

**Sammy Smooha**

# **Still Playing by the Rules**

**Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel 2012**

**Findings and Conclusions**



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## Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel 2012

### Findings and Conclusions

Sammy Smooha



Text Editor (English): Sharon Assaf

Field Work Supervisor: Survey of Arab respondents – Dr. Nohad Ali, Western Galilee College; Survey of Jewish respondents – Dr. Mina Zemach, Dahaf Research Institute

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**The Israel Democracy Institute (IDI)** is a non-partisan “think and do tank” dedicated to strengthening the foundations of Israeli democracy. A 2009 Israel Prize recipient, IDI promotes political reform, democratic values, social cohesion, and solutions in the field of religion and state.

**The Guttman Center for Surveys** at IDI holds the largest, most comprehensive database on public opinion surveys in Israel. Over a span of sixty years, the Center, based in Jerusalem, has applied rigorous, innovative, and pioneering research methods enhanced by its unique “continuing survey.” It has documented the attitudes of the Israeli public regarding thousands of issues, in all aspects of life, in over 1,200 studies that have been conducted since 1947: from everyday concerns to politics, culture, ideology, religion, education, and national security.

**The University of Haifa** is dedicated to academic excellence and social responsibility. Its location provides a unique backdrop for novel interdisciplinary programs, cooperative endeavors with academic institutes around the world and a diverse student body primed to address regional challenges and universal social issues. Jews, Arabs, and new immigrants come together to study, research, share knowledge, and socialize in an atmosphere of coexistence, tolerance, and mutual respect. Instruction is offered within six faculties: Humanities, Social Sciences, Law, Natural Sciences, Social Welfare, and Health Sciences and Education; and the Graduate School of Management. The University’s dual mission of first-rate higher education and service to the community at large is manifested in the equal educational opportunities open to all sectors of society and in its many forms of programs for reducing the gaps between population groups.

**The Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel** was developed at the University of Haifa by Prof. Sammy Smooha, of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Since its inception in 2003, the Index measures the attitudes of Arab and Jewish citizens toward each other and toward the state, drawing on representative national surveys conducted annually. It creates a scientific database that monitors trends of change over time in the attitudes of the Arab minority and Jewish majority. In 2012 the Index became a joint enterprise of the University of Haifa and Israel Democracy Institute.



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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel was inaugurated in 2003 under the aegis of the University of Haifa, becoming a joint project of the University and the Israel Democracy Institute (IDI) in 2012. Prof. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev, then president of the University of Haifa, and Dr. Arye Carmon, president of IDI, gave their blessing to this collaboration, which seeks to contribute to the study of relations between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel, to Arab-Jewish coexistence, and to a resilient democracy in Israel.

The surveys on which the Index is based were conducted by the University of Haifa in conjunction with IDI's Guttman Center for Surveys under the leadership of Prof. Tamar Hermann.

Dr. Nohad Ali of Western Galilee College was responsible for carrying out the survey in the Arab sector, and Dr. Mina Zemach, head of the Dahaf Research Institute, was in charge of the Jewish sector. Both provided assistance in formulating some of the questions, and I wish to express my thanks for their contribution.

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The Beracha Foundation. The report does not reflect the opinions of these foundations or the institutions under whose auspices this research was conducted. I bear sole and full responsibility for its contents.

Sammy Smooha  
Haifa, 2013

## CHAPTER 1

### ABOUT THE INDEX

---

The Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel, based on an Arab public opinion survey and a Jewish public opinion survey carried out every year in the fall, measures attitudes of Arab and Jewish citizens toward each other and toward the state and serves as a tool to monitor trends of change in these attitudes over the years.

The Arab survey draws on 700 face-to-face interviews with a national representative sample of Arab citizens aged 18 and over (including Druze and Bedouin, but excluding Palestinians in East Jerusalem and Druze in the Golan Heights, who are by and large not Israeli citizens). The Jewish survey draws on 700 telephone interviews with a national representative sample of Jews aged 18 and over (including immigrants, the ultra-Orthodox, settlers, and Moshav and Kibbutz members). The sampling error in each survey is plus or minus 3.7%. The Arabs are interviewed by Arab interviewers in Arabic and Jews are interviewed by Jews in Hebrew and Russian, and all are promised full confidentiality. The interviews are conducted on the basis of fixed-choice questionnaires that comprise 190 items for Arabs and 150 items for Jews in 2012.

The Index data are weighted according to the returns of Knesset elections, ensuring full correspondence between reporting on voting in the interviews and the actual election returns. The Index surveys have been conducted since 2003 according to the same design, allowing comparisons of the survey results from 2003 to 2012. The Index questionnaires include some questions which were posed in

surveys of Arabs and Jews that first started in 1976. These questions have continued to be posed up to 2012 and are used as benchmarks to measure long-term trends of change in Arab and Jewish attitudes.

The Index examines sixteen key issues on which Arabs and Jews are likely to differ. These are social and cultural separation, image of the other, alienation, distrust of institutions, deprivation, collective memory, threats, legitimacy of coexistence, regional disputes (mainly the Palestinian question), regional integration, identity, minority leadership, autonomy, means of struggle, options for change (of policy and regime), and overall evaluation of the state of Arab-Jewish relations. In addition to these constants, the Index focuses every year on a specific issue, whether it is one of the constant issues or another important topical issue that may shed light on the relations in the triangle of Arab citizens, Jews, and the state. In the 2012 Index the specific issue was civic service for Arab youth.

In addition to analysis of the findings concerning each issue, the cumulative Index data allows us to examine short-term trends of change for the Index years from 2003, long-term trends of change since surveys of Arabs and Jews started in 1976, and drivers of coexistence (namely, background and other characteristics associated with attitudes toward Arab-Jewish coexistence).

Like other Israeli indexes, mainly the Israeli Democracy Index of the Israel Democracy Institute, the Peace Index of Tel Aviv University and the Israel Democracy Institute, and the National Resilience Index of the National Security Studies Center of the University of Haifa, the Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel has several advantages over incidental public opinion polls. It is a scientific tool for investigating a certain issue, comprehensively and annually, based on national representative surveys of the adult population, enables cross-temporal comparisons in order to examine trends of change beyond random fluctuations, and constitutes a database that provides valuable information to researchers, policy makers, and anyone interested in the topic.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAIN FINDINGS OF THE 2012 INDEX

---

#### 2.1 The Deepening Rift between Arabs and Jews

Israel is a deeply divided society owing to the deep divisions between Arabs and Jews and between the religious and secular. The cultural differences between the Arab and Jewish citizens and the separation of institutions and communities are permanent and appreciable. The two groups are fundamentally divided on principal issues concerning the character of the state, the conflict with the Arab world, and integration into the region.

Yet, since Rabin's assassination in 1995, Arab-Jewish relations have deteriorated as a result of the shattering of the high hopes that the Rabin government instilled in the Arabs, the failure of the Oslo Accords, the October 2000 unrest, the repression of the second Intifada, the military acts of the 2000s, the legislative steps taken and restrictions imposed in order to contain the national struggle of the Arab public and leadership, and the lack of initiation of a state program for achieving socio-economic equality. Despite the rift in and worsening of Arab-Jewish relations, Israel has maintained quiet and stability, but the fears of the breakdown of coexistence and violent outbursts are on the rise.

