social and economic aspects of life, in a very limited and unequal way. This comes amidst a continued and firm policy of control and censorship which guarantee the hegemony of the majority and marginalizing the minority.

**The principles of an ethnocratic system include:**
1. The control of an ethnic group on the State system.
2. Focusing on ethnicity (and religion) and not citizenship, as a basic principle of the distribution of resources and abilities and undermining the "people" (citizens in general).
3. A gradual ethnic process of politics based on ethnic classes.
4. A permanent state of instability.
5. The ethnocratic logic provides tools for understanding societies that prefers one certain group over others; it also dominates the dynamics between different ethnic groups.

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* This document depends to a research presented by Dr. Asaad Ghanem and discussed by the group.

To maintain the ethnocratic system, Israel has implemented several rules concerning the Palestinian Arabs in Israel:

1. Cutting all identity relations between the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and the rest of the Palestinian People and the Arab and Islamic Nation. Israel has tried to create a new group of "Israeli Arabs".
2. Preventing Palestinian Arabs in Israel from keeping relations with their brothers in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and, the Palestinians refugees.
3. Opposition of organizing the Palestinian Arabs in Israel in any form that can be of a contradiction to the aspirations of the Jewish majority and the state in terms of parliamentary representation and preventing them from exercising any non parliamentarian political activities of public struggles.
4. Opposing the Palestinian Arab leadership attempts to building a vision adverse to consolidate the Status of the Arab minority in the Jewish state which ultimately accepts the Jewish control of the state, its resources and abilities.
5. Forcing the Palestinian Arabs in Israel to accept resource allocation on a basis of ethnicity rather than citizenship. This aims at maintaining the Jewish superiority and the Palestinian Arab inferiority in Israel.

The Palestinian Arabs in Israel are in need of changing their status. While they are preserving their Arab Palestinian identity, they need to obtain their full citizenship in the State and its institutions. They also aspire to attain institutional self-rule in the field of education, culture and religion that is in fact part of fulfilling their rights as citizens and as part of the Israeli state. They also seek to obtain full equality with the Jewish majority.

Such self-rule within the State poses a system based on **Consensual Democracy**. A system embodies the presence of two groups, the Jews and the Palestinians. Such system would guarantee real resource, leadership and decision making participation.

**The Palestinians in Israel should demand the following, from the State:**

1. The State should acknowledge responsibility of the Palestinian Nakba (tragedy of 1948) and its disastrous consequences on the Palestinians in general and the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel in particular. Israel should start by rectifying the damage that it had caused and should consider paying compensation for its Palestinian citizens as individuals and groups for the damages resulted from the Nakba and the continuous discriminating policies derived from viewing them as enemies and not as citizens that have a right to appose the state and challenge its rules.
2. The State should recognize the Palestinian Arabs in Israel as an indigenous

national group (and as a minority within the international conventions) that has the right within their citizenship to choose its representatives directly and be responsible for their religious, educational and cultural affairs. This group should be given the chance to create its own national institutions relating to all living aspects and stop the policies of dividing between the different religious sects within the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

3. The State has to acknowledge that Israel is the homeland for both Palestinians and Jews (the Israeli future constitution and state laws should reinforce this point by adding an introduction paragraph). The relation between the Palestinians and Jews in Israel should be based on attainment of equal human and citizen rights based on international conventions and the international relative treaties and declarations. The two groups should have mutual relations based on the consensual democratic system (an extended coalition between the elites of the two groups, equal proportional representation, mutual right to veto and self administration of exclusive issues).

4. Israel should acknowledge the right of minorities in line with international conventions. It should admit that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel have a special status within the institutions of the international community and are acknowledged as an indigenous cultural national group enjoying total citizenship in Israel. It should also acknowledge that the Arab minority in Israel has international protection, care and support according to international conventions and treaties.

5. Israel should refrain from adopting policies and schemes in favor of the majority. Israel must remove all forms of ethnic superiority, be that executive, structural, legal or symbolic. Israel should adopt policies of corrective justice in all aspects of life in order to compensate for the damage inflicted on the Palestinian Arabs due to the ethnic favoritism policies of the Jews. The State should cooperate with representatives of the Palestinian Arabs to search the possibility of restoring parts of their lands that Israel confiscated not for public use. Israel should also dedicate an equal part of its resources for the direct needs of the Palestinian Arabs.

6. Israel should acknowledge the rights of the Moslems to run their affairs concerning the Waqf (Islamic endowment) and the Islamic holy sites. Israel should no longer be in control of the Islamic and Christian holy sites and acknowledge their right of self-rule the as part of the collective rights given to the Palestinian Arabs.

7. Israel should acknowledge the right of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel of social, religious, cultural and national continuity with the rest of the Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic Nation.

# The legal status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel*

There are two facts that must be taken into consideration in crystallizing the legal status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel:

1. The Palestinian Arabs in Israel are the indigenous people of the country and their historic and material relations with their homeland emotionally, nationally, religiously and culturally.
2. They are an integral vital and inseparable part of the Palestinian People.

**The reality of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel reveals two basic dimensions concerning Israel's relation with its Arab minority:**

1. The official–legal dimension: Since the establishment of the State back in 1948, Israel has taken a discriminating policy towards the Palestinian Arab citizens, through implementing discriminatory laws and legislations (canonized discrimination).
2. The economic-social dimension: represented by economic dependency of the Palestinian Arabs on the State. Such dependency negatively affects the living conditions of the Palestinian Arabs.

These two dimensions are closely related. They determine, arguably, the collective Arab experience.

## The official dependency:

The Israeli legal system includes a number of core laws that produce and reinforce inequality between the Arabs and the Jews in Israel (*de jure*). It is biased open to the Jewish majority. This official bias is not restricted to symbols such as the Israeli flag, but also to deeper legal issues concerning all Palestinian Arabs living fields specially citizenship, immigration, sharing of political decision making, land ownership, language, religious places and other. This official dependency leads to an open official classification of the Israeli citizenship:

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* This document depends on the research presented by Dr. Yousef T. Jabbarin and discussed by the group.

the mentioned canonized citizenship, second and third citizenship. The first citizenship is held by the citizen who enjoys priority. It goes without saying that this ethnic superiority fundamentally contradicts the principles held by those deprived of this democracy such as equality and combat of ethnic and national discrimination ratified by the international conventions pertaining to human rights and the rights of the minorities.

