



יזמות קרן אברהם (ע"ר)
מبادرات صندوق إبراهيم

The Abraham Fund Initiatives

Building a Shared Future for
Israel's Jewish and Arab Citizens

■ בנינו مستقبلًا مشتركًا لليهود والعرب مواطني إسرائيل

בונים עתיד משותף
ליהודים ולערבים אזרחי ישראל

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The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Position on Police Violence against Arab Citizens of Israel

For decades, policing of Arab society in Israel has been characterized by acute under-policing. This is reflected through weak law enforcement, slow response to incidents, non-resolved open cases, and low allocation of funds and resources to effectively respond to violence within Arab society. In parallel, policing of Arab society in Israel is also characterized by alarming over-policing, which is often reflected in ethnic profiling, quasi-military operations in policing activities, intelligence gathering skewed based on perceived security threats and disproportionate use of force.

The tension between these two extremes, over and under-policing, stems from the position taken by the Israeli Police towards Arab citizens: on the one hand, the police is a service provider for citizens and on the other, the police views Arab citizens as a potential security threat and a challenge to public order. The contradiction between the two positions, which is unique to the police's relationship to the Arab minority and no other population group in Israel, makes it difficult to ensure security and provide services to Arab society.

The long-term vacuum in policing services in Arab communities, coupled by high rates of poverty, limited social services and other socioeconomic factors have led to an unprecedented levels of violence within Arab society. Between 2014-2017, the murder rate per 100,000 people was five times higher in the Arab population compared to the Jewish population in Israel. 53% of murder victims and 57% of murder suspects were Arab, and the number of attempted murder victims in Israel was three to four times higher among Arabs. Arabs represented half of aggravated bodily harm victims and suspects, and a third of assault victims and assaults on public servants. 64% to 84% of open cases relating to possession and use of illegal weapons are of Arab citizens.¹ All the while, the crime rate in the Jewish population is declining.

Police conduct during political protests held by Arab citizens is extremely sensitive and requires special caution. Arab-Palestinian citizens, who have historically suffered from institutionalized discrimination and whose state is in conflict with its people, have the legal right to protest Israel's policies in a non-violent manner. Arab leaders have a role to play in leading their elected constituency in these protests. The Israeli police is obligated to allow these protests to take place, even if they are ideologically against such event, and furthermore, ensure safety at protests. The use of violence by the Israeli police during these events results and contributes to the deep mistrust between Arab society and the Israeli police, and prevents the Israeli police from acting efficiently against violence within Arab communities.

Effective policing within Arab society requires determined and effective law enforcement against criminal offenders. It should be expected that the Israeli police use the same level of necessary force used against Jewish criminal offenders of similar nature, the minimum force needed to keep the peace and bring offenders to justice.

¹ Statistics on Serious Violence in the Non-Jewish Sector. Knesset Research and Information Center. 2018

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