

Adalah The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel
عدالة المركز القانوني لحقوق الأقليات العربية في إسرائيل
עזאלה המרכז המשפטי לזכויות המיעוט הערבי בישראל



Adalah's Annual Report

2020

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About Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

P.O. Box 8921 Haifa 31090 Israel Tel: (972)-4-950-1610 Fax: (972)-4-950-3140

חיפה 31090, סב 8921 هاتف 04-9501610 فاكس 04-9503140
חיפה 31090, ת.ד. 8921 טלפון 04-9501610 פקס 04-9503140

Email: adalah@adalah.org

<http://www.adalah.org>

Adalah (“Justice” in Arabic) is an independent human rights organization and legal center. It was founded in November 1996 as a joint project of two leading Palestinian NGOs in Israel - The Galilee Society and the Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA).

Adalah’s mission is to promote human rights in Israel in general and the rights of the Palestinian minority, citizens of Israel, in particular (around 1.6 million people, or 20% of the population). This work also includes promoting and defending the human rights of all individuals subject to the jurisdiction of the State of Israel (e.g. Palestinian residents of the 1967 Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)). Adalah is the first Palestinian Arab-run legal center in Israel, and the sole Palestinian organization that works before Israeli courts to protect the human rights of Palestinians in Israel and in the OPT.

Since its establishment, Adalah has brought about 275 impact litigation cases before the Israeli Supreme Court and the lower courts, which have spanned diverse fields including land and planning rights, civil and political rights, and economic and social rights. Numerous cases have resulted in landmark, precedent-setting decisions. In order to achieve its goals, Adalah:

- Brings strategic impact litigation cases and other legal interventions before Israeli courts and state authorities;
- Provides legal consultation to individuals, NGOs, and institutions;
- Appeals to international institutions and fora;
- Organizes conferences, and publishes reports and analyses of critical legal issues;
- Conducts extensive media and social media outreach in Arabic, Hebrew and English;
- Trains legal apprentices and new lawyers in human rights litigation and advocacy.

For more information, see Adalah’s website: <https://www.adalah.org>

Haifa Office (main)

94 Yaffa Street
PO Box 8921
Haifa 3109001, Israel
Tel: (972)-4-9501610
Fax: (972)-4-9503140

Naqab Office

P.O. Box 10273
Sderot Yitzhack Rager 28, Room #214
Beer el-Sabe (Be’er Sheva), Israel

Context

2020 was a year like no other for us all. The COVID-19 pandemic, which interrupted life in Israel/OPT (and the rest of the world) from mid-March onwards, combined with local and international political instability, created new, unprecedented challenges for Adalah.

The Trump Plan, annexation: The year began with the announcement of former US President Trump's 'Deal of the Century', which gave a green light to Israel's illegal annexation of massive swathes of land in the occupied West Bank. It further proposed the forced transfer of over 260,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel living in ten towns in the Triangle region to a future enclave in Palestine. According to the plan, the residents of the earmarked communities would remain in their homes but Israel's borders would simply be redrawn to leave them outside of it. As Adalah argued in a [position paper](#) against it, the Plan, which was drawn up in close coordination with the Israeli administration, constitutes a racially-motivated attempt to forcibly transfer Palestinian citizens of Israel (PCI) and strip them of their Israeli citizenship.

Israeli elections: Soon after the announcement of the Trump Plan, a third round of Israeli national elections was held (on 2 March 2020) within the space of a year, and topped the agenda. Adalah was deeply engaged in defending the rights of PCI and the Palestinian leadership in Israel to participate freely in elections against attempts by right-wing actors to disqualify Arab candidates. The third round of elections, too, was not conclusive and did not result in the formation of a ruling coalition. The demands of the COVID-19 pandemic eventually pushed the leading parties to enter into a coalition that was intended to focus on managing the crisis. In April 2020, Adalah sent a [letter](#) to Israeli authorities warning that a coalition agreement that includes a stipulation to impose Israeli sovereignty over parts of the occupied West Bank is patently illegal, in violation of both international and Israeli law. However, formal annexation, which was expected to take place in July 2020, did not, largely due to the intensive international pressure not to go forward and the need of the Israeli government to focus on its response to the COVID-19 crisis.

COVID-19 crisis: From mid-March 2020 onwards, Israel joined the rest of the world in the prolonged crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. From the start of the outbreak, the government acted in a discriminatory manner against PCI in making interventions to protect people's lives and wellbeing, in areas including access to healthcare, distance learning, information, and economic support for local authorities, and the right to privacy/civil liberties. The C19 crisis exposed the stark state discrimination against PCI in place for decades, which served to further exacerbate the emergency. In addition, for the first three months of the pandemic, the caretaker government, led by Prime Minister Netanyahu, decreed a series of emergency regulations to contain and manage the crisis without the oversight of the Knesset, and in violation of the rule of law.

There were also large gaps in access to testing, emergency medical services, and appropriate isolation centers for Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem compared with Jewish Israelis, and even more limited access to these facilities for Palestinians in the wider West Bank and Gaza due to Israel's strict border controls, which also prevented the transfer of critically-ill patients from Gaza. In addition, the 4,450 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli prisons, who are classified by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) as "security prisoners", suffered from grave health risks, as they have been exposed to extremely harsh measures of confinement. As closed, overcrowded places, prisons are at high-risk of COVID-19 outbreaks. Palestinian laborers from the West Bank were subjected to unsanitary, dangerous and restrictive working conditions in Israel during the COVID-19 crisis. Israel issued various regulations designed to keep the construction industry, in which large numbers of Palestinians work, running during COVID-19 lockdowns. These regulations focused on the Israeli economy, as well as on security measures, including monitoring of the workers' movement via a telephone app, and confiscation of their identity cards, as opposed to health and safety. They were also prevented from returning to the West Bank for long periods of time.