This official discrimination on a national basis is the core of all forms of discrimination against the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. It is the root cause from which Palestinians in Israel suffer, individually and collectively. Thus, the official definition of Israel as a Jewish State created a fortified ideological barrier in the face of the possibility of obtaining full equality for the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel.

## The social – economic dependency:

Therefore it is impossible to talk about obtaining full equality in light of discriminatory laws that consolidate a hierarchical relationship between the Jewish majority and the Palestinian Arab minority, characterized by superiority of the ruling national group. The certainty of these discriminatory laws in the public life in Israel pose an inescapable core question: is it possible to guarantee real equality to the Palestinian Arab citizens even in the societal spheres in which, theoretically, there is no discriminatory classification? We claim that the Israeli legislations and laws negatively affect the status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, including the areas where–theoretically- the principle of quality is valid.

In addition to the official dependency mentioned above, there is a continued historic injustice in the living standards (de facto) of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, which is reflected by official and public social–economic data. In addition to the official inferiority of the status of the Palestinian Arabs, a socio-economic dependency is added. This dependency is reflected in the various aspects of life including poverty, unemployment, low study average, etc.

In light of this discriminatory framework, the Israeli Supreme Court failed to provide legal protection for the Arab citizens. The Supreme Court turned down appeals of central issues concerning the Arab citizens, including land confiscation and official budgets allocation. The rulings of the Supreme Courts in favor of the Arab citizens (such as the case of Qa'dan family) are very few. Still, these rulings do not carry any collective dimension that affects the reality of the life of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

There is a genuine need to articulate legal strategies that match with the future

collective visions of the Palestinian Arabs in this country. There is a need to develop a legal discourse that go beyond the boundaries of the Israeli legal and jurisdictional system and present fundamental legal alternatives that can preserve the historical, national and civil rights for the Palestinian minority.

## Towards Group Transformational Equality:

Our legal vision concerning equality of the Palestinian Arabs depends on the transformational group perspective of equality. Through this principle we seek to obtain practical equality and partnership on the national- collective level, and, opposing economic dependency from which the Palestinian Arabs suffer. This is to achieve a comprehensive structural societal change that fulfils living conditions for the minority not less in its social and economic level than those of the majority. We seek to obtain total freedom of national dependency, exploitation and oppression.

On the basis of this broaden democratic vision we seek to crystallize our collective future vision of the legal status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, so it is based on equality, partnership and mutuality.

## 1. The shared citizenship rights:

In order to guarantee the desired legal protection of the shared citizenship rights in Israel, the legal system should adopt the anti-discrimination laws in all aspects of life individually and collectively. This legal system should also include the creation of an independent commission (or commissions) for equality and human rights. Such commission should focus on guaranteeing the implementation and surveillance of anti-discrimination laws. It should also adopt the international conventions pertaining to the protection of human rights and be obligated to them, such as the international convention combating all forms of discrimination, and those pertaining to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and those calling for equality of women and child, so that the terms of these conventions would become an indivisible part of the internal law enforced in the country.

## 2. The collective –national rights:

Concerning collective national rights, we believe that Palestinian Arabs in Israel, as a collective and as individuals, should have equal participation in all public resources including the political ,material and symbolic resources .Such participation would be the cornerstone of building an equal and just

society, where this society would include equal relevance and opportunity for each group on the basis of democratic principles of consensuality and power sharing .On the level of legal protection of the national collective rights we note a number of basic legal axes that must be guaranteed in order to crystallize the desired legal status of the Palestinian Arabs :

1. An official recognition of the collective Palestinian Arabs existence in the State, and their national, religious, cultural, and language character, and recognition that they are the indigenous people of the homeland.
2. Recognition of the Palestinian Arab rights of complete equality in the State on a collective –national basis.
3. Guaranteeing dual language system of both Arabic and Hebrew.
4. Guaranteeing effective representation and participation of the Palestinian Arabs in decision making procedures within the official institutes and the activation of the veto right in matters concerning their living.
5. Guarantee of self-rule of the Palestinian Arabs in the fields of education ,religion ,culture   and media and   recognizing their right to self-determination with respect to their collective life complementing their partnership within the state
6. Equal distribution of resources, such as budget, land and housing.
7. Appropriate representation on a collective basis in the state system.
8. Guaranteeing the right of the Palestinian Arabs to have open and free relations with the rest of the Palestinian People and the Arab Nation.
9. Guaranteeing the rights of the Palestinian Arabs in issues obliterated in the past such as the present absentees and their right of return; the Islamic waqf (endowment); unrecognized Arab villages and land confiscation.
10. Official acknowledgment of the historical injustice against the Palestinian Arabs in this country and against the Palestinians in general and to guarantee for ending this injustice and correcting its continuous disastrous consequences.

In order to obtain the desired legal status of the of the Palestinian Arab citizens and to face challenges that associate us during our struggle we propose to reinforce the existing efforts and further develop the legal, cultural, and social-economic status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel .This is to be actualized by crystallizing and developing legal and strategic policies to serve and push our causes on the short and long terms. We can have a clear future vision in order to obtain equality and partnership and combat national discrimination and negligence within the state.

# Land, Planning, and Housing Policy of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel *

There is no doubt that struggle for land was and is still the core of the Palestinian –Zionist conflict since the inception of the Zionist movement by the end of the nineteenth century. The Zionist movement used religious and secular terminologies to convince the Jewish people and the world of its right over historic Palestine. Terms from the torah such as the "holy land" and "land of Israel" were and are still used. These were mixed with secular sayings such as "a land without a people for a people without land". They were like a fuel that operates the Zionist cart and unite the "Jews of the Diaspora" and link their future to Palestine.

The land day in 1976 was a turning point in the struggle over land between the Israeli state and the Palestinian Arabs. The possibility that the Arab minority would influence on the planning system in the country was nearly absent. The system was and is a Jewish non-democratic system.

The problems facing the Palestinian Arabs are many, but the issue of land planning and housing remains the main difficulty for the Arab minority in Israel. There are around 1.15 million Arabs living in Israel which is about 18% of the total population of Israel and will double in the year 2020. The geographic space of the Arab citizen (650 meters square per person) will shrink to 375 meters square per person.

In line with this reality, it is difficult to talk about development of the Arab villages and towns without solving the issue of land sovereignty and widening its jurisdiction boundaries. The Palestinian Arabs possess less than 3.5 of the size of the State land and 1.5 of it is out of their local authorities` jurisdiction boundaries.