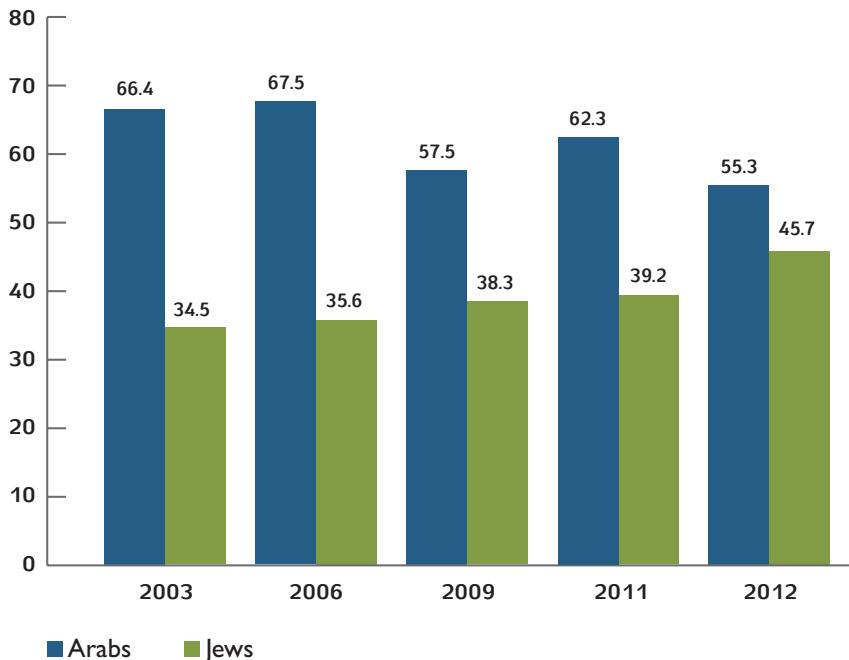
#### 2.2 The Arab Perspective

1. Despite the worsening of Arab-Jewish relations since Rabin's assassination, reflected both in the hardening of Arabs' attitudes and

in the escalation of their protest, the Arab public holds a realistic position regarding its status as a minority in Israel. The 2012 Index found that 55.9% of Arabs reconciled themselves to Israel as a state with a Jewish majority, 60.6% as a state whose language is Hebrew, 53.2% as a state with an Israeli-Hebrew culture, and 60.2% as a state where Saturday is the day of rest. Moreover, 54.7% of the Arabs would prefer to live in Israel than in any other country in the world. Reconciliation with Israel's Jewish character does not mean preference, as the Arabs prefer a binational state to a Jewish and democratic state, nor does it imply justification of the status quo, since 69.6% of the Arab respondents think that it is not justified that Israel maintains a Jewish majority. In addition, the Arabs show a strong commitment to coexistence grounded in acceptance of Israel within the pre-1967 borders, management of relations according to democratic procedures, and relationships based on choice. For example, 80.5% of the Arabs agreed that among the kinds of relationships "between Arabs and Jews [there] should also be relationships that people voluntarily choose such as personal friendship and activity in joint organizations."

2. The potential for integration between Arabs and Jews, two of the world's most separated groups, is far from being realized. 37.1% of the Arab respondents want their children to attend Jewish high schools, 42.4% are in favor of to live in Jewish neighborhoods, and 72.8% want Arab political parties joining coalition governments. Moreover, acceptance of integration is even greater – 45.1% agree to Arab children attending Jewish high schools and 55.3% approve of Arabs living in Jewish neighborhoods. In Arab eyes integration would increase their access to resources and to a less traditional way of life without them having to assimilate into the Jewish population.

**Figure 1. Agree to Arabs living in Jewish neighborhoods, 2003–2012  
(percent)**

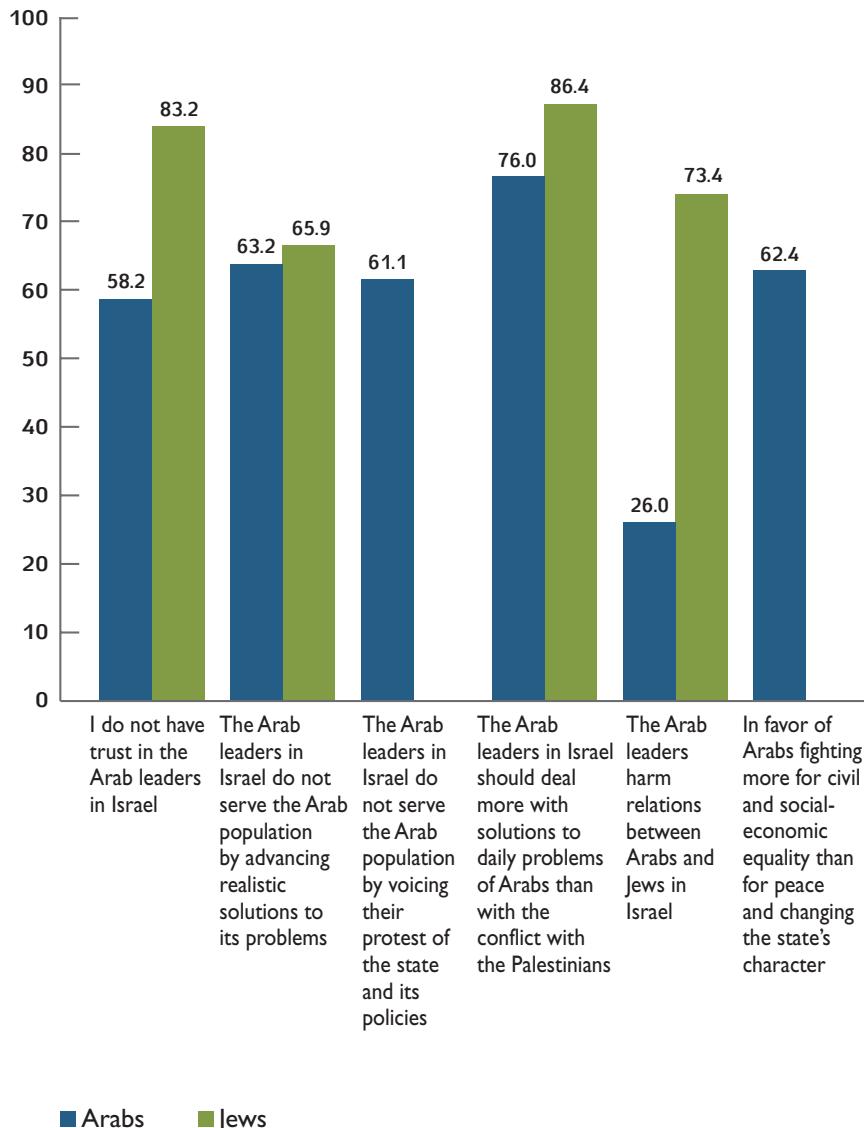


3. The pragmatic approach of Arab citizens is also evident with regard to the adoption of a constitution for Israel. 48.2% of the Arabs responded that in a public referendum they would vote for a constitution that “defines Israel as a Jewish and democratic state and guarantees full citizenship rights to Arabs.” However, in 2006 Arab support for such a referendum reached 70.9%, and has dropped sharply since then.
4. The Arab public shows an ambivalent attitude toward the Arab leadership. On the one hand, a majority of Arabs think that the Arab national leadership institutions truly represent Arab citizens: the Arab political parties (61.9%), the Arab High Follow-Up

Committee (62.7%), and the Committee of Arab Local Councils (55.0%). On the other hand, 58.2% of the Arabs do not trust Arab leaders in Israel: 63.2% think they do not serve the Arab population in advancing solutions to its problems, 61.1% hold that they do not serve the Arab population in protesting against the state and its policies, and 76.0% maintain that they should deal more with settling the daily problems and less with Israel's dispute with the Palestinians. Moreover, 62.4% support, while only 25.5% oppose, the possibility that Arabs will fight more for civil and socio-economic equality than for peace and change of the state's character.