I. Legal Action

LEGAL SUCCESSES

COVID-19-related cases

Protecting the right to health: access to COVID-19 testing. Following Adalah's Supreme Court (SCT) petitions and other legal interventions initiated in March and April 2020, Israeli health authorities opened COVID-19 testing centers in the Naqab, Triangle and Upper Galilee, areas with a majority of Palestinian citizens of Israel, where no testing facilities were previously available. The lack of testing facilities was particularly urgent in the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Naqab, with a population of approx. 90,000 residents who generally do not receive at-home care from Israel's national emergency medical service, due in part to the lack of paved access roads into and within their villages. [More information](#)

- [Negligence in crisis: Palestinian citizens of Israel 'not being tested for coronavirus'](#), *The New Arab*, 30 March 2020
- [After weeks of ignoring its Palestinian citizens, Israel to step up testing in Arab towns](#), *Mondoweiss*, 3 April 2020
- [Fighting COVID-19 in the Bedouin community](#), *The Times of Israel*, 13 April 2020
- [Interview with Sawsan Zaher](#), Adalah's Deputy GD, *Kan 11 News* (Hebrew), 15 April 2020
- [Sawsan Zaher live report on COVID-19 in Palestinian communities](#), *i24 News*, 16 April 2020
- [How Palestinian citizens are putting Israel's coronavirus powers in check](#), *+972*, 12 May 2020

Securing access to COVID-19 tests for Palestinians living behind the Separation Wall in Jerusalem. In response to Adalah's urgent petition to the SCT submitted on 8 April 2020, Israeli health authorities opened clinics and testing centers via the Clalit Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) in the Shuafat refugee camp and Kufr Aqab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, from 14 April 2020. Later, drive-in centers were opened, as requested in the petition, at the entrances of both Kufr Aqab and the Shuafat refugee camp, allowing for the 150,000 residents of these areas to be tested without the need to cross the checkpoint into Jerusalem. The petition was filed in coordination with the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, and on behalf of numerous local NGOs and residents. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#) On 16 August 2020, Adalah wrote to the Health Ministry demanding that it reopen COVID-19 testing sites that had been closed following the first wave of COVID-19, and by the end of the month, two centers had been reopened for Palestinian residents living in these neighborhoods. [More information](#)

- [East Jerusalem worries of healthcare collapse over coronavirus](#), *Al Jazeera*, 5 April 2020
- [Coronavirus: Rights group demands Israel open testing centres in Palestinian areas](#), *Middle East Eye*, 8 April 2020
- [In Jerusalem, coronavirus gives Israelis and Palestinians something else to argue about](#), *The Washington Post*, 11 April 2020
- [Health Ministry to test 150,000 Palestinians in East Jerusalem](#), *Jerusalem Post*, 13 April 2020
- [After Weeks of Warning, Coronavirus Spreading Among Palestinians in East Jerusalem](#), *Haaretz*, 14 April 2020
- [Israel to open coronavirus testing centres in occupied East Jerusalem](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 14 April 2020
- [East Jerusalem scrambles to prevent COVID-19 outbreak before Ramadan](#), *+972 Magazine*, 22 April 2020

Promoting the right to essential health information on COVID-19. Following Adalah's urgent legal letters in March 2020, the Israeli Health Ministry began releasing additional, timely essential public health information on COVID-19 in Arabic on its website. The failure of key Israeli governmental

ministries to provide this information posed a serious threat to the Arabic public in Israel. The Ministry also opened an Arabic Facebook page for COVID-19-related information, moves made in response to Adalah's demands. [More information](#)

- [Israel didn't publish coronavirus guidance in Arabic — so Palestinians stepped in](#), *+972 Magazine*, 17 March 2020
- [Negligence in crisis: Palestinian citizens of Israel 'not being tested for coronavirus'](#), *The New Arab*, 30 March 2020
- [Adalah: Israel Fails to Provide Real-time Coronavirus Updates in Arabic for Palestinian Citizens](#), *The Palestine Chronicle*, 10 March 2020
- [The Ministry of Health does not translate all corona updates into all languages in Israel](#), *Globes* (Hebrew), 10 March 2020
- [Knowledge of Arabic required: "The virus does not recognize ethnic identity"](#), *Ynet News* (Hebrew), 10 March 2020
- [Arab doctors are at the forefront of the struggle in Corona, and feel there is a purpose behind them](#), *Haaretz* (Hebrew), 17 March 2020

Supporting pregnant women in employment against unfair dismissal: The Israeli SCT ordered the government appear before the Knesset's Special Committee on Welfare and Labor Affairs and find a solution for 4,000 pregnant women, women undergoing fertility treatments, and new mothers who were fired from their jobs in accordance with COVID-19 Emergency Regulations (ER). The government decreed these ERs on 6 April 2020, allowing employers to do so, and then cancelled the regulations immediately after Adalah's petition. Adalah submitted a petition on behalf of MK Aida Touma-Sliman (Joint List) on 12 April 2020 to the SCT demanding the repeal of the ER. As Adalah argued, these regulations violated the rights of these women by allowing employers to dismiss them without obtaining a special permit from Israel's Labor Ministry, thereby suspending the legal protections from arbitrary dismissal that are provided to pregnant women in the workplace. [More information](#)

- [Adalah petitions Supreme Court against dismissal of pregnant women during the COVID-19 crisis](#), *Haaretz* (Hebrew), 12 April 2020
- [Government Announces Pregnant Women Can't Be Put on Unpaid Leave](#), *Haaretz*, 19 April 2020
- [Coronavirus: As court strikes down new rule, Israel's pregnant workers remain in limbo](#), *Middle East Eye*, 23 April 2020

Securing a halt on state-executed home demolitions. Following a joint letter by 30 NGOs to the Attorney General (AG) in March 2020, the Israeli authorities committed to halting home demolitions and the destruction of agricultural crops in the Naqab, during the first wave of COVID-19. Later, following a demand in August 2020 by Adalah and the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem that centered on Israel's accelerated demolition of homes in Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem (EJ), the Justice Ministry announced a second freeze on home demolitions on 1 October 2020, in Israel and in EJ, due to the resurgence of the COVID-19 crisis at that time. The Justice Ministry specified that demolition orders for residential buildings would not be enforced, and that warning notices would be kept to a minimum. Adalah estimates that the decision affected at least 10,000 Bedouin citizens of Israel facing home demolitions in the Naqab alone; however, home demolitions in the Naqab remained high in 2020, due in large part to self-demolitions, which continued. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