Land and Planning policy adopted by Israel since 1948 leaves no room for doubt that judaization of the land was one of the most important characteristics of the modern State. Israel, which refers to itself as a democratic state, does not offer free land market. Israel is the only state in the world that possesses more than

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*  This document depends on the research presented by Dr. Thabet Abu Rass and discussed by the group.

93% of the land, under the definition "state land". Land in Israel is not for sale, but for mortgage for 49 years.

The basic issues the Palestinian Arabs face in Israel are the racial and legal discrimination; judaization of the Arab land property; demographic increase; diminishing space; administrative division of the country space (areas of local authorities jurisdiction); no participation in the decision making; improper structural planning and demolition of Arab houses.

## The basic components of the Israeli land and planning policy:

1. Elimination of the Palestinian historic and geographic features to prevent the return of then Palestinian refugees.
2. Transferring Arab land into a Jewish property, through the use of force and adopting a central collective, comprehensive and not individual land system.
3. Preventing "state land" of being allocated to the Arab towns and villages in Israel.
4. Adoption of administrative division (areas of local authorities jurisdiction) that guarantees control over Arab land.
5. Marginalizing the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and preventing them from taking part in the decision making process.
6. Demolition of Arab houses and threatening of the Arab demographic danger in order to expand Jewish settlements.

## Recommendations;

1. Adoption laws of Distributional justice between the Arab citizens and the Jewish citizens within the consensual democracy. To cancel all laws of confiscation and the regulations and measures that discriminate against the Arab minority.
2. Changing the Israeli policies within the fields of land and planning starting with recognizing the historic oppression that inflicted the Palestinian Arab minority. The boundaries of the Israeli land must conform to the boundaries of citizenship and not to the boundaries of the Jewish people. Adoption of the use of the term "Israeli land" instead of "Jewish territory" or "State land".
3. Administrative reconstruction of the Israeli institutions that work in the fields of land planning and housing so that participation of non-Israeli intuitions and representatives are cancelled (Non Israeli Jews) especially the Jewish

agency and the Jewish national fund. Accordingly, permitting the Arab minority of the necessary and genuine representation in these institutions.

4. Expanding the area of jurisdiction boundaries for the Arab villages and towns so that public land (state land) becomes part of this sovereignty.

5. Adoption of a new public rhetoric concerning land and planning. So that it includes a demand to stop the implementation of the current law of planning and housing that discriminated against the Arab citizens. There is a need for a new structural planning and housing plans within the Arab communities based on consensual democracy and distributional justice principles conforms to the needs of the Arab minority.

   These plans should settle issues historically stalled such as the issues of the internally displaced, the Waqf (Islamic endowment), the Arabs of the Negev and the Palestinian Arab participation in possessing and management of this public property.

**In order to obtain desired goals mentioned above, the following points must be taken into consideration:**

1. The issue of land is the most sensitive of issues concerning Arab Jewish relations in Israel. Palestinian Arabs in Israel can obtain full equality only if Israel becomes a real democratic State. Full change towards implementing real equality for the Arabs in Israel, concerning land and planning issues, is connected to a change of the objectives of the State and its identity as a Jewish State. Such change should bring Israel towards adoption of democracy. Hence, there is no one tool towards obtaining such objectives. This paper suggests the adoption of various struggling methods, with having clear time schedule.

2. There are issues which we can obtain in the short term through the use of available and allowed (within the Israeli laws) tools of struggle such as the political and legal struggle .This issue depends also on raising an educational awareness track. In order to reach the strategic goals and structural change new work mechanisms should be adopted such as enhancing public activism and international advocacy. This will never be obtained without organized public work and without empowering Arab professional and political cadres.

3. Changing the Arab and the Arab –Jewish struggles characteristics would pose new questions about the status and conditions of the Palestinian Arabs in the Israeli ethnocratic system.

# Economic strategy for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel *

The problematic economic status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel is reflected in:
1. Low educational and professional level of the Arab working force and low participation in the civil working force.
2. The distorted participation in the economy of the State and the work market reflected on the following:
3. Low level of life quality in comparison to the Jewish society. In addition, high living standards and consumption levels are rising rapidly more than the rise of income and the economic development.
4. Distinguished cultural and structural social characteristics that affect the level of consumption. In addition to the adoption of saving methods that do not necessarily contribute to the economic development.
5. Economic dependency on the political positions of the State and the Jewish society and the permanent reliance on the national social insurances, add to the enormous influence of the political and military developments on the economy.

Through conducting a study on the current situation of economical activities and its revenue, we have found out that the Arab citizens in Israel should merge with a new economic system through a development plan based on activation of the economic resources. This will promote implementation of a social welfare system that includes the basic services and provides work opportunities for all.
As for the relation between Arab economy and general Israeli economy, the choice is relatively clear:
 The size of the market in Israel and geographic distribution of the Arabs and the level of economic development in the Arab cities and villages do not allow the creation of an ethnic economy akin to "Enclave". Furthermore, the Jewish majority- Arab minority relation does not allow such development. The development of large economic interests and intersection by the economic interests with the Jewish society pose an important factor in affecting the policy

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* This document depends on the research presented by Professor 'Aziz Haidar and discussed by the group.

exercised against the Arabs especially as the economic chances provided by the Israeli market for the Jewish majority are much more than those provided for the Arab minority.

In addition, the State has gone a long way in the process of privatization and made tangible achievements of globalization in which it merged as a strong and developed producer in the most important economic branches in the world economy. The situation in international relations is not different from that within the state. Thus, the group that merges in that process as a strong working force attains economic successes and raises its political and social status.

In line with the previous analysis, the best choice for the Arab citizens in Israel is to adopt a two-fold development: **First**, merging in the Israeli work market as a legitimate right of equal opportunities in employment and investment market being citizens of the state, **second**, creation of internal momentum within the economic movement that would lead towards an increase in the chances for the Arab society and relatively free from dependency and attain social unity and equality.

## The higher objectives:

1. Creating a new society to be able to deal with major economic operations (production, distribution and consumption).
2. Ending economic dependency especially the social allowances that have been decreasing since 2001.
3. Decreasing the percentage of deprived population (the difference between the level of income and the poverty line) and providing aid for those who are unable to guarantee an acceptable life standard.
4. Minimizing the influence of the market change due to slow economic activity, merging numbers of foreign workers and changes of supply and demand levels aiming to limit unemployment and part time jobs.
5. Creating an atmosphere of social security and sense of belongingness and equality.