5. But the Arab public's criticism of the government is more severe than is its criticism of Arab leaders. 70.5% of the Arabs say that the government today treats Arabs as second class citizens or as hostile citizens who do not deserve equality. Most Arabs respond harshly with regard to the laws fining commemoration of the Nakba (lit. the Catastrophe, marking the date of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the displacement of the Palestinians in the aftermath), granting authority to admission committees of communal villages to reject candidates, and punishing supporters of the boycott of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and other motions of this sort. 76.2% of Arab respondents in 2011 felt these laws weakened their confidence in coexistence with Jews, and 75.6% reported that these laws diminished their belief in Israel's right to exist.
6. The Arabs feel alienated and threatened in Israel. In 2012, 55.5% said that as Israeli citizens they feel estranged and rejected (54.3% in 2003), 62.4% felt that it is impossible to trust most Jews (55.6% in 2003), 77.8% feared grave violation of their basic rights (71.1% in 2003), and 68.0% were afraid of population transfer (55.4% in 2003).

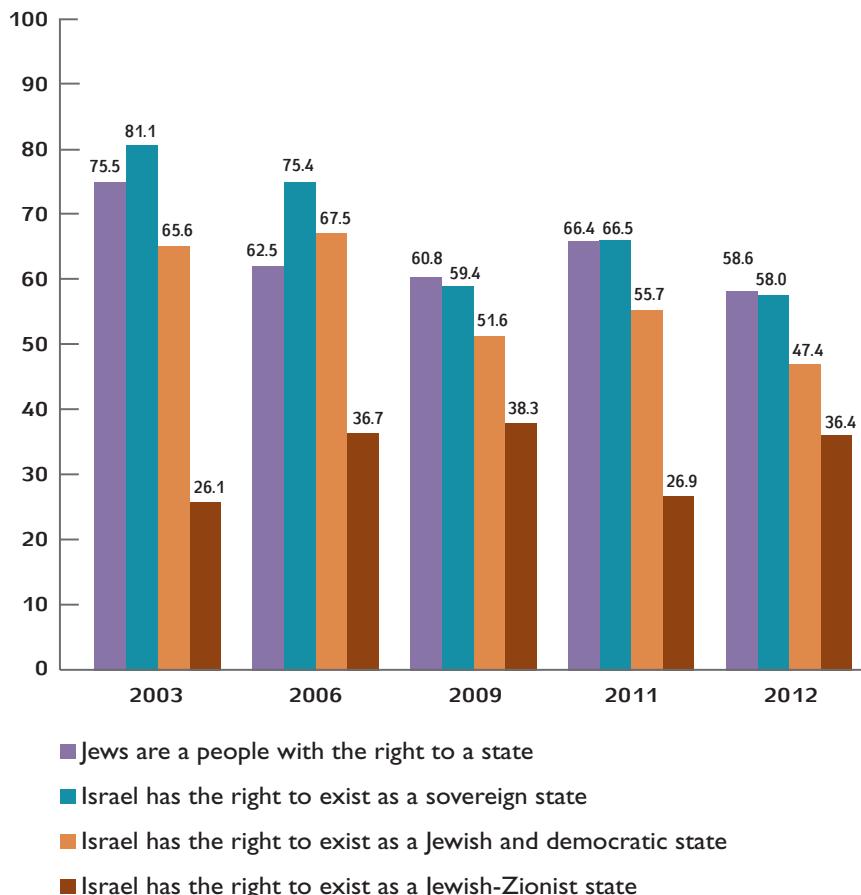
Figure 2. Lack of trust in Arab leaders in Israel, 2012 (percent)



7. Arab respondents rejected all sixteen steps suggested by the survey that Arab citizens take so that the state and Jews treat them with equality, dignity, and trust.<sup>1</sup> For instance, in 2012 only 34.4% agreed that for this stated purpose, Arab citizens should fulfill a form of mandatory service to the state (compared with 43.0% in 2009), 35.3% agreed that Arab citizens will accept Israel as a Jewish and democratic state (compared with 40.3% in 2009), and 33.6% agreed that Arab leaders would refrain from harsh statements against the state (compared with 44.4% in 2009).
8. Differences in these attitudes are noted among Arab population groups. More critical and radical attitudes are displayed by non-Druze, the religious, Arabs with a distinct Palestinian Arab identity without an Israeli component, Arabs lacking ties with Jews, and those who themselves or whose family have been injured by Jews or state institutions (have encountered threats, humiliation, blows, discrimination, harassment by the authorities, land confiscation, displacement from their village or town). Age, gender, and level of education were not found to have an impact on Arab attitudes.
9. A series of domestic and external developments has led to the Arab public's deepening sense of alienation and toughening of attitudes, to the point that the years from 2003 to 2012 were a lost decade in Arab-Jewish relations. The proportion of Arabs denying Israel's right to exist as a state was 20.5% in 1976, 6.8% in 1995 (during the second Rabin government that is considered the Golden Age of Arab-Jewish relations), 11.2% in 2003, and 24.5% in 2012.

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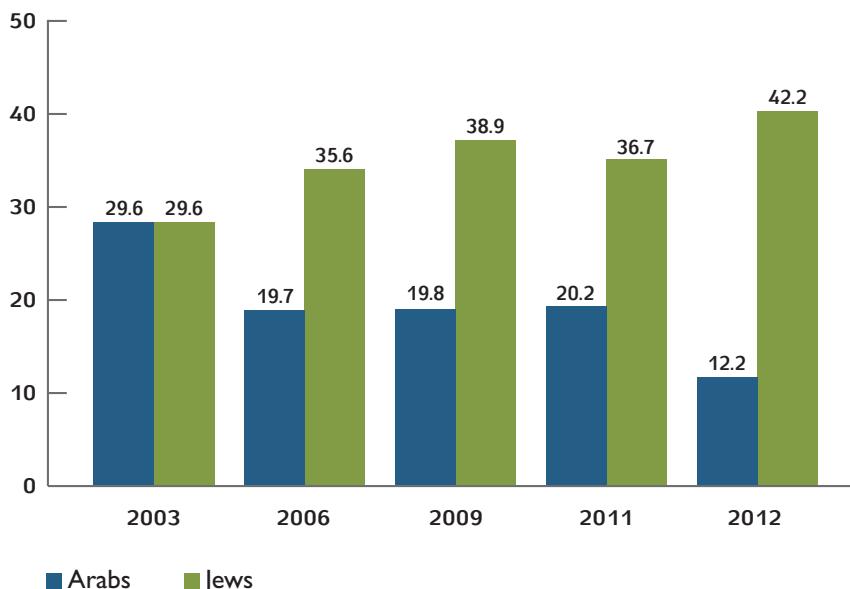
<sup>1</sup> See Table 1, p. 27.

**Figure 3. Israel's right to exist, 2003–2012 (Arabs; percent)**

82.2% of the Arabs in 2012 accused Jews of the Nakba (a rise from 65.3% in 2003), and 47.9% have participated in Nakba commemoration events (up from 12.9% in 2003). Since 1996, and especially since 2006, appreciable hardening of Arab attitudes in all key issues is apparent. The percentage of Arabs holding accommodating and compromising stances has been steadily decreasing and has shrunk to a minority.

