

Mr. Perez De Cuellar, General Secretary United Nations  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. De Cuellar,

As a board member of a NGO on the Question of Palestine, accredited by the United Nations, I was quite shocked when I read about your statement of 13 May 1991 criticizing the General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism.

I am myself a Jew born in Palestine in 1941. For many of us Jews it is clear as sunshine at noon that Zionism is a racist ideology and that the State of Israel is a racist Apartheid state. I join hereby two documents supporting my claim: A statement denouncing Zionism and supporting Palestinian rights, signed by some three hundred Jews, mostly intellectuals, writers and scholars; and an article published recently in the Israeli respectable daily paper *Ha'aretz* by a Jewish Israeli, Urzi Ornan, concerning the Israeli apartheid legislation and practice. In addition Dr. Uri Davis, a veteran Israeli champion of human rights, who is now living in Britain and teaches in Exeter University, has published a book *Israel: An Apartheid State* and published by Zed Books, London.

There are more and more Jews who understand now that the State of Israel cannot be democratic and Jewish at the same time. Either it is the State of those professing the Jewish religion in the world or the State of its inhabitants, regardless of religion and ethnicity. This awareness is reflected in the growing number of writings by Jews and Israelis on this subject.

Your statement of 13 May is therefore a heavy blow against democracy and justice for my homeland. I hope it is based on a temporary misperception and that you will continue to firmly uphold, conforming to your mandate, resolutions of the General Assembly.

Sincerely yours,  
Elias Davidsson, composer  
Reykjavik, 5.7.1991

settlement, development and lease to such inhabitants and citizens as are of Jewish origin only.

It is proper to call a spade a spade: this is racist, apartheid legislation.

We ought not blind our eyes with vain casuistry: is the meaning of «Jewish origin» Jewish religious origin, or national origin or ethnic origin and what is exactly the subtle difference between discrimination on the basis of religion, nationality or ethnicity? Racial discrimination is not discrimination on the basis of skin colour. Racial discrimination is discrimination also on the basis of skin colour and also on the basis of origin (offspring of a Jewish mother) and also on the basis of ethnic origin (Ashkenazi versus Sefardi). This obtains in the language of human beings who are committed to a universal value system. Human beings who wish to evade or exclude themselves from this commitment can do so only by way of serious violation of the principles of intellectual moral integrity, pretending that the profound discrimination between a person recognised in law by the state as Jewish versus a person not recognised by the state as Jewish is not racial discrimination because it is «colour blind».

There obtains a correct consensus in the peace camp in Israel against the occupation, against the continued Zionist settlement in the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war, for Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, for an international peace conference under UN auspices with the participation of all parties concerned with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, including the PLO on equal footing. Opposition to the occupation and support for the Palestinian intifada are cornerstones for any relevant critical position regarding the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. But contrary to the view of many in the peace camp in Israel, the root of the solution to the conflict and the root of the solution to the profound structural discrimination in the State of Israel between those recognised by the State as Jewish versus those who are not recognised as Jewish is not found in the principle of political and territorial separation between the State of Israel and the State of Palestine. The root of the solution can be found in the first instance in a clear and unequivocal distinction between three categories:

- One legal: citizenship
- One political: nationality
- One confessional: religion

The political pretension of political Zionism was to establish a state with a guaranteed demographic Jewish majority; a state where the majority of its citizens have Jewish (Israeli) citizenship, Jewish nationality and Jewish religion. Such political pretensions as conceived by political Zionism can be maintained – and then not for a very long period – only on the basis of racist apartheid legislation and a regime of occupation. Any democratic alternative must distinguish emphatically and clearly between citizenship, nationality and religion.

The State of Israel in whatever boundaries never was and never will be a single nationality state. The future of the State of Israel is contestable, but if it has a political democratic future at all in the next decade, let alone in the next century, then it is a future as a bi-national state without the guarantee of a demographic majority for such of its inhabitants as are defined today by the state as Jewish. The most feverish dreams of transfer in the minds of Kahanists (followers of the assassinated Rabbi Meir Kahane's *Kach* party) and Zeevists (followers of Rehavam Zeevi's *Moladet* party) or others will not alter the destiny of the State of Israel as a bi-national state. Any attempt to realise such criminal nightmares of transfer will fail. ►

a state with a guaranteed demographic Jewish majority, must be rejected from a moral point of view, because it is based on racism, and is not valid from a practical point of view, because it is destined to fail.

The United Nations defines racism (racial discrimination) in Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: «In this Convention, the term, *racial discrimination*, shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life» (Article 1, General Assembly Resolution 2106 A (XX), 21 December 1965).

In the State of Israel as a sovereign Jewish state in its political Zionist meaning the cornerstones of Knesset legislation are racist. For instance: The Absentees Property Law on the one part and the Law of Return on the second part (1950) are designed to guarantee a demographic majority of citizens of Jewish origin, and deny citizenship to the inhabitants of the country whose origin is Arab (Muslim and Christian). The Jewish National Fund Law (1953), Israel Lands Laws (1960) and the Covenant between the government of Israel and the Jewish National Fund (1961) reserve 92% of the total land area of the State of Israel in its 1967 boundaries for