## Mechanisms of achieving the plan:

The strategic plans require the creation of a special association for economic development created by the High Follow up Committee. The association should include a steering committee with representatives of the High Follow-Up Committee; the National Committee of the Heads Arab Local Authorities; the Follow-Up Committee for Arab Education in Israel; the forum of Arab Businessmen; and economists.

The tasks of the committee include:

1. Specifying the methods and means of obtaining specified objectives for economic development and follow-up of implementation of the drawn up plan.
2. The proposed association should initiate the creation of institutions for economic development, coordination between the various existing institutions in order to guarantee integration between the various activities.

We have detailed the activities and institutions in the following fields:

Political activity, education and the working force, economic research, the role of the local Arab authorities, utilization of women in economy, aiding the deprived population. In all, any development plan should be steered according to the population's needs. We have specified that the two issues important to development are infrastructure and education.

## Executive Activities:

1. These activities require the joint efforts of the High Follow-Up Committee, The National Committee of the Heads of Local authorities, the local Arab authorities, and the Arab members of parliament and Arab businessmen.
2. The political work is a vital precondition to implement the suggested strategic work plan.
3. There is a need to dedicate many years in order to implement the work plan and until the infrastructure work is done, already existing institutions, such as the Education Counseling Center, can provide guidance for students, concerning technical and economic professions. The creation of technological and professional rehabilitation centers requires convincing investors and international funds to create special institutions to support such centers financially.
4. There is an immediate need to create a research center for conducting social and economic development studies; examining the characteristics of the working force; and creating methods to disseminate information and data for new initiatives and plans. Due to low number of female participants in production, a social and cultural study should aim at increasing women participation in the work force.
5. Encouraging women to participate in the work force requires immediate creation of an organization to discuss the methods of encouragement of the creation of facilities in the Arab villages and cities, and the creation of a special fund to support production initiatives for Arab women. We must consider also local initiatives of building branches of trade, service and marketing companies that women can participate in.
6. Establishing a committee to secure the rights of Arab workers, especially female workers.

# Strategy for social development of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel *

The importance of development of the society stems out from the following:

1. A healthy society is the product of active societies characterized by solidarity and positive initiation.
2. The members of any society should work towards fulfilling their own goals, instead of submitting to a higher governmental authority.
3. Participation in the development of the society is important in order to prevent a sense of alienation where the minority looses control over their own agenda and feel their participation is meaningless.
4. Strong participation in society's affairs is a must for building a democratic society.

Therefore, we studied the historic developments of the social structure of Arab villages in Israel and the means and methods of cultural, social and political control and the Arab citizen's chances to change their conditions.

The study discusses the development of three pillars of the social structures (family, clan, and caste) and the reflection of the institutional structure on the individual. We discovered that the changes have led to a situation in which the clan as an economic and social unit had fallen a part and that the nuclear family has become the most important and influential unit, morally and economically. As for the extended family, it has only a psychological meaning and conducts some conventional social roles. The clan maintained its essence especially in local authorities' elections (Primary elections within the clan before local authorities' election).

We learn that patriarchy is still the dominant quality in the Palestinian Arab family, even within families with two educated parents. The inferiority of women is the outcome of the patriarchal society. Therefore, her status is the result of a structural condition. The study also examines the means of control over women that include customs, conventions, honor values, shame and

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* This document depends on the research presented by Professor 'Aziz Haidar and discussed by the group.

violence, prevention of women from turning to official authorities of law and order, added to the active role that the State and the Jewish society are taking in this process. The Arab political movements in Israel does not differ in their views and attitudes of social issues, especially issues concerning women, from the views of liberation movements in the third world.

The study shows the presence of many divisions represented by family, clan and caste loyalties. Furthermore the study shows the horizontal division on the basis of gender.

Our study tackles the institutional structure which includes local authorities, political parties and civil society institutions. Concerning local authorities, we found that, during the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the Arab society In Israel was witnessing a genuine development on the levels of administration, organization and leadership. This development process was very limited and did not last long as conventional administration endured the process of development. Corruption and deterioration of the administrative structure expanded.

The patriarchal system and deprivation of women from having full participation has remained. This has led to the deprivation of women from participating in primary clan elections, as potential candidates and representatives of society. The political parties and movements did not meet the expectations of taking an active role in organizing the society through the creation of social and civil institutions. The political institutions banned social and cultural discussions. They did not develop any discussion about women social status and socio- economic issues.

Thus, the policy of the political parties and national institutions has always been the policy of focusing on major issues such as the Palestinian Cause and the relation with the State. Rarely was it about the reality of the people. The fact that up until now no political party could include a female parliament member could be an evidence of the political movements maintaining of the essence of the patriarchal system. Even the first female representation in the Israeli parliament was through the Zionist parties.

We have spoken about the weakness of the institutional building in the Arab society, due the absence of civil organizations that can fill the gap created by the lack of services provided by the State and by the neglect of traditional societal organizations in providing services in society. This gap was not filled by political parities, neither was it filled by Arab local authorities.

The study shows absence of mainly two kinds of social institutions:
1. Institutions aiming to prevent social diseases and supply the needed help.
2. Institutions aiming to preserve order locally as local committees of mediation and arbitration.

Our study notes that institutional structure remained weak due to personal tendencies within the organization and family interests. Henceforth, the organizational level and functional performance continued to decline.

In the study concerning the effect of the structural status on the individual personality, we chose to focus on an important subgroup in society, which are the educated academics. This is group that is supposed to be responsible for advocating social change. The study shows that the behavior of this group is reflected in the social traditional distorted structure (local authorities, political parties, the ministry of education, civil society institutions). They produced an atmosphere and positions adverse to social change and a mentality adverse to team work and to any collective interest and development.

## Goals of development strategy:
1. The process of social development is a very expansive and comprehensive one and includes all aspects of life. The study focuses on social relations and intuitional building.
2. Social development aims at creating a sound and cordial atmosphere that guarantees the solidarity and social equality, where the individuals can enjoy a better life. This means upgrading the status of women through equating them with men in all aspects of life, especially self-assertion aspect.
3. The participation of individuals both men and women in the process of social change.
4. Treatment of social diseases that exhaust social resources and harm social relations.
5. Creating harmonic pace between growth and structural development and between growth and individual and local development.
6. Achieving balance between creative- innovative individuality and collective interest.
7. Guaranteeing a sound social base to nurture collective identity.