10. The deepening of the Arabs' distress, disaffection with the continued government policy toward them, indignation about the protracted occupation, and the toughening of their attitudes toward Jews and the state are unequivocally expressed in the agreement of 58.6% of respondents with the statement that "it is justified that the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip start a third Intifada if the political stalemate continues," and the agreement of 58.2% of respondents with the claim that "it is justified that Arab citizens in Israel begin an Intifada of their own if their situation does not improve significantly." Moreover, only a small and declining minority feel that affiliation to Israeli citizenship, as compared to religion and Palestinian people, is their most important identity—dropping from 29.6% in 2003 to 12.2% in 2012.

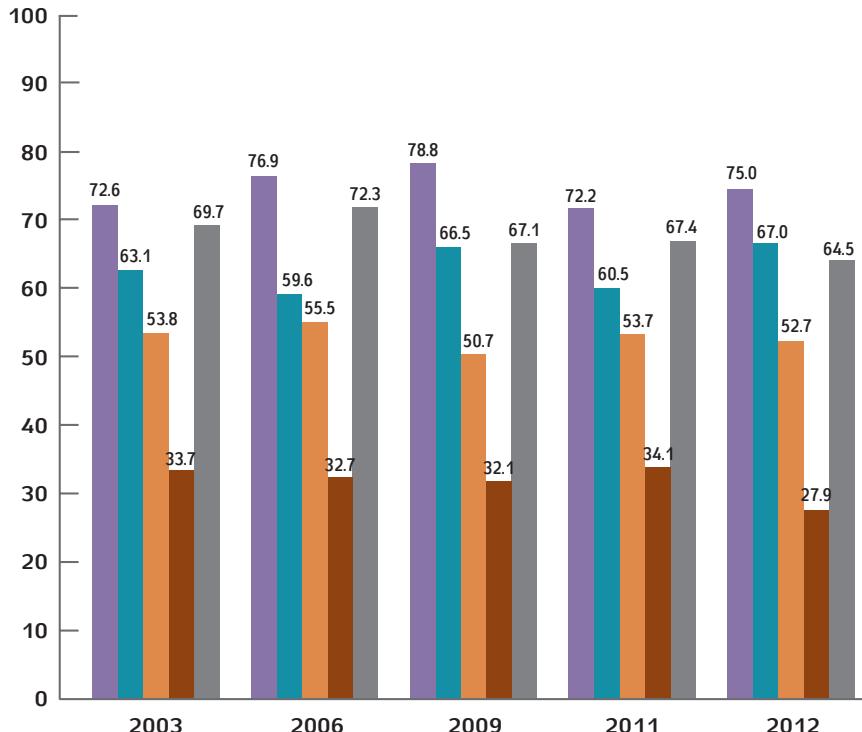
**Figure 4. Israeli citizenship is the most important affiliation, 2003–2012 (percent)**



## 2.3 The Jewish Perspective

1. In contrast to the marked toughening of Arab attitudes, there was no similar change in Jewish attitudes over the years, but rather stability and even some moderation prevailed. The Jews have remained Zionist and resolute in preserving Israel's Jewish-Zionist character. A majority of 92.6% agreed in 2011 that it is justified that Israel maintains a Jewish majority (95.3% in 2006), and 87.8% thought that the Jews should have a right of control over the state (92.8% in 2006), and this Jewish position has remained intact over the years. 91.8% of the Jews in 2012 supported the Zionist claim that Israel has the right to exist as a state catering to the needs of Jews in the country and all over the world.
2. A majority of Jews accept the right of Arabs to live in Israel as a minority despite their fears of the perceived dangers involved. 75.0% of Jewish respondents in 2012 agreed that the Arabs have the right to live in the state as a minority with full citizenship rights (72.6% in 2003). A majority recognized the collective rights of the Arabs to separate religion, culture, and education. Likewise, a majority of 58.3% agreed that the state has to accord Arabs the powers of self-administration of their religious, cultural, and educational institutions (61.7% in 2003). A significant percentage of Jewish respondents were also ready to accept Arab citizens as neighbors (45.7% in 2012, compared to 34.5% in 2003), as students in Jewish schools (54.8% in 2012, up from 51.5% in 2003), and Arab political parties in government coalitions (52.8% in 2012, up from 47.4% in 2003). Most Jews prefer that Israel be integrated into the West rather than the Middle East (65.0% in 2012; 66.4% in 2003).

Figure 5. Arab rights, 2003–2012 (Jews; percent)



- Recognize the right of Arabs to live in the state as a minority with full civil rights
- Accept Arabs as full members in Israeli society
- Believe the state should grant certain preference to Jews over Arabs
- Deny Arabs the right to vote for the Knesset
- Will choose the Jewish character of the state if it clashes with its democratic character

3. Jews are fearful of Arab citizens and do not trust them, though attitudes have softened over the course of the decade since the Index first began gathering its data. In 2012, 57.6% of the Jews reported avoiding Arab areas in Israel out of fear or rejection (compared to 73.1% in 2003), 51.5% reported fear of the high Arab birthrate (compared to 70.1% in 2003), 64.9% fear Arabs endangering the state because of their struggle to change its Jewish character (71.8% in 2003), 27.9% favor denying Arabs the right to vote in Knesset elections (35.9% in 2003), 69.4% believe that an Arab citizen who defines himself or herself as “a Palestinian Arab in Israel” cannot be loyal to the state and its laws (75.6% in 2003), 64.5% would choose the Jewish character of the state in case of a contradiction with its democratic character (69.7% in 2003), and in 2011, 39.4% reported support for transfer of some Arab localities in the Triangle to a future Palestinian state (compared to 45.3% in 2003).
4. Jewish respondents approved of the survey-recommended steps that would enable Arabs to feel that Israel is their country and that they are equal citizens. Their favorable response was on the condition that these steps do not harm national security, blur the state’s Jewish identity, or require affirmative action for Arabs.<sup>2</sup> In 2012, 51.9% of Jews agreed that the state grant recognition to the unrecognized Arab communities (65.1% in 2009), 54.9% agreed that the state mandate by law that Arab citizens receive suitable representation in state institutions and other public bodies (66.3% in 2009), and 55.9% agreed that the state mandate by law that Arab citizens receive their proportional share of the state budget (69.0% in 2009). On the other hand, only 26.9% agreed that security checks at border crossings should be the same for Arabs and Jews (33.2% in 2009), only 24.5% agreed that proper expression should be given to Arabs in the state’s symbols, flag,