- [Number of Palestinians made homeless by Israeli demolitions hits four-year high despite pandemic](#), *The Independent*, 31 October 2020

Challenging mass surveillance of COVID-19 patients by the intelligence services. The SCT issued a unanimous, precedent-setting decision in April 2020 that the Shabak intelligence services cannot track citizens without legislative authority, even during the exceptional coronavirus pandemic. The

court found that there was no legal authority for the government to expand the powers and use of the Shin Bet secret security service for mass cellphone surveillance of COVID-19 patients, and all citizens. While all citizens were tracked, the practice is particularly worrying in the case of Palestinians, since they have historically been subjected to excessive surveillance by the Shabak. In issuing its decision, the court accepted a petition by Adalah and the Joint List, among other petitions. The SCT also issued an interim injunction limiting these practices on 19 March 2020 in response to the petition. The case raised critical concerns of the exploitation of the pandemic as a national security rather than a public health issue, the constitutional role of the government versus the legislature in a civil emergency, and the involvement of the security services in civilian matters. This decision is a milestone as, for the first time, the Court recognized restrictions on the Shabak's powers pursuant to the Shabak Law. [More information](#) | [Adalah's analysis of the decision](#)

- [Israel Is Now Tracking Coronavirus Patients Using Their Smartphones](#), Vice, 19 March 2020
- [Israel's top court hears challenge to coronavirus cyber-monitoring](#), Reuters (via Yahoo! News), 19 March 2020
- [Israel's coronavirus outbreak gives rise to cellphone tracking initiative](#), The Washington Post, 19 March 2020
- [Israel's Top Court: No Shin Bet Tracking of Coronavirus Patients Without Knesset Oversight](#), Haaretz, 19 Mar 20
- [The Pandemic Surveillance State](#), Counterpunch, 24 March 2020
- [Shin Bet Tracking, Police Check-ups: Pandemic Spurs Rise of Israel's Big Coronavirus Brother](#), Haaretz, 9 Apr 20
- [Interview with Sawsan Zaher](#), Adalah's Deputy GD, *Kan 11 News* (Hebrew), 16 April 2020
- [Israeli Court Takes Step to Halt Phone Tracking Amid Virus](#), The New York Times (Via AP), 26 April 2020
- [Interview with Hassan Jabareen](#), Adalah's GD, *Kan Bet Radio* (Hebrew), 27 April 2020
- [Israeli court orders halt on phone tracking without more legislation](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, 27 April 2020
- [Cellphone monitoring is spreading with the coronavirus. So is an uneasy tolerance of surveillance](#), The Washington Post, 1 May 2020
- ['I can't be afraid of the risk to privacy right now': Coronavirus and tracking app surveillance](#), Independent (UK), 8 May 2020

Securing government funding for Arab municipalities in Israel to mitigate COVID-19-related financial damages. The Ministries of Interior and Finance granted Arab towns emergency funds of NIS 200 million (US \$57 million) in June 2020 to mitigate initial financial damages caused by the COVID-19 crisis, which jeopardized the provision of local public services, following Supreme Court legal action by Adalah on behalf of the Arab Mayors' Committee. Arab municipalities were originally slated to receive just 1.7% of aid provided to all municipalities nationwide, while Arab citizens comprise 20% of the population. The discrimination in the government's policy in allocating the funds would have led to severe economic harm and to a potential financial collapse of Arab towns, jeopardizing the provision of essential public services. The resolution of the case will alleviate some of the economic damage incurred by the Arab community due to the Coronavirus crisis. Since the outbreak of the Coronavirus crisis in March 2020, the Arab municipalities have lost about NIS 70 million (US \$20 million) every month, with a total expected loss of NIS 210 million (US \$60 million); meanwhile, municipal expenses have increased during this period as local authorities have worked to fight the virus. [More information](#)

- [Chairman of the Committee of Heads of Arab Authorities: "We are really collapsing, we will not be able to recover"](#), *Globes* (Hebrew), 12 May 2020
- [Corona crisis: The number of people infected in Israel has risen to 16,477, 252 have died from the virus](#), *Walla!* (Hebrew), 10 May 2020

- [Strike of the Arab local authorities continues... Petition to the Israeli Supreme Court against discriminatory policy](#), *Arabs 48* (Arabic), 9 May 2020
- [Audio clip](#) from *Kan Bet Radio* (Hebrew) from 12 May 2020 at 06:44.

Renewal of fuel and other goods to Gaza

Five human rights NGOs, led by Gisha and including Adalah, petitioned the SCT demanding that Israel immediately halt the ban on the entry of fuel to Gaza, which had disabled the Strip's only power plant and threatened public health as Gaza attempted to contend with the COVID-19 outbreak. The urgent petition was submitted on 30 August 2020 and the SCT ordered Israeli state authorities to respond by 1 September. One day prior to the submission of the state's response, Israel renewed the entry of fuel to Gaza and the case was consequently dismissed. [More information](#)

- [Human rights groups demand Israel allow fuel into COVID-struck Gaza](#), *+972 Magazine*, 31 August 2020
- [Israel Blocks Qatari Aid to Gaza in Response to Incendiary Balloons](#), *Haaretz*, 14 August 2020
- [Israel's stoppage of Gaza fuel supplies fail to halt incendiary balloons](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 August 2020

Access to food aid. In December 2020, the Interior Ministry positively amended its policy of conditioning eligibility for food security aid on payment of municipal property tax (*arnona*), which then enabled approximately 90,000 Bedouin living in unrecognized villages to apply for it, following Adalah's legal intervention. The food aid program was instituted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is worth NIS 700 million (approximately US\$208 million). The program excluded these residents as these villages are not affiliated with any municipal authority, as a result of Israel's refusal to recognize them. This group is among the poorest citizens in the country. They have been significantly impacted by COVID-19, and are therefore among the most vulnerable to food insecurity. [More information](#)