## Considerations to be taken into account:
1. Many social issues can be treated only through a deep structural transformation of prevailing values, norms and behaviors and through

having a clear vision of the status of women and having an equal work division between the two genders.

2.  There are social issues that cannot be treated through institutional reform, such as family and clan bigotry. The treatment and reform of such issues are the outcome of an educational process.

3.  Attention should be paid for the differences in the extent of modernization. There are huge differences in the level of education and institutional experience especially with the democratic institutions and the scope of the availability of human and material resources.

4.  There are huge differences in the extent of complication of the society in which development occurs. The more the compilations are, the less the total number of the participating people and the more the number of the participating organizations in the process.

5.  Equilibrium between the missions of attained objectives and identity to safeguard the group.

6.  Negligence of the prevailing divisions and issues pertaining to dignity has been continuous for a long period of time.

7.  Variation of social and religious conventions, apposing to the western laws (secular tendencies in contrast to religious trends; conservative traditions in contrast with western traditions, and, demanding cultural independency opposing to merging in the Israeli society).

8.  The Israeli authorities are not concerned in social development but are interested in deepening gaps within the society. There are also individuals and groups that find an interest in this and make maximum efforts to foil attempts of reform.

9.  The Arab society suffers from loss of references and lack of trust in all political parties and institutions. Therefore, collective participation in the process of development needs a long period of time.

## Mechanisms:

1.  On the subsidiary level of society, work could be done on the basis of the local bond where people in the village would gather together to face problems and exploit the potential of their neighborhood. This method is efficient. Individuals living in the same place share interests even though they are not interested in mingling with each other for leisure.

2.  Organizing people on the local level through creating neighborhood committees interested in cleanliness, order and other environmental issues. Also, committees interested in public institutions can settle local disputes and control misconducts of individuals.

3. Creation of social solidarity institutions of relief and financial aid; institutions for the treatment of crises; institutions for the relief of the disabled and handicapped, and, institutions for the treatment of drug addicts and alcoholics. This mission requires the creation of a developed mechanism for financial donations and volunteering.

4. Creation of mechanisms for volunteering at local authorities, schools and other societal institutions.

5. Creation of institutions for social, cultural and educational activities to help bring together of seculars and non seculars, of both genders and of different religions and ages.

6. Creation of institutions for mediation and settling disputes on the basis of harmony between social norms and the State laws. These institutions should include mechanisms to deal with domestic violence; violence between families and violence in schools.

7. Developing education for values programs and preparing national collective identity curricula.

8. Preparing educational programs that aim to reinforce generational relations. Such programs should decree the suffering of the elderly, socially and psychologically. This is an important method that would reinforce the national and social identity.

9. Promoting women status through creating special units for women in all institutions, especially the Follow-Up Committee and in local authorities. Also, it is very important to encourage women to have an active role in local elections. The creation of pressure means on political parties is very important, as it guarantees proportional representation proper to women. This should also guarantee that political parties would call for equality in work opportunities for women and call for women rights.

10. The Follow-Up Committee should initiate (through the research institutions we proposed in another document) research concerning social development on the micro and macro levels, and creating special fund aiming to encourage academic social sciences higher studies.

11. Creating supervision institution akin to the Follow-Up Committee to adhere local authorities and official institutions from nepotism.

12. Publishing periodic editions interested in local issues that pose a podium for criticism and publish reports on the work of the institutions, the behavior of the individuals in society and the extent of transparency. These editions should also encourage supervision on businessmen and employees in the Arab society in Israel.

# Educational vision and strategic planning of the Arab educational system in Israel *

The status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel poses challenges on the level of society in general and the educational system in particular .This requires a deep analysis of the reality of education in Arab schools in Israel and shedding light on the educational and technical changes that the education system should undergo and stressing the role of schools in dealing with all new developments.

The problems of the educational system can be defined and as follows:
1.  Political problem: discrimination against the Arab education system in Israel.
2. Ideological problem: the lack of approval over the content of education and the nature of values Palestinian students should educate upon in order to crystallize their national and civil identity.

In spite of the quantitative development of the Arab education in Israel, the qualitative development still faces problems:

1.  Education does not prepare students to deal with the modern world.
2.  In spite of intensive efforts to change pedagogical methods, the Arabic educational system is still theoretical, rather than practical and it adopts conventional methods that consolidate memorizing knowledge not producing knowledge.
3.  The majority of graduate students join the work force of services market not of production. This leads to an obstruction of students' social and economic development, individually, and, collectively.
4.  In Arab schools academic achievements are still poor, in comparison to Jewish in all levels.
5.  Deprivation of Arab children from pre-school education.
6.  The absence of an Arab university and developed educational faculties.

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* This document depends on the research presented by Dr. Khaled Abu Asbah and discussed by the group.

This leads to producing weak teaching cadres and researches. These issues expand the gap between the world of education at school and the outside world.

7.  The lack of investment in education, on governmental level or the local authorities' level or private (parents) level.
8.  Duality of the Arabic language: the spoken language and the classical language taught in schools. This impedes the educational process and ultimately weakens the development of analytical skills.
9.  The lack of new curriculum that is relevant to changes within society rather, thus limiting contribution in enhancing the cultural identity. This also delays finding any solution for the tensions between traditional trends, modernism, post modernism and globalization.

The weak educational system and the Arabic educational curriculum needs clear educational strategy that takes into accounts the cultural developments and knowledge wide exposure and technology revolution.

Before any educational strategic planning we should consider present and future social- structural challenges and problems and address education as a momentous force for the society. The status of the Arab women should be taken into account, in addition to the economic, political and environmental aspects of society.

## The strategic work plan should depend on the following:

1.  The right of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel (as indigenous people in their homeland) to self- administration of the educational system and to self-determination of its policy.
2.  Adoption of the Arab education objectives as drafted by the Follow-Up Committee for Arab Education in Israel after the fourth Arab education conference back in 1994, taking into consideration the possibility of adjusting such objectives according to current developments, empowering the universal and social values education.
3.  The educational systems tasks are made up of the following:
    a.  The creation of a generation that enjoys crystallized values and identity and confident personalities.
    b.  Teachers should have the chance to exploit and nurture the abilities and potential of their students.
4.  Considering educational system as the basic component for any socio-

economic, cultural and political collective growth project.

## Work tracks:

1. **Legal track:** continuation of demanding self- management of the educational system within international laws and conventions through addressing international organizations that deals with such issues, appealing to justice in all matters of official discrimination.