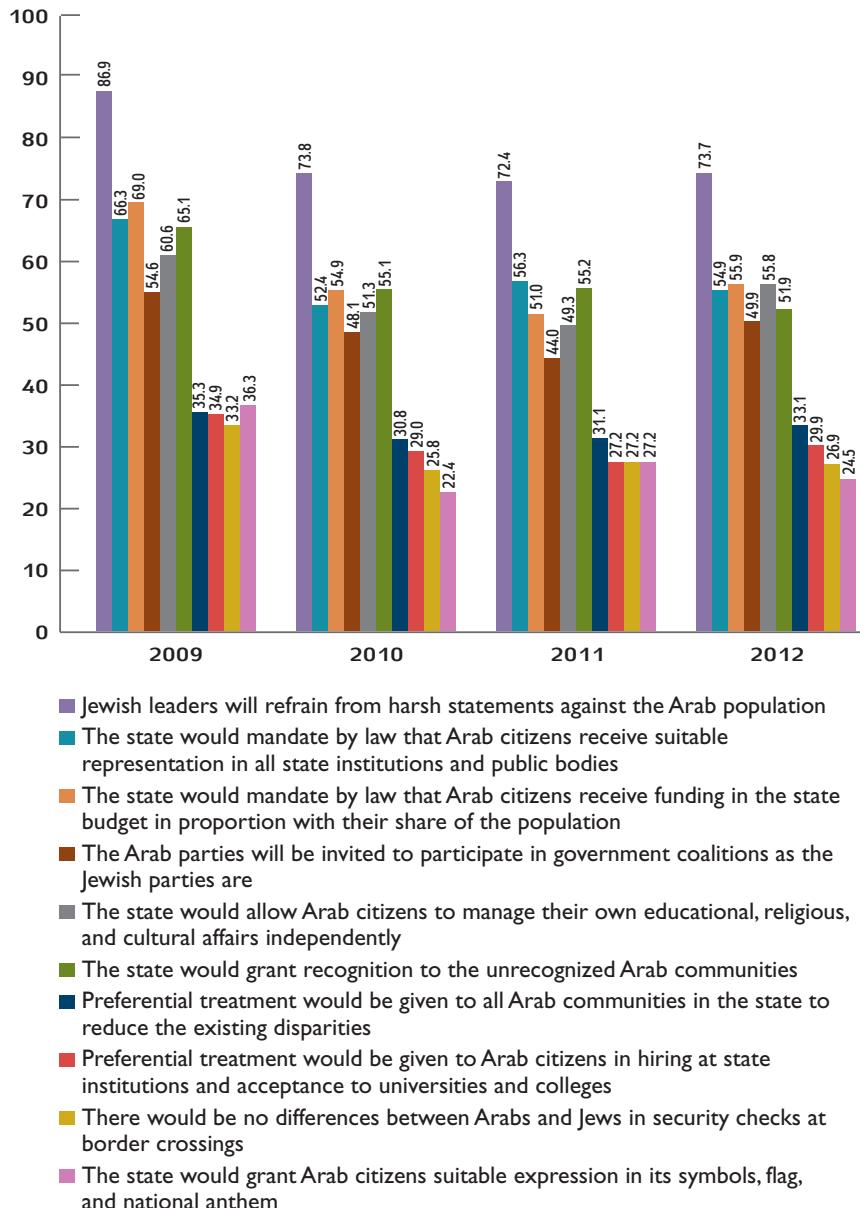
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<sup>2</sup> See Table 2, p. 29.

and national anthem in order that Arabs may be able to identify with it (compared with 36.3% in 2009), and only 29.9% agreed that affirmative treatment should be given to Arab citizens in job placement in state institutions and in admission to universities and colleges (34.9% in 2009). These rates of agreement are by no means insignificant, with a decrease noted from 2009 to 2010, however, the readiness of Jews to take significant steps to enhance equality and integration and instill in Arabs a sense of belonging and acceptance has stabilized from 2010 to 2012.

5. Jews largely differ in their attitudes toward the Arab minority. Those holding critical and negative attitudes include the ultra-Orthodox and national-religious, 18–24 year-olds, Jews who have not completed a higher education, Jews whose most important membership is Judaism or the Jewish people (not Israeli citizenship), Jews who define themselves as belonging to the moderate political right or the right, Jews without Arab friends or who do not spend time with Arabs, and Jews who have been subject to threats, humiliation, or blows by Arab citizens.
6. There is no evidence in the Index data and in the surveys conducted since 1980 of a toughening of Jewish attitudes toward Israel's Arab citizens. In most cases stability or moderation, not toughening of attitudes, was found. This generalization stands in contradiction to the dominant view according to which the Jews have undergone an unrelenting drift toward religion and the political right, and as a result their intolerance of the Arab minority has been on the rise. The research findings affirm the alternative interpretation that along with the increase in power, prominence, and audacity of the radical right, the main trend in Jewish politics is the formation of a large and viable political center and the convergence of the Jewish public from all sides into the center. This shift overall produces stability and moderation of Jewish attitudes (mainly the moderation of right-wingers who have moved to the political center).

**Figure 6. Steps Jews are willing to take so that Arabs will feel that Israel is their country and they are equal citizens, 2009–2012 (percent)**



## CHAPTER 3

### CONCLUSIONS

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Analysis of developments since 1996, the 2003 to 2012 Index findings, and the 1976 to 2012 attitude surveys leads to several conclusions regarding Arab-Jewish relations in Israel.

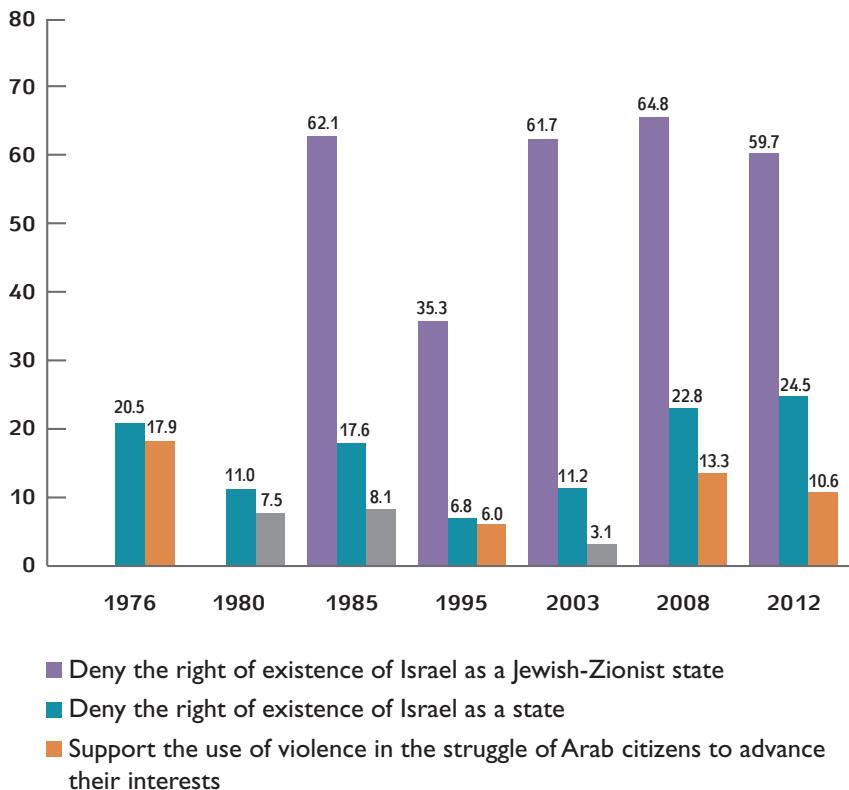
#### 3.1 Toughening Attitudes versus Stability

For the ten years spanning 2003 and 2012, the Index is marked by the trend of a toughening of Arab attitudes toward the Jewish character of the state and its Jewish majority but by stability or even a certain moderation in Jewish attitudes toward Israel's Arab citizens.

The hardening of Arab attitudes stems primarily from the wide gap between the high expectations raised by the second Rabin government (1992–1995) and the stark reality of its aftermath, the continued discrimination and exclusion of Arabs, and the ongoing occupation, Jewish settlement building, violence, feelings of hopelessness, and rising tensions involving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and above all—the growing disaffection with the current formula of the Jewish and democratic state.