Other legal successes

Securing the right to water for Bedouin citizens of Israel. Following Adalah's legal intervention, 400 Bedouin residents of Khashem Zanneh in the Naqab were reconnected to a drinking water supply in February 2020. In October 2019, the Water Authority cut the water to a connection point that serves the villagers, claiming that they had not paid their bills; in fact, the local representative had not transferred the money. Adalah argued that the Water Authority's policy lacked a legal basis, and was arbitrary and discriminatory. The lack of water caused the residents extreme hardship for several months, and the reconnection was a significant positive change in their daily lives. [More information](#)

Demanding access to education for Bedouin pre-school children in the Naqab. Adalah's urgent court petition in February 2020 resulted in the swift resumption of bus services for 2,200 Bedouin pre-school children in 20 villages in the Naqab who had been stuck at home for a month after the Education Ministry failed to transfer funding to the Neve Midbar Regional Council, due to a budget dispute. The case was filed on behalf of parents with affected children and the Regional Council for the Unrecognized Villages in the Naqab and had a positive impact on the children and their families, approximately 11,000 individuals. [More information](#)

- [Adalah: Over 2,000 Bedouin Preschoolers Stuck at Home due to School Bus Budget Dispute](#), *IMEMC*, 14 February 2020
- [Israel cuts school buses for Bedouin children](#), *The Electronic Intifada*, 21 January 2020

Defending the political participation rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel during national elections. The SCT rejected the Central Election Committee's decision to disqualify MK Dr. Heba Yazbak (Balad-Joint List), a Palestinian Arab woman leader, from running in the 2 March 2020 national elections, accepting Adalah's legal arguments. Adalah legally represented MK Yazbak in the three

disqualification motions that were filed against her before the Central Elections Committee in the lead up to the elections. Adalah also legally represented her before the Supreme Court, filing legal arguments and attending hearings. Earlier, in January 2020, Adalah released a response on behalf of MK Yazbak to the Attorney General's request for clarifications regarding her public statements she had made. In addition, Adalah legally represented the Joint List of Arab parties before the Central Elections Committee, which rejected disqualification motions against it. The Supreme Court's decision protected the rights to vote and to stand for election of PCI. The decision also undermined the ongoing attempts by right-wing politicians to delegitimize the elected representatives of the Arab public in Israel. The Joint List went on to win 15 seats in the Knesset, the highest ever number. [More information](#)

- [This Arab Lawmaker Poses a Challenge to Israeli Democrats](#), *Haaretz*, 28 January 2020
- [The Election Commission disqualified MK Hiba Yazbek's candidacy; decision will be discussed by the Supreme Court](#), *Haaretz* (Hebrew), 29 January 2020
- [Right-wing Israeli lawmakers attempt to remove Palestinians from Knesset](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 30 January 2020
- [Arab MK, Yigal Amir party hope Supreme Court let them run](#), *Jer. Post*, 4 February 2020
- [Israel court postpones ruling on disqualification of Palestinian MP](#), *ME Eye*, 5 February 2020
- [Israeli court nixes ban on Arab politician's parliament bid](#), *Associated Press*, 9 February 2020
- [The Supreme Court ruled: MK Heba Yazbek from Balad will be able to run for the Knesset](#), Channel 13 News (Hebrew), 9 February 2020

Protecting the right to freedom from religion. In April 2020, the SCT accepted Adalah's February 2018 petition and overturned a ban on bringing leavened bread products into Israeli hospitals during the Passover holiday. The decision marks the end of a policy based on Jewish religious law that applied to all individuals – PCI and secular Jewish Israelis – who had to undergo strict searches at hospital entrances during the week-long Passover holiday. The Court ruled that religious laws could not be imposed on the public and could not override fundamental freedoms enjoyed by Arab public, Israeli Jewish secular public, and everyone else. Later in the year, the SCT rejected the state's request for a second hearing on the case, accepting Adalah's legal arguments against the re-opening of the case. [More information](#)

- [High Court: Hospitals Have No Authority to Bar Leavened Products Brought in During Passover](#), *Haaretz*, 1 May 2020
- [High Court rules hospitals can't issue chametz ban for Passover visitors](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 1 May 2020
- [Israel's Supreme Court Approves Chametz on Passover in Hospitals](#), *Jewish Press*, 1 May 2020
- [Israel's Supreme Court Rules That Hositals Can't Ban Chometz On Pesach](#), *Yeshiva World*, 1 May 2020

Fighting Israel's Annexation of the West Bank. In June 2020, the Israeli Supreme Court struck down the Settlements Regularization Law (SRL), which allowed Israel to expropriate private West Bank Palestinian lands for settlements. The SRL law had allowed Israel to expropriate private land, and to "regularize" or "legalize" dozens of Israeli settlements built on it. Adalah, the Jerusalem Legal Aid Center and Al Mezan, on behalf of 17 Palestinian local councils in the West Bank, petitioned the SCT against the law in 2017. The court ruled that the law disproportionately violated the rights of Palestinians to property, equality and dignity. The SCT's decision stresses that the Knesset cannot legislate laws that violate international humanitarian law, and that the Israeli Military Commander in the West Bank is not the sovereign and that his authority in the area is temporary by its nature, and that, since June 1967, the laws that apply in the West Bank are the laws of "belligerent occupation", supplemented by international human rights law. In this case, the government argued, through private attorneys, that the Knesset had the power to legislate in the West Bank and that Jewish

Israelis had a “natural right” to live there. However, the the ruling does acknowledge as appropriate the “humanitarian purpose” of the law – aiming to avoid demolition and eviction of residential and settlement buildings in the West Bank and to find solutions for the settlers who built their home in the area in “good faith”, or with the encouragement of the authorities. Thus it refers to “less harmful”, more “proportionate” alternatives, adopting the AG’s position on the matter. [More information](#) | [Position Paper: Adalah’s initial analysis of the SCT decision](#)

- [Israel’s top court strikes down West Bank land seizure law](#), *AFP*, 11 June 2020
- [Israel’s top court strikes down West Bank land seizure law](#), *The National*, 10 June 2020
- [Israel court strikes down law legalising settlements on private Palestinian land](#), *Middle East Eye*, 10 June 2020
- [High Court nixes Settlements Law as annexation approaches](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 June 2020