2. **Educational- Public track**: the Follow-Up Committee for education should strengthen its relations with the community, in general, and with the Arab schools, in particular. It should also develop networking process with all institutions active in the field of education, developing new alternative curricula.

3. **Practical track:** creating detailed strategic study on building an Arab university, creating high educational council for the Arabs (within the High Follow up committee and in coordination with the Follow up Committee for education); altering the work methods of the Follow-Up Committee for education to become a professional committee able to prepare educational programs and developing the education departments within the local authorities in order to implement such programs.

## The required steps:

1. The local authorities should adhere to prioritization of the status of education, and supporting their departments by recruiting professional staff capable of high level of educational and vocational work, while taking into consideration the local, educational and societal aspects; to end political assignments in local authorities and to consider the educational system as part of the local economic-social development work.

2. Discussing the possibility of creating national private schools (by non-governmental organizations) with a specific educational character.

3. Creation of a professional committee aiming to raise the status of the Arabic language as a mother tongue.

4.  Drafting an action plan in partnership with the local authorities to promote extra curriculum educational programs.

5. Development of human cadres, in general, and leadership, in particular and to propose establishing an educational leadership school.

6. Creation of a research center for strategic educational planning that works within the High Follow-Up Committee.

7. Encouragement of participation of citizens and parents in the educational process.

# The Palestinian Arab culture in Israel *

The Palestinian Arab culture in Israel underneath the Israeli regime is a nature continuation of the Palestinian culture that was developed here up until the Nakba. Prior to the Nakba, Palestine was a focal point for two Arab renaissance centers: Lebanon and Egypt. Culture, literature and philosophy were developed in Palestine. Books, Daily newspapers and tabloids were published. Print houses were established in Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. Translation from Arabic to English, French and Russian were produced as well. Intellects of the Arab world exchanged visits with their Palestinian counterparts.

These cultural activities took place mainly in Palestinian metropolitan cities. As for the rural areas, the rural traditional- religious culture dominated specially during Ramadan nights and other social and religious occasions that took place in the different Palestinian villages.

The Nakba severely affected such cultural up rise as most of the Palestinian intellects were expelled and cultural institutions in the cities were demolished. Those Palestinians who remained in their homeland had to rebuild this culture movement under the racial, discriminating military rule. The new State institutions exercised (and still exercising) a policy of national "nothingness" by declining to the recognition of the Palestinians in Israel as a national minority and compelling school curriculum that ignores these aspects. The Nakba undermined the Palestinian metropolitan life, which was the source of cultural creativity.

The post-Nakba stage witnessed two cultural streams, the national stream, led by the communist party, and the authoritarian stream, led by the Histadrut and other governmental apparatuses. In the early 1950s, Haifa started to restore its cultural activities; Al- Itihad newspaper was published again, in 1948 and Al-Jadeed magazine was published in 1951 .Al-Ithad print house published Arabic books too. Cultural forums and clubs were initiated in the cities and villages. In return, the Israeli establishment initiated a media campaign to promote loyalty to the regime, through compiling Arab schools to adopt specific curricula that

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* This document depends on the research presented by the author Mr. Salman Nattour and discussed by the group.

encourage loyalty to the State. Histadrut clubs were created in the Arab villages to promote activities of such values. The Histadrut also published the only daily Arab newspaper "Al-Yawm" (until 1967, then it was published in the name "al-anba'" and it was shot down in 1979). Monthly and weekly magazines such as "Haqiqat al Amr" and "Al Hadaf" were published and an arab publishing agency was developed "Dar Al Nashr Al Arabi".

## The last six decades could be divided into five important stags:

**The first stage**: between 1948 and 1956, this stage was characterized by early start of founding any culture after the Nakba. A public discussion was held over how to re-build institutions to face the "culture of nothingness" that the Israeli system is promoting. Add to it voices within the Israeli government calling for Judaization of the Arabs and using Hebrew as their daily life language (as in the case of the Arab Jews in the Arab countries).

**The second stage**: between 1956 and 1967 (The 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip, the Golan Heights and Sinai), this stage was characterized by having a clear collective vision within the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. The role of the national stream grew up under the leadership of the communist party and the development of the "resistance literature" and poets and writers that surprised the Arab world after the 1967 war.

**The third stage**: between 1967 and 1976, this stage was characterized by reconnecting with other parts of the Palestinian People. It opened a window to the Arab world and the Plaestinian city was revealed like Jerusalem, Nablus and Ramallah and where the Palestinian town within Israel started to restore its identity: Haifa, acre, Jafa and Nazareth. This stage paved the way for yet another stage that was characterized by building the foundation for the Palestinian cultural identity. This was also the stage where the conspiring "culture of nothingness" led by the official authority was separated from the local struggling revolutionary national culture.

**The fourth stage**: between 1976 and 1991, this is a stage of cultural renaissance; the Land Day in 1976 affected the political, national and intellectual discourse and enhanced the Palestinian –Palestinian cultural relation. PLO cultural institutions were established in Beirut back in 1982 and effecting the Palestinian culture in the whole region. This renaissance period lasted even after the PLO left Beirut. The Intifada that broke out in 1987 sparkled the Palestinian awakening in Palestinian occupied territories, the Galilee and the Triangle area. .

**The fifth stage**: It is a stage of setback, it starts from 1991 when the gulf war

broke out and continues with the Oslo agreements up until the second Intifada, in 2000 .This stage is characterized by Arab Palestinian lack of sense of unity .This stage needs thorough research, analysis aiming to fully understand its characteristics, reasons and outcomes.

Those who study the Palestinian culture in general and the Palestinian literature in particular should notice that the common component of the Palestinian culture is "Historic Palestine". It is the homeland and is the unifying element between all even though this homeland is occupied. The land is wherever Palestinian creative people meet. Sense of belongingness to this place remains the priority of the national, cultural and civilized identity. For the Palestinians artists and intellectuals, this place provides the primary literary language with its special vocabulary of the history, geography and culture.

We, the Palestinians in Israel, are an integral part of this place as it creates our consciousness and our literary language and crystallizes our identity. Israel tried over the past decades to disengage us from this place not through physical transfer but through intellectual emotional transfer. Israel tried to create a new identity on the basis of "loyalty to the state"-as outlined in the goals of the Arab educational curricula.

This policy did not succeed as after the Nakba, an Arab Palestinian cultural movement surfaced and became a natural extension to the Palestinian cultural movement that was crystallized back in the early twenties of 20th century.