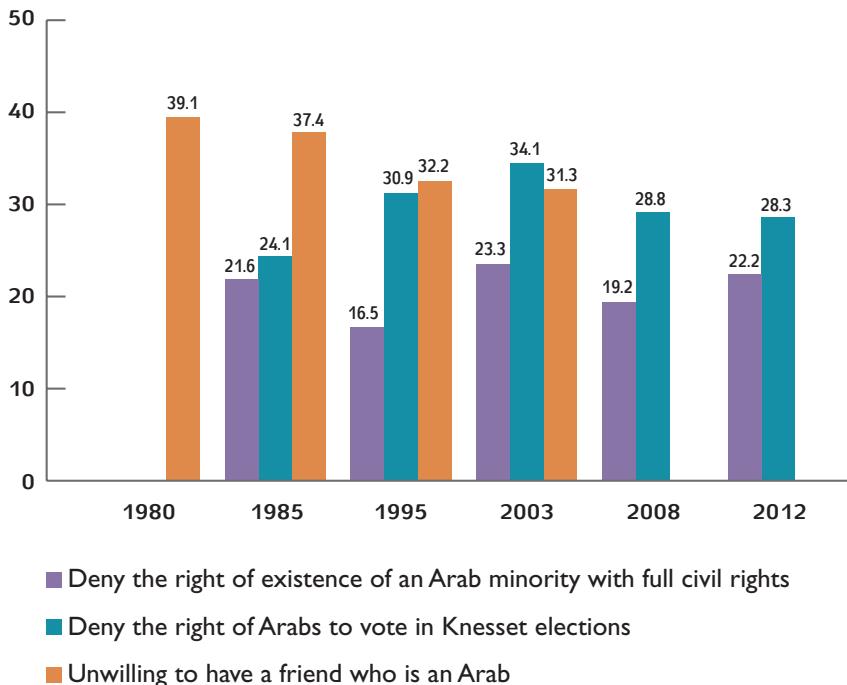
A similar trend is observed also in the three and half decades since the first Land Day strike in 1976 that marked the beginning of Arab mass protest. In addition, the Arab attitudes after 1996 are more critical than before 1996 and their graveness has further intensified since 2006. On the other hand, since 1980 there is no hardening of Jewish attitudes regarding the Arab minority.

**Figure 7. Militant and rejectionist attitudes of Arabs, 1976–2012  
(percent)**



The first decade of the 2000s was a lost decade for Arab-Jewish coexistence. During this time there was not only no improvement in the status of the Arab minority and in the infrastructure of coexistence but there was also a regression. Relations between Arabs and Jews worsened and Arab attitudes continued to harden. These regressive processes threaten the relative tranquility in Arab-Jewish relations. The deterioration will continue unless the state spearheads a new policy for increasing equality and integration.

Figure 8. Rejectionist attitudes of Jews, 1980–2012 (percent)



### 3.2 Aversion to Concessions that Would Improve the Relationship between Arabs and Jews

A comprehensive look at the Arab and Jewish respondents' attitudes surrounding the steps suggested by the survey to improve Arab-Jewish relations shows that while Jews are open to a degree of change, the Arabs perceive themselves as the absolute victim, expect the Jewish population to make all the concessions, while refusing to take any steps in order to win the trust and goodwill of the State and of the Jews or to motivate the latter to affect change.

Although the Future Vision documents assume coexistence in Israel within the Green Line and democratic Arab struggle, they

set forth an extreme goal and place the responsibility for change on the Jews and the state alone. According to these documents, all the changes required from the Arabs themselves are internal social changes that are supposed to better their lifestyles and propel them to intensify their endeavor of turning Israel into a binational state.

**Table I. Steps that Arabs are willing to take so that the state and the Jews will relate to them based on equality, dignity, and trust – Arab respondents, 2009–2012 (percent)**

	<b>Arabs</b>			
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Peace and the Palestinian question</b>				
Arab citizens would not identify publicly with the Arab side if Israel were attacked verbally or physically	32.0	27.0	33.2	23.2
Arab leaders would unequivocally condemn violent acts of Arabs against Jews in Israel	46.9	33.2	46.5	35.7
Arab citizens would consider Israel their country, and support it in the event of a conflict with a Palestinian state	32.3	25.6	25.1	20.3
<b>Transitional justice</b>				
Arab citizens would not publicly mark Nakba Day	23.8	30.8	19.2	17.5
Arab citizens would not demand that the displaced (internal refugees) be permitted to reestablish their destroyed villages	22.1	25.2	20.2	18.8
Arab citizens would not see the Jews as foreign colonizers who stole the country's lands from the Arabs	34.2	30.3	28.3	29.0



→		<b>Arabs</b>			
		2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Equal duties</b>					
	Arab citizens would fulfill some form of mandatory service to the state	43.0	34.2	47.0	34.4
<b>Means of struggle</b>					
	Arab citizens would refrain from protesting overseas against the state	33.9	28.3	27.9	31.0
	Arab leaders would refrain from harsh statements against the state	44.4	36.2	42.0	33.6
<b>Identity</b>					
	As long as there is no peace between Israel and the Palestinians, Arab citizens would not define their identity as “Palestinian Arabs in Israel”	27.3	30.9	30.4	26.3
	Arab citizens would not demand recognition as a Palestinian national minority	21.6	23.2	23.7	19.3
<b>Legitimacy of Israel</b>					
	Arab citizens would accept Israel as a Jewish and democratic state	40.3	34.8	38.8	35.3
	Arab citizens would accept Israel as the state of all Jews worldwide, and not only the Jews in Israel	25.7	27.1	24.6	22.8
	Arab citizens would refrain from fighting to change the Jewish-Zionist character of the state	25.2	20.9	26.3	27.8
	Arab citizens would waive the right of return of Palestinian refugees to the State of Israel	19.1	20.4	16.5	16.7
	Arab citizens would recognize the right of the Jews to determine the language, culture, symbols, and policies of the state while recognizing the needs of Arab citizens	41.5	38.0	41.1	35.9

**Table 2. Steps that Jews are willing to take so that Arab citizens feel that Israel is their country and they are citizens with equal rights, or to improve Arab-Jewish relations – Jewish respondents, 2009–2012 (percent)**

	<b>Jews</b>			
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Peace and the Palestinian question</b>				
Jews and Palestinians would make painful concessions, and a Palestinian state would be established on the 1967 borders with the option of territorial exchange	42.0	43.5	43.5	42.3
Israel and the Arab states would make painful concessions, and achieve normal relations and peace	74.2	66.5	64.8	68.0
There would be no differences between Arabs and Jews in security checks at border crossings	33.2	25.8	27.2	26.9
<b>Transitional justice</b>				
As part of peace with the Palestinians, the state would provide compensation in land or money to Arab citizens for lands confiscated from them	49.6	44.1	49.8	44.0
The state would recognize its responsibility for the Nakba (the catastrophe that happened to the Palestinians in the 1948 war)	15.5	14.4	15.6	12.7
Mosques and Muslim cemeteries would be restored	56.0	51.1	*	*