Halting Racial Profiling on Public Bus #18. In 2019, Adalah, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-I) and the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC) petitioned the SCT against a discriminatory, racially-motivated and humiliating procedure of pulling Palestinians with an “Arab appearance” off a public bus at an entrance to a major Israeli hospital. At the SCT hearing, Israeli authorities revealed that there existed an official police practice of checking passengers for “suspicious indicators”, which included ethnic and racial elements. Following a hearing in January 2020, the security guards committed to halting the practice. The SCT ordered the state authorities to formulate a permanent security procedure that does not include racial profiling. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

- [Police will no longer conduct racial profiling on Dan bus line](#), *Jerusalem Post*, 27 January 2020
- [Police reverse racial profiling policy at Israeli hospital](#), *+972 Magazine*, 27 January 2020

Selected Other Major Cases and Legal Interventions

1. COVID-19-related litigation

For a complete list of Adalah’s work during the COVID-19 pandemic, please see a [dedicated page on Adalah’s website](#)

Cases brought on behalf of Palestinian citizens of Israel

Demanding that Bedouin students in the Naqab be connected to state distance-learning system. A SCT petition filed by Adalah on 5 April 2020 demanding that the Education Ministry immediately connect students to the Internet, and/or alternatively provide them with mobile routers and the equipment needed to connect to the educational distance learning system, following a nationwide school closure beginning from 15 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis. More than 50,000 Bedouin children in Naqab villages are not connected to electricity or internet, and most lack computers. As a result, they were unable to participate in distance learning. The petition was filed on behalf of the Follow-up Committee for Arab Education, the Regional Council for Unrecognized Villages in the Naqab, the National Association of Arab Parents’ Committees for Education, and other partners. The Court dismissed the case because the government had declared a return to school, despite that thousands of Bedouin children have not returned to school. Some schools contended that they could not reopen because they could not meet the Health Ministry’s guidelines, while others are located in coronavirus “hot spots” where schooling was not immediately resumed. Adalah followed up on the case throughout the year, as more school closures were implemented. [More information](#)

- [Urgent petition to the High Court: To connect Arab students in the Negev to distance learning](#), *Local Call* (Hebrew), 6 April 2020
- [Interview with Sawsan Zaher](#), Adalah's Deputy GD, *Kan Bet Radio* (Hebrew), 12 April 2020
- [Adalah's Petition: Connect Bedouin students to the Internet for distance learning](#), *Makour Rishon* (Hebrew), 26 April 2020

Petition demanding suitable COVID-19 isolation options for Bedouin women. Adalah filed a petition to the SCT on 21 May 2020 demanding that the authorities provide culturally-suitable isolation conditions for Arab Bedouin women living in the unrecognized villages in order to comply with Health Ministry guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adalah argued that, due to the lack of proper land planning policies, the women do not have the conditions for isolation in their homes, that there are no suitable options for isolation in their villages, and that social norms prevent the women from staying in hotels outside their villages, as the state proposed. Further, the petitioners argued that the state was obliged to take special measures to meet the needs of this distinct sub-group. The petition was supported by a survey of 67 women conducted by a social worker to identify needs, and a Bedouin women's rights expert. Adalah filed the petition on behalf of eight women's rights groups, the Regional Council for the Unrecognized Villages, and other partners. In June 2020, the Court dismissed the petition, contending that it was too "theoretical" for it to consider. Adalah rejects this conclusion, given that the petition demanded a concrete, practical solution. The dismissal of the petition leaves vulnerable Bedouin women in danger. [More information](#)

Adalah undertook a group of legal interventions on behalf of Arab Bedouin citizens of Israel in the Naqab who were **denied access to vital services and facilities** during the C19 pandemic, and particularly those living in unrecognized villages. These interventions included demands that the Israeli communications and postal authorities provide a mobile post office to serve residents; grant access to unemployment offices/benefits; and provide their homes and villages with electricity and Internet connections to enable them to make online applications for unemployment benefits and to receive necessary health information. These cases have a common underlying cause in the violation of the land, housing and property rights of the Bedouin. [Mobile post office](#) | [Electricity and Internet connections](#)

Challenging the Government's excessive use of emergency regulations (ERs). During the first months of the pandemic, the Israeli Government decreed dozens of ERs without the parliamentary oversight required by law. Many led to human rights violations against PCI, including ERs that prohibited visits to prisoners by family and lawyers, authorized the Shin Bet secret services to engage in massive surveillance by the tracking and monitoring of citizens' cellphones, and many other restrictions on all aspects of life. Adalah, in its own name and on behalf of the Joint List political party, filed a petition to the SCT on 5 April 2020 against the Israeli government's continuous approval of emergency C19 regulations without Knesset oversight, arguing that the policy violated the rule of law. A SCT ruling issued in August 2020 criticized the government's declaration of dozens of new emergency regulations, without proposing them as bills to the Knesset. The petition was, however, dismissed after the Knesset began acting through primary legislation following the passage of a specific COVID-19 law at the end of July 2020. [More information](#)

Challenging the constitutionality of the "Major Coronavirus Law". In September 2020, Adalah and ACRI petitioned the SCT against the "Major Coronavirus Law", enacted in July 2020. The law grants the Israeli government sweeping powers to curtail a wide range of civil liberties. Adalah argued that the extremely expedited process in legislating the law impeded a necessary discussion; that the power granted to the government to declare a state of emergency violates article 38(a) of the Basic Law: The Government; and that the powers given to the government and the Knesset's marginalization of its own role in decision-making, violate the principles of separation of powers, the rule of law and the principle of legality. [More information](#) *Update:* An expanded panel of nine justices held a hearing on six petitions against the law on 12 January 2021. The SCT Court rejected the

petitions filed by Adalah and ACRI on 4 April 2021. While the SCT approved the law as a whole, it lifted certain restrictions on the right to protest as enumerated in the law. In Adalah's view, a law that awards the government such sweeping powers jeopardizes the rule of law. [More information](#)

Cases brought on behalf of Palestinians in the OPT, including Palestinian prisoners