On the other hand, we live in the shadows of the Jewish State. We speak the Hebrew language fluently. We listen to Jewish rhetoric and provide them our rhetoric. We translate Israeli books into Arabic. We relate to the culture of the other as do the Palestinian intellectual living in France, for example, or in England or the Americas and contributing to these cultures. We relate to the culture of "the other" in a sense of relevance to an acquired culture different from our own culture.

The difference between us and others who are known for their double cultural reference is that we belong to both sides of the conflict, us and them; in other words, we have become part of the culture of the other /the opposite.

This double relevance is not voluntary. It is compulsory. It is a form of educational occupation, on the one hand, and, knowledge relation, on the other. Do we know it to become part of our identity or know it to clash with it to remain outside the identity and eventually it will become part of our identity?

The issue of the Palestinian Arab in Israel culture continuity to the Arab world is ambiguous due to the disconnection from the mother culture in our homeland. It mounts sometimes to the extent of Arab boycott on our culture or discard of its status and refusal to acknowledging its confrontational position in the front line of the anti-Arab thought ideology .That is, if we take into account the struggling role of the political culture in the stage of historic challenges, such as these we witness on the Arab and Palestinian levels. But on the other hand culture cannot prosper away from the mother culture," the greater self".

It is time to present the issue of, responsibly and rationally, within the framework of a comprehensive dialogue, in order to expand the concept of loyalty from the" smaller self" to the "larger self" and to determine the mechanisms of organic relation to the mother Arab culture.

The relation with the "other", the Israeli, does not present the relation with Jewish culture but the relation with the State and its institutions. The State has not determined a position acceptable to us yet in terms of nurturing our Arab culture. The State still deals with us as a minority of different religions and sects but not as national minority. Therefore, any support that is presented by the State is dedicated to serve this policy. Do we accept a support that contravenes our ambitions, identity and the core of our culture?
Sadly, the issue of the government support to any local Palestinian culture in Israel has not been studied deeply nor was it discussed.

Like other groups worldwide, the results of globalization and the effect of the western culture run parallel to political and economic interests in order to build a global system that serves these interests. Due to our daily preoccupation with the local cultural issues, our culture did not pose the question of the relation with the west. Generally speaking, the positions that appear to be in regards to this issue are an angry rejection or a despairing compliance, a fundamental metaphysics approaches or an imported postmodernism.

Placing this issue on the agenda of our Palestinian culture does not only mean crystallizing a position for ourselves, rather contributing to the global dialogue between the West and the East. It will also contribute to the heritage of our nation and of humanity.

## A high board of cultural affairs:

Creating higher board to follow up the Palestinian cultural affairs in Israel does not pose a substitute to any already existing framework. Rather, it will back these frameworks and activities and collect and intensify work to maintain and develop our culture.

The Follow-up Committee of the Palestinian culture will be independent. It will work beneath the High Follow-up Committee. But it will not subject to its institutions. This separation between the political and the cultural is necessary in order to guarantee total independence away from any factional and political influence.

This board's components will be of heads of the cultural institutions: the societies interested in cultural work, theaters cultural clubs, unions of artists and writers and cultural magazines and others. They will elect a secretariat executive committee that should meets periodically and a general board that should meet annually in a Palestinian cultural conference.

The board will starts at the first stage a general survey of the Arab reality. It will collect data about the cultural activities and the local national institutions and sources of funding. It will create subcommittees for each cultural aspect: literature, theatre, creative arts, electronic art and in other fields. Each committee will prepare a detailed report and provide recommendations to be discussed by the cultural follow-up committee then all will be referred within the Arab culture conference.

## The Palestinian cultural conference:

On the theoretical and intellectual levels, the first Arabic cultural conference will discuss three core issues:
1. The identity of Arabic culture and its implications.
2. Its relation with the other –that is, the Israeli Jew.
3. The status of the local Palestinian culture within the global one.

The conference of the Palestinian culture (Jaffa conference for the Palestinian culture, or Haifa, or Nazareth..) will present documents discussing our cultural reality and putting up a comprehensive method to define this culture, draw its tracks and determine the mechanism of follow-up and means of maintenance and development.

The first conference will elect the boards of the committee to implement resolutions and recommendations. And in order to prepare a conference, an initiative committee should be elected and a work document for general and specific guidelines should be prepared and activities and forums should be promoted.

# The Institutional and Political Public Work *

The societal institutions are the implementing bases to any collective vision development for a society excluded away from State institutions such as the Palestinian society in Israel. The political, cultural, economic and social development of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel needs an organizational structure and institutions development, aiming to balance between the ability of working with the State institutions and between the ability to act freely and independent. The creation of national institutions and clarification of their internal roles and their relations with the State institutions, the elected local authority, individual initiatives, the private sector and the political institutions are the most prominent challenges that require discussion and decision making.

Development of the national institutions would promote real change in our collective status in terms of the ability to face the regional conflict. It would promote our status in the State and our collective vision that is being crystallized – especially after the Oslo agreements –.

The current stage is characterized by building national institutions of local services, legal, religious, gender, culture and education. These institutions form 5% of the non-governmental organizations registered in Israel. The average budget of these institutions does not exceed 2% vis-a-avis the budgets allocated for active societies in Israel. Such societies receive 1.5% of the budget allocated for governmental societies. Arab institutions are excluded from being supported by the major global Jewish institutions and face difficulty in obtaining aid from the Arab world institutions.

These institutions, alongside the factional or national institutions that represent the Arab citizens of Israel, such as the High Follow-Up Committee and the National Committee of the Heads of the Local Arab Authorities work without coordination and with no clear strategy. In general, Palestinians in Israel lack strategic vision to develop and coordinate institutional work.

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* This document depends on the research presented by Mr. Ja'far Farah and discussed by the group.

## Proposed Objectives:

1. Continuing internal and collective organization aiming to obtain individual and collective rights of the Palestinian Arabs as citizens of the State, being the indigenous people and as part of the Palestinian People dispersed throughout the world and as part of the Arab region and contributors to the global dialogue.

2. Deepening the consciousness over the national Palestinian identity and the democratic humanitarian civil values of the Arab society as basic points to resist the institutional control and challenge ethnic divisions and internal social problems including the status of Arab woman, children and social classes.

3. Developing and empowering the work of Arab institutes aiming to promote social change, and creating a mechanism of networking and coordination between them.

4. Building strategies and institutions aiming to end the regional conflict and promote the peace process by benefiting from the unique status of the Arab society, both locally and regionally.