→	Jews				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	
<b>Civil rights</b>					
The state would guarantee the rights and security of its Arab citizens, and take firm measures against anyone who threatens them	88.9	78.1	80.4	82.0	
Jewish leaders would refrain from harsh statements against the Arab population	86.9	73.8	72.4	73.7	
The state would ensure that Arab citizens could live in any community that they choose	42.0	37.6	37.2	42.8	
<b>Resources</b>					
The state would grant recognition to the “unrecognized” Arab communities, which currently have no official status, and allocate resources to them (e.g., hooking them up to water and electricity) that recognized communities receive	65.1	55.1	55.2	51.9	
The state would mandate by law that Arab citizens receive suitable representation in all state institutions and public bodies	66.3	52.4	56.3	54.9	
The state would mandate by law that Arab citizens receive funding in the state budget in proportion with their share of the population	69.0	54.9	51.0	55.9	
The Arab parties would be invited to participate in government coalitions, as the Jewish parties are	54.6	48.1	44.0	49.9	
The state would implement an emergency program to close the gaps between Arab and Jewish citizens	61.6	51.3	49.6	51.0	
New mixed neighborhoods would be established where Arabs and Jews would live together	38.4	39.2	37.0	43.4	



→	<b>Jews</b>				
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	
State lands would be allocated to develop communities in the Arab sector	44.1	38.0	38.7	40.5	
A state authority would be established for Jewish-Arab equality and coexistence	62.9	54.9	*	*	
<b>Affirmative action</b>					
Preferential treatment would be given to Arab citizens in hiring at state institutions and acceptance to universities and colleges	34.9	29.0	27.2	29.9	
Preferential treatment would be given to all Arab communities in the state to reduce the existing disparities	35.3	30.8	31.1	33.1	
<b>National minority status</b>					
Arabic would be used in state institutions on par with Hebrew, and would be a mandatory subject in Jewish schools	51.2	49.5	47.7	48.5	
It would be required by law for public services to be given in both Arabic and Hebrew	*	63.7	*	*	
The state would recognize Arab citizens as Palestinians, and ensure their right to maintain ties with the Palestinian people and the Arab nation	35.0	30.9	27.5	28.2	
It would be required by law for all signs to be in both Arabic and Hebrew	68.8	66.4	*	*	
<b>Autonomy</b>					
The state would allow Arab citizens to manage their educational, religious, and cultural affairs independently	60.6	51.3	49.3	55.8	



→	Jews			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
The state would recognize a top body elected by Arab citizens to represent them	55.7	43.8	43.3	47.5
The state would be required to consult** with the leaders of Arab citizens on important decisions affecting the Arab population	80.1	65.0	60.7	65.8
The state would recognize, and support the establishment of, an Arab university on equal standing with other universities in Israel	45.3	39.8	38.6	39.4
<b>Character of the state</b>				
The state would grant Arab citizens suitable expression in its symbols, flag, and national anthem	36.3	22.4	27.2	24.5
The Law of Return (which grants only Jews the right to immigrate to Israel and immediately receive Israeli citizenship) would be abolished	19.8	16.1	*	*
An annual state holiday commemorating coexistence between Arabs and Jews would be instituted	64.1	55.0	*	*
A symbol that Arabs can identify with would be added to the national flag	16.5	12.7	*	*

\* Question was not asked.

\*\* In 2009, the wording was “the state would consult.”

### 3.3 National Struggle

Since 1967, Arab citizens have experienced politicization and empowerment as a result of the developments in their milieu. Israel has undergone a comprehensive process of democratization (with a certain regression during the term of the rightest government Israel has ever had, in 2009–2012) and the spread of Jewish protest movements, changes that created opportunities for Arabs to organize and fight against discrimination and exclusion. The Arabs cumulated power and exacted a price for their maltreatment by the state and the Jews. From the beginning of the 1970s, under Rakah leadership, they concentrated their fight for civil equality and achievement of peace according to the plan of two states for two peoples.

The Oslo Accords fostered in them a feeling that these two goals are about to be fulfilled, but Rabin's assassination shattered their dreams. The improvement in the state's treatment of them and their people ceased, and the eruption of violence disillusioned them. They also realized that no salvation is forthcoming for them from the Palestinian leadership and a future Palestinian state. For this reason they shifted their collective goal from protest to national struggle. The Arab leadership of Hadash, Balad, and Ra'am-Ta'al is no longer satisfied with protest to uproot discrimination, obtain civil equality, and establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel, but rather strives to change Arabs' national status, obliterate Israel's Jewish identity, and form a binational state instead of the Jewish nation state. This endeavor received formal expression in the Future Vision documents that challenge both the Jewish state and the Palestinian national movement. The idea of making Israel a binational state requires that the Jews renounce the Zionist project and the Jewish state and signals to the Palestinian leaders that the Palestinian state will not offer a sufficient remedy to the Israeli segment of the Palestinian people. The objective of the national struggle that the Arabs are conducting vis-à-vis the State of Israel and the Palestinian national movement is to

escape from their double marginality—within Israeli society and even more within the Palestinian people—and to gain attention, respect, and help from both sides.

### 3.4 Arab Leadership

The state and the Jewish majority, led by the political right, interpret the Arab national struggle as an existential threat. Voices are heard from among them explicitly proclaiming that the menace from within by the Arabs in Israel is graver than the external Palestinian peril and the other enemies in the region. Jewish defensive democracy embarked on a struggle for containment. The anti-Arab legislation in the Knesset is a signal sent from the heads of the state to the Arab leadership to cease and desist because its fight is on the verge of crossing the red line.

The Jewish public and leadership perceive the Arab leadership as untrustworthy, unrepresentative, and ineffective, while the Arab public views it as representative but untrustworthy and ineffective. This is a situation that makes it hard to advance Arab-Jewish relations because trustworthy, representative, and effective minority leadership in the eyes of the minority, the majority, and the state is a central factor for promoting minority-majority relations. In the absence of power-sharing, the ideological Arab leadership is engaged in protest and national struggle, but the pragmatic Arab minority is expecting it to share power, change policy, deal with daily problems, and come up with practical solutions. The Jewish leadership does not feel the need or public responsibility to affect a basic change, while the Arab leadership is not ready to modify its strategy in order to generate change in policy and in the attitudes of the Jewish leadership and public. The outcome is a lingering standstill. Both the Jewish and Arab sides shake off public responsibility and avoid taking real steps for change.

### 3.5 Peace Makers or Spoilers?

For years, many have expressed the view or indulged in the hope that Arabs in Israel would be “a bridge for peace” with the Palestinians and the Arab world for being part of both sides and their strong stake in peace. However, this expectation is not realistic. The Arabs cannot fulfill the role of peace makers because they are absolutely on the Arab side and hence cannot serve as a fair mediator. Moreover, they lack the power and resources that are vital for a conflict manager (like the United States for instance). On the contrary, the Arab minority is liable to perform the role of “peace spoiler.” The Arab citizens might impede the attainment and stabilization of a peace treaty with the Palestinians if they conduct a struggle to include their own demands in it, if they open an Intifada of their own, if they join a Palestinian Intifada, or if in the national referendum they vote against a permanent settlement that ignores their demands from the state. Improvement of the Arab condition in Israel can curb this dire development.

### 3.6 The Infrastructure of Coexistence

Despite the deep rift between Arabs and Jews and the trend of toughening Arab attitudes, the Index findings point to the sustained infrastructure of Arab-Jewish coexistence in Israel. A majority of Arabs and a majority of Jews believe in a shared society, accept the state in its pre-1967 borders as the arena for their relations, feel Israel is a good place to live, are committed to democracy as a mechanism for managing their mutual relations, and agree that civil equality is the basis for coexistence and an important state goal.