Seeking to protect the health of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem (EJ). In addition to Adalah's demand for COVID-19 testing, Adalah also sent urgent letters to Israeli authorities demanding information about the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and the available treatment for patients (17 April, 1 May); urging them to allow the operation of Emergency Committees in EJ neighborhoods that aid Palestinian residents in coping with the coronavirus (19 April); demanding medical care for Palestinians in EJ infected with COVID-19 (20 April), and calling for preventive measures to halt the spread of COVID-10 in EJ neighborhoods, as well as the relocation of Palestinian residents infected with the virus to isolation centers (20 April); and to ensure a regular supply of water to Palestinian residents of Kufr Aqab and surrounding EJ neighborhoods, as mandated by law (20 April). [More information](#)

Palestinian workers' rights. Adalah sent an urgent letter to Israeli authorities on 30 March 2020, demanding that Israeli employers provide Palestinian workers from the West Bank with proper housing and living conditions, and that they be given access to health facilities. West Bank workers were allowed to work in Israel during this COVID-19 crisis, mainly to keep Israel's construction sector from collapsing. However, at the beginning, they were banned from returning home for one or two months. While in Israel, they had no health insurance, and were excluded from the protective measures imposed by the state on all other workplaces.

Israel's COVID-19 health obligations towards Palestinians in Gaza. On 7 April 2020, Gisha, Al Mezan, and Adalah send an urgent letter to the Israeli Defense Minister demanding that he formulate and immediately publish an action plan designed to confront the spread of COVID-19 in Gaza Strip. The groups argued that this program must first and foremost ensure that the medical needs of the Palestinian civilian population are met. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

Lifting Gaza travel restrictions imposed under guise of COVID-19. Five human rights NGOs, including Adalah, sent letters in June and July 2020 demanding that Israel reverse its ban on travel to and from Gaza and allow Palestinians' travel, including for patients in urgent need of critical medical treatment and other humanitarian cases via the Erez crossing against the backdrop of COVID-19. Travel was at a virtual standstill since March due to measures taken to curb the spread of COVID-19, and later, when the PA announced that it was halting coordination with Israel due to the government's plan to annex parts of the WB. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

- [Gaza Infant Dies After Heart Surgery Postponed Due to Cessation of Coordination With Israel](#), *Haaretz*, 23 June 2020
- [Gaza Residents Abroad Faced Uphill Battle to Return Home. Coronavirus Robbed Them Even of That](#), *Haaretz*, 15 July 2020

Calling for vaccines for Palestinians in the OPT. On 23 December 2020, Adalah joined 19 NGOs calling on Israeli authorities to fulfil their legal obligations and ensure that safe and high-quality vaccines be provided to Palestinians living under Israeli occupation and control in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [More information](#)

Update: This demand was later made in a petition to the Israeli SCT, led by PHR-I and joined by Adalah in March 2021. [More information](#)
Palestinian prisoners

From the outbreak of COVID-19, Palestinian prisoners, who are classified by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) as “security prisoners” and who number about 4,450, suffered and continue to suffer from grave health risks, as well as other extremely harsh measures of confinement imposed by the IPS and other Israeli authorities. In 2020, Adalah brought numerous cases before the Israeli courts and state authorities to defend the rights of Palestinian prisoners.

Isolating prisoners, closing prisons. At the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IPS took drastic steps to isolate Palestinian prisoners, completely shutting the prisons and cutting them off from the outside world. In March 2020, Adalah, on behalf of Addameer, lawyers, prisoners and their families, filed a petition to the Israeli SCT demanding the cancellation of emergency regulations prohibiting family members and lawyers’ visits. During SCT hearings on the case, the Israeli authorities committed to easing restrictions on lawyers’ visits – while imposing many conditions which continue to create a severe burden – and allowing very limited telephone calls for minors, and one call for adults during Ramadan or if sick or in quarantine. The SCT refused to intervene in the discretion of the IPS and allowed this case – which challenged the severest practices – to remain pending for most of the year, even in the face of fundamental violations of the right to counsel and the right of family visits. Family visits remain suspended. Adalah also sought to cancel a bill that authorized the Public Security Minister to ban visits by family members and lawyers to prisoners. [Press Release 1](#) / [Press Release 2](#)

- [Israel’s coronavirus lockdown is blocking human rights work, but not abuses](#), +972, 31 Mar20
- [High Court working on human rights petitions during coronavirus crisis](#), *Jer. Post*, 6 April 2020
- [Palestinian Security Convicts in Israel Get a Brief Call Home Despite Coronavirus Restrictions](#), *Haaretz*, 7 May 2020

Further, in light of the exclusive control over prisons and prisoners exercised by the IPS, Adalah tried to enable some monitoring of the prisoners’ conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adalah and MK Yousef Jabareen filed a motion to the Israeli SCT seeking a temporary injunction on the 2016 prohibition of visits by MKs to prisons; Adalah and MK Jabareen had petitioned the SCT on this matter in 2017, and the case was still pending in 2020. The court rejected this request. On 14 July 2020, the SCT ruled on the petition, with three justices delivering three different rulings in the case. Adalah and MK Jabareen have subsequently asked on 22 September 2020 for an additional hearing on the case. This case remains pending. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#) | [Press Release 3](#)

- [Knesset’s Legal Adviser Says Lawmakers Should Be Able to Visit Palestinian Security Prisoners](#), *Haaretz*, 12 May 2020

Adalah also sent a letter to the AG and other Israeli ministers on 19 May 2020 challenging a pre-bill (in advance of a law) that permitted the holding of criminal proceedings and detention hearings in courts in the absence of detainees or prisoners, replacing their presence by real time audio or video telecommunications. Adalah argued that these arrangements disproportionately infringed on the fundamental constitutional rights of prisoners, as they prevent the court and attorneys from being able to gain a full impression of the prisoners’ conditions during detention and of whether prisoners were ill-treated or tortured.

Demanding improved health and safety measures. Adalah also demanded that the IPS provide information on a range of health and hygiene-related issues (22 March), take immediate preventive health measures and conduct COVID-19 tests (2 April), and permit prisoners’ families from the OPT to deposit money in prison canteens (30 April) to allow their purchase of food and sanitary products in order to cope with the spread of the virus, especially as family visits were halted. These demands were infrequently met. In May 2020, Adalah filed a petition to the SCT demanding the implementation of Health Ministry guidelines to maintain social distancing in crowded cells in Gilboa Prison, months before the COVID-19 infection rates spiked. Despite the high-risk posed of spreading

the virus in the overcrowded cells, the SCT rejected this request in July 2020, ruling nonsensically that these rules were not relevant for prisoners. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#) | [Press Release 3](#)

- [Palestinian prisoners denied social distancing rights](#), *TRT World*, 28 July 2020
- [Palestinian prisoners have no right to social distancing despite coronavirus threat, Israeli court rules](#), *The New Arab*, 27 July 2020
- [Coronavirus: Israeli court rules Palestinian prisoners have no right to social distancing](#), *Middle East Eye*, 24 July 2020
- [NGO to High Court: Even security detainees have rights during coronavirus](#), *Jerusalem Post*, 25 July 2020
- [Opinion: Israel Could Have Prevented COVID-19 Outbreak Among Palestinian Prisoners](#), *Haaretz*, 8 November 2020

2. Civil and Political Rights

Demanding an independent investigation into the killing of Ya’akub Abu al-Qi’an. In February 2020, Adalah and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) filed a petition to the SCT in the case of the police killing of Bedouin math teacher Ya’akub Abu al-Qi’an during a large-scale, heavily-militarized operation to demolish homes in his village, Umm al-Hiran in the Naqab, in January 2017. The petition, filed on behalf of the Abu al-Qi’an family, demands that the Israeli Supreme Court order the annulment of the decision of former-State Attorney Shai Nitzan to close the PID probe into the killing of Mr. Abu al-Qi’an, to reopen the investigation and to criminally indict all those responsible for his death. The investigatory materials raise serious questions about the behavior of the police, the Police Investigation Department (PID), and Israeli politicians, all of whom were quick to declare that Abu Al-Qian was a terrorist, and confirm that Abu al-Qi’an was not carrying out an attack and that the police did nothing to save his life. In September 2020, in light of media reports presenting alleged new evidence regarding the closure of the investigation, Adalah and PCATI submitted an urgent motion to the SCT demanding an *order nisi* and requesting an immediate hearing on their petition. Adalah and PCATI stressed that correspondence between Nitzan and the Israeli Police Investigations Department (PID), released by journalist Amit Segal, seems to provide new evidence of a conflict of interest on the part of Nitzan. In September 2020, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Israeli police apologized for the police killing of Mr. Abu al-Qi’an, but did not announce the re-opening of the investigation. [More information](#) *Update:* A SCT hearing was held on 8 March 2021; the case remains pending.

- [New evidence reveals Bedouin citizen was left to die after police shooting](#), *+972 Magazine*, 23 February 2020

Challenging the constitutionality of the Jewish Nation-State Basic Law (JNSL). This petition was filed to the SCT on behalf of the Palestinian political leadership in Israel in August 2018 calling for the cancellation of the JNSL, enacted in July 2018. The JNSL constitutionally enshrines – for the first time – the identity of the State of Israel as the national home of the Jewish people only. The law identifies *Eretz Israel*, or the “Land of Israel”, as the area to which it applies; *Eretz Israel* includes all of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The law further guarantees the ethnic-religious character of Israel as exclusively Jewish and entrenches the privileges enjoyed by Jewish citizens, while simultaneously anchoring discrimination against Palestinian citizens and legitimizing exclusion, racism, and systemic inequality.

In a nearly 60-page petition, the petitioners maintain that the Law is racist and that it contradicts all norms of international law. In relation to Palestinian citizens of Israel, the petitioners argue that the JNSL entrenches the privileges enjoyed by Jewish citizens, while simultaneously anchoring discrimination against Palestinian citizens and legitimizing exclusion, racism, and systemic inequality.

The petitioners further argue that, by providing that the state views Jewish settlement as a national value, and will act to encourage, promote and consolidate its establishment, the JNSL institutes segregation as a new legal norm. In relation to the OPT, the JNSL may also give legal justification to the establishment and retroactive legalization of the settlements, and further and existing annexations and related laws constitutional backing. In addition, the application of the JNSL to East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights also stands in violation of international law.

After two years of delay, the SCT, by an expanded panel of 11 justices, held a hearing on the case, together with 14 other petitions pending against the JNSL, in December 2020. The full-day hearing was broadcast live on Israeli TV. The case remains pending. See [Adalah's designated website page on the case for more information](#)

- [The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is complex. A court case shows the 'nation state' law isn't](#), *MSNBC*, 3 December 2020
- [AG body slams attempt to strike Jewish Nation State Law](#), *Jerusalem Post*, 3 December 2020
- [Israel's Attorney General Against High Court Intervention in Contentious Nation-state Law](#), *Haaretz*, 4 December 2020
- [How Israel is using the nation-state law to perpetuate racial segregation](#), *The New Arab*, 15 December 2020
- [Israeli High Court hears challenge to Jewish nation law](#), *Wash Post (via AP)*, 22 Dec 2020
- [High Court hints it wants to interpret Jewish Nation-State Law, not nix it](#), *The Jerusalem Post*, 22 December 20
- Op-ed by Sawzan Zaher, Adalah Deputy GD: [Nation-state Law Essentially Establishes Apartheid Regime](#), *Haaretz*, 22 December 2020
- [The Nation-State Law had its day in court, as did the farce of Israeli democracy](#), *+972 Magazine*, 24 December 2020

How the law is being used in Israel: An Arab family brought a case against the Municipality of Karmiel (a Jewish majority town in the north of Israel with 50,000 residents) and the Education Ministry demanding that the municipality fund transport to school for their children, as there are no Arabic-language schools in the city. In a very racist ruling, the Magistrate's Court explicitly relied on Article 7 of the JNS Law to find that Karmiel is 'Jewish city', that establishing an Arabic-language school there or funding transport of Arab children to schools in surrounding communities, would provide incentives for Arab families to move into Karmiel and that this influx of Arab residents would "alter the demographic balance and damage the city's character". As Adalah has a related-case of school transport for Arab children in Karmiel, Adalah commented extensively on this case in the Hebrew and Arabic media. (Notably the Haifa District Court upheld the decision in this case but sharply critiqued the lower court's rationale and reliance on the JNS Law). [More information](#)

- ['It's a Jewish City': Court Rejects Lawsuit by Arab Students, Citing Israel's Nation-state Law](#), *Haaretz*, 30 November 2020
- ['Carmiel is a Jewish city,' court tells Arab students seeking transportation](#), *The Times of Israel*, 30 November 2020
- [Court authorizes the cancellation of a lawsuit by Arab children from Karmiel through the Nation State Law](#), *Haaretz (Hebrew)*, 30 November 2020
- [Israel invokes nation-state law in denying transport to Palestinian schoolchildren in Galilee](#), *Middle East Eye*, 1 December 2020
- [Court uses Jewish Nation-State Law to block funding for Arab students](#), *Jer Post*, 2 Dec 2020
- [Court throws out school discrimination suit as Israel tests nationality law](#), *Al-Monitor*, 2 December 2020

Seeking cancellation of discriminatory law re. the "administrative release" of prisoners

Adalah and ACRI petitioned the SCT in 2019 on behalf of two Palestinian minors against a new law which excludes individuals classified by the IPS as security prisoners – overwhelmingly Palestinians – from early release in cases of prison overcrowding. Under the new law, individuals classified as criminal prisoners and sentenced to longer terms of imprisonment, arguably for more serious offenses, will receive early release, while all Palestinians classified as security prisoners will not. The SCT held a hearing in June 2019, and again on 5 July 2020, before seven justices on a judicial panel that was expanded due to the important constitutional issues raised by the petition. *Update:* Since the hearing, the SCT has asked the state to submit several updates about the implementation of the law, the most recent of which is due on 22 June 2021. The case remains pending. [More information](#)

Supreme Court appeal against decision to strip citizenship from Palestinian citizen of Israel. In August 2017, the Haifa District Court ruled to uphold the Interior Minister’s decision to revoke the citizenship of Alaa Zayoud, a PCI serving 25-years in prison following a conviction for attempted murder for “breach of loyalty”. This is the first time an Israeli court has ruled to revoke an individual’s citizenship. Adalah and ACRI appealed the decision to the Israeli SCT in October 2017, and the SCT decided in December 2017 to freeze the Interior Minister’s decision, pending the outcome of the appeal. A hearing was held on 23 June 2020 before an expanded panel of seven justices. A further hearing is scheduled to be held on 27 July 2021. [More information](#)

Challenging restrictions on Knesset members travel for legitimate political activity. Adalah petitioned the SCT in April 2018 on behalf of MK Yousef Jabareen against a 2018 amendment to the Knesset’s Code of Ethics that allows the parliament to prohibit an MK from traveling overseas if funding for the trip is provided by a body that calls for a boycott of the State of Israel or the settlements. The Ethics Committee banned MK Jabareen from traveling to the US on a lecture tour sponsored by Jewish Voice for Peace. Adalah argued that the amendment violated MKs’ rights of freedom of expression and movement, solely due to political opinion, and the Knesset exceeded its legal authority with this sanction. A SCT hearing was held on 16 January 2020; case awaiting decision. [More information](#)

Representing an Arab political leader charged with freedom of expression offenses. In October 2018, Adalah succeeded to release the Arab political leader, citizen of Israel, Raja Eghbaria, head of the Abnaa al-Balad extra-parliamentary political party, to house arrest (after one month) following his detention without bond for a series of Facebook posts, which Israeli police alleged amounted to incitement to violence. The state prosecutor later filed an indictment against Eghbaria in the Haifa Magistrates’ Court for various speech-related offenses related to his Facebook posts over the last years. Adalah is seeking to dismiss the indictment on the grounds that the facts alleged do not amount to any crime, as well as issues of selective, discriminatory prosecution and more. In June 2020, Adalah succeeded to remove all conditions on Eghbaria release. [More information](#)
Update: Hearings on the case were held in March, April and June 2021; the next hearings are set for September 2021; case remains pending.

Demanding closure of State Attorney’s “Cyber Unit” for illegally censoring user content. In November 2019, Adalah and ACRI petitioned the SCT following two years of complaints by Adalah that the Israeli Cyber Unit has been, and continues to unlawfully issue requests to major social media providers to censor content on their websites. The mechanism for issuing these requests includes appeals to content intermediaries like Facebook and Google to remove, restrict or suspend access to certain content, pages or users, based on an alleged violation of domestic laws as well as the intermediaries’ own Terms of Service. This form of censorship is conducted without any legal procedure and without granting targeted users the right to be heard in the decision, and is sometimes implemented without the users’ knowledge. Following a hearing in August 2020, the SCT ordered the state to explain the source of the legal authority under which the “Cyber Unit” operates, and to present a comparative review of similar mechanisms in other countries, if they exist. After

many delays, the Court granted a “order to show cause”, and the state responded. Adalah submitted its response on 24 January 2021. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

Update: On 12 April 2021, the SCT rejected Adalah and ACRI’s petition, giving a green light to the continued shadowy operations of the Cyber Unit, and allowing it to continue its “alternative enforcement” model of censoring social media content, conducting quasi-judicial censorship without allowing social media users to defend their rights or even to know that the state has been involved in removing their online content. [More information](#)

Accountability and Right to Life

Demanding the release of Ahmed Erekat, killed by Israeli forces, to his family for burial. Adalah is representing the family of 27-year-old Ahmad Erekat before the Israeli Supreme Court. Erekat was shot and killed by Israeli Border Guard soldiers on 23 June 2020 near the Abu Dis checkpoint, and his body has remained in Israeli custody for almost one year. While the Israeli authorities initially informed the family that they would hand over his body on 24 June 2020, a few hours later they retracted their decision. Adalah filed a SCT petition on 30 June 2020, arguing that the Israeli authorities were holding the body without authority, and that every person has the constitutional right under Israeli law to be buried with dignity and within a short time following his death. Moreover, withholding the body of a deceased individual from his family also constitutes a violation of international law, most notably the Convention Against Torture (CAT). The SCT issued an *order nisi* in the case in July 2020 requiring the state to justify the continued holding of Erekat’s body. However, in September 2020, the Israeli