5. Developing tools and mechanisms aiming to increase dialogue and prevent societal disputes.

6. Developing social programs aiming to change the status of Arab Woman, in general, and concentration on improving the economic and social status, in particular, and political participation of the Palestinian Woman in Israel.

7. Developing relations and activities with other countries and organizations on the international arena including International Jewish organizations in order to stress the importance of international recognition of the national, cultural, economic and social needs of the Arab society in Israel. This aims promote the status of the Arab society and develop a democratic system equal and just for all groups of people in Israel.

8. Reinforcing cooperation between local organizations, including the Jewish organizations in order to advocate for political, economic and social governmental decisions that affect the individual and society, and the Arab society in particular, including the issue of promoting just peace in the region.

9. Developing mechanisms to consolidate and develop the relation with the rest of the Palestinian people and the Arab world on the basis of cultural and national continuity.

## Proposed principles to develop institutional work:

**The relationship between the national institutions and the political parties:**

This stage requires decision taking over of empowering the national institutions on top of which the High Follow-Up Committee to meet the needs and expectations of the Palestinians in Israel. This requires also decision taking over

the form of building process and determining the form of relation between the High Follow-Up Committee and the political parties, local individual initiatives and the private sector.

**Organizing the relationship between the national institutions:**
Creation of the national institutions requires organizing the relation between them and creating a framework that coordinates between the independent or factional societies and the executive national boards of the High Follow-up Committee. It also requires the creation of appropriate mechanisms to transfer the fees of funding these national institutions by political parties and local Arab authorities .It is also important to end the discussion over the work of the High Follow-up Committee of the Arab with the political parties and the local authorities and to complete its new constitution.

**A framework coordinating between the political factions:**
The current coordination between the political factions is restricted to reaction activities initiated by the High Follow-Up Committee. The parties refrain from developing a coordinating framework to face the government policy and discuss general national plans as a central goal. It is important to create this framework which does not depend on temperament in its work but initiates the discussion process within the Israeli political sphere.

**National plan for development:**
The current stage requires support of a national development plan based on studying the current situation and benefit from the points of strengths, to face the Israeli government policy of attempts to marginalize the Palestinian Arabs from its economic and developmental institutions. This plan must depend on a serious field survey that could be a referendum in the field of human resources and infrastructure.

**Support of the private sector:**
In any society, the private sector is an important factor for economic development and growth. In the Palestinian society, this sector suffers discrimination and marginalization by the government and is not being dealt with as a potential strategic sector that could profit and prosper.

**Support of independent institutions:**
The creation of national institutions is complemented by encouragement of the local and national self-initiatives in the fields of services, research, religion,

culture and the legal arena. Development of the institutional work requires coordination of efforts between the State and the political parties, the private sector, the independent societal initiatives, and the creation of mechanisms to coordinate independent work between them all.

## National institutions required for the upcoming stage:

**A political leadership framework:** This framework should lead the Arab community and coordinate between the political leaderships. It contributes to the creation of a podium for the societal democratic dialogue; to the coordination between youth movements, non governmental institutes, trade unions and the media campaigns executed by the political parties without giving up the principle of competition within them. The chairman of the High Follow-Up Committee should hold meetings to develop this framework as a new stage in the work of the High Follow up Committee. Dialogue between the political parties should begin and decisions should be taken where they should meet expectations of the Arab community from its political leadership.

**A local and factional leadership framework:**

The High Follow-Up Committee of the Arabs in Israel merges up until now between two components, the national factional leadership and the local leadership in spite of various and sometimes contradicting needs presented by these two frameworks. It is important to develop this board for the sake of avoiding future duality. It is important also to include representative of local leadership in mixed Arab Jewish cities.

**A Local Authorities Framework:**

The National Committee of the heads of the local Arab authorities coordinates the relation between the heads of localities and represents the interests of the local authorities. The suggested framework would expand and institutionalize the work of the Committee aiming to benefit from the potential economic force within the local authorities. It would also and develop regional programs and plans that serve the citizens and local authorities. It is important to plan regional activities to the local authorities in the fields of education, sewage, industry, transportation, culture and government services. This framework is held accountable for absorbing the anger of the Arab community arising from the policy of the government. This is particularly true due to the local authorities` position with regards to current process of the government responsibilities` privatization.

**Independent frameworks and frameworks within the Follow-Up Committee:**

The High Follow-Up Committee needs building of national institutions and empowering the existing ones to be able to put up and implement strategic visions for the Palestinian Arab community in Israel. This requires clarification of the roles between the societal institutions both existing and future.

**Organizations to be developed:**
1.  Completion of the track to develop a national elected representative board of the Palestinian society in Israel (a track led by the High Follow-Up Committee)
2.  Development of the work of the National Follow Up Committee of the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities and the creation of executive apparatuses that benefit from the status and abilities of the Arab authorities and defend their rights.
3.  Empowering the existing efforts and creation of executive country branches of the political boards and Arab local authorities with the participation of the independent societies working in the following fields :
    a.  Sub- Committee for the educational and human resource development.
    b.  Sub- Committee for economic and agricultural development
    c.  Sub- Committee for health and welfare.
    d.  Sub- Committee for religious institutions and encouragement of inter faith dialogue.
    e.  Sub- Committee for development of international relations and regional policies.
    f.  Sub- Committee for the development of the social and political status of women.
    g.  Sub- Committee for the affairs of the Negev and the unrecognized villages.
    h.  Sub- Committee for land planning.
    i.  Sub- Committee for media.

Within this context, an organizational structure of the High Follow Up Committee on Arab education should be considered as a form of construction of national institutions to include professionalism and maintaining the ability to influence the political parties and recruiting independent institutions and professional experts that benefit and contribute to the work of the local Arab authorities.

Creation and activation of these boards requires the creation of an executive professional body responsible for the planning stage and finding sources of funding to activate these institutions.

## Participants:

| | Name | Institution |
|---|---|---|
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| 3 | Sheikh Hashem Abdelrahman | Mayor, Um Al Fahem |
| 4 | Wakeem Wakeem | Internally Displaced Institute |
| 5 | Aida Touma | Women against violence Institute |
| 6 | Prof Aziz Haidar | The Hebrew University of Jerusalem |
| 7 | Husam Abu Baker | Ibrahim Fund |
| 8 | Iyad Rabi | Al Ahali Institute |
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| 16 | Nabeeh Bashir | Mada Institute |
| 17 | Saber Rabi | Adam Institute |
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