A majority of Arabs, around 55%, also reconciles itself with Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, and resigns itself to it being a state with a Jewish majority, a Hebrew language, an Israeli-Hebrew culture, and a Jewish calendar. Arab reconciliation with a Jewish state is conditioned on full civil equality and fulfillment of Arab national aspirations by establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank and

Gaza Strip. It is clear that sharp power asymmetry between the Jewish state and the Jewish majority on the one hand and the Arab minority on the other underpins this reconciliation. Yet this is not the main factor for the continuous quiet and stability—a sharp power asymmetry also prevails between Israel and the Palestinians under occupation but it has not prevented terrorism, mass revolts, struggle by diverse means, and repression.

### **3.7 Conditions of Sustained Calm and Stability**

The conditions conducive to the sustained calm and stability of Arab-Jewish relations are as follows:

- 1. The Israelization of the Arabs, which offsets and reduces the effect of their Palestinization and Islamization.** An Arab in Gaza or Nablus experiences Palestinization without Israelization whereas an Arab in Nazareth or Jaffa experiences Palestinization with Israelization. The process of Israelization that an Arab in Israel goes through moderates his Palestinization, ties him to Israel and draws him nearer to Jews in language, culture, lifestyle, and means of struggle. His status as an Israeli citizen carves a destiny for him that is divergent from that of a non-citizen Palestinian. In the same vein, a member of the Islamic Movement in Israel is not only linked in life to Israel but is also aware of being a member of a Muslim minority that does not stand a chance of becoming a majority and taking over the country. He will become more moderate than a member of the Islamic Movement in Egypt, Afghanistan, the West Bank, or Gaza Strip, in which Islamization not only fails to set limits but also heightens expectations of an Islamic revolution.
- 2. The resilience of Israel as a state.** The continued democratization accounts for the Arabs' ability to conduct a legal and orderly struggle, provides services and benefits, and promotes a

policy that differentiates Palestinian citizens from non-citizen Palestinians. The rule of law and procedural democracy that Israel upholds guarantee Arabs participation in parliamentary and extra-parliamentary politics, making it unnecessary to turn to illegal measures. If Arabs resort to subversion and violence, they will be subdued and fail. Additionally, Israel is a welfare state that especially benefits the Arabs because they are over represented among the needy, have large families, lower incomes, and underdeveloped communities. Moreover, Israel definitely does not treat its Arab citizens as it treats the Palestinians across the Green Line. The Arabs in Israel enjoy freedom of movement, access to employment all over the country, the right to vote for the Knesset, welfare services, living conditions of a citizen, and a future in a democratic state, as opposed to the insecure life and future of a subject living under military occupation or siege, or in the diaspora.

3. **The shift of the Jewish majority to the center and the state's distinction between Palestinians on the two sides of the Green Line.** Israeli politics is undergoing a process of centrism. There is a move from the left and right to the center which has become large and attractive despite its instability. Right-wingers who move to the center moderate their political attitudes and become more tolerant toward Arab citizens. This fact accounts for the lack of a trend of hardening attitudes among the Jewish public. Yet, a vocal Jewish radical right has emerged. It leverages its power by pushing some legislation and legal motions that assault the Arab minority and create a nationalist and non-democratic atmosphere. This radical right failed in taking over the state and radicalizing the Jewish public, but it succeeded in reinforcing the alienation of the Arab minority and in engendering growing fear of collapse of democracy among the elites of the center and the left.

**4. The Palestinian national movement assigns to the Palestinians in Israel the role of a political lobby for the Palestinian people and does not expect them to join the Palestinian resistance movement and to undermine the existence of the state.** Like Israeli governments, the PLO and the Palestinian Authority distinguish between Palestinians outside Israel (including Arabs in East Jerusalem) and inside Israel (“Arabs of the interior”). They do not see themselves as representative of the Arab citizens, do not reject Israel’s policy that Israeli Arab problems are Israel’s internal affairs, do not recruit them for terrorism and war against Israel, and do not call on them to boycott Knesset elections and disrupt law and order. They consider them as an integral part of Israel and urge them to support the peace movement in Israel and to act politically for the Palestinian cause. This stance gives legitimacy to the existence of the State of Israel and to the continued stay of a Palestinian Arab minority in it. Only in special circumstances does the Palestinian Authority take into account the needs of Arabs in Israel. Its rejection of the demand of the Netanyahu government to recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people is influenced by pressure from the Israeli Arab leaders who view this demand as over-determination of the Jewish-Zionist character of the state, but the main consideration is that such recognition might put an end to the right of return to Israel of Arab refugees. Moreover, even in these exceptional cases the Palestinian Authority does not intervene directly in relations between the State of Israel and its Arab citizens. As a matter of fact, Arab citizens have a feeling which is grounded in reality that just as they are marginal to Israeli society, they are marginal to the Palestinian people. The prime mover of the Future Vision documents was the feeling that the Palestinian national movement does not represent them, their interests differ from the interests of the other segments of

the Palestinian people, and they should fight directly vis-à-vis the State of Israel for improving their status.

##### **5. Non-intervention of the international community in Israel's internal affairs and in its policies toward the Arab minority.**

The United Nations, the European Union, and international non-governmental organizations support Arab civil society organizations, mostly with financial aid, but they do not press Israel to change its character or its policy toward the Arab minority. The UN partition resolution of 1947 recognizes Israel as a Jewish state, a recognition that is accepted by most countries in the world except the Arab world. The international criticism of and pressures on Israel focus on termination of occupation and the need to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

#### **3.8 Mutual Red Lines**

The toughening of Arab attitudes is the outcome of a certain weakening of these conditions. But these cohesive intergroup forces are still strong enough to ensure a modus vivendi between the two sides. Both Arabs and Jews, and certainly the state, do not want to break the rules of the game. Each side is cautious not to cross the red lines that the other side has drawn.

The red lines that the state and the Jewish majority drew for the Arabs are avoidance of security violations, non-infraction of law and order outside the Arab communities, non-adoption of steps that would cause international interference in Israel's internal affairs, and not harming the Jewish-Zionist character of the state. The test lies in Arab behavior, not so much in Arab attitudes. This is why the toughening of Arab attitudes does not alarm the authorities.

The red lines that the Arabs and their leaders have drawn for the state and the Jewish majority include, among others, non-denial of Arab basic rights, non-confiscation of large tracts of Arab lands,

non-imposition of military rule, non-repeal of the Arab exemption from military and civil service, avoidance of a blatant and manifest anti-Arab policy in the allocation of services and resources, and the prohibition of terror-tactics against Arab citizens.

The mutual respect of red lines is a common interest. Neither side has an interest in crossing them because the price that each side might pay is high. This is the lesson learned from the October 2000 Arab uprising that sharpened the red lines.

### **3.9 A New Formula for a Jewish and Democratic State**

In order to better cope with the division, discord, and conflict between Arabs and Jews, it is essential to reach peace with the Palestinians and the Arab world. A peace agreement will terminate the status of the Palestinian Arab minority as part of an active enemy.

There is also a need to fashion a more balanced formula of a Jewish and democratic state that will be fairer to the Arabs and tolerable by Jews. In the new and reformed Israel, that has a friendly Palestinian state next door, discrimination and exclusion of Arabs will be abolished and the Arabs will be granted full civil equality, state recognition as a Palestinian national minority, cultural autonomy, representation in the state power structure, proportional share of the state budget, and a state duty to consult with Arab political parties represented in the Knesset on matters vital to the Arab minority. The Arabs, like the Jews, will fulfill a duty of service to the state. In this way most of the demands set forth by the Future Vision documents will be met and the Arabs will cease their struggle to transform Israel into a binational state and accept Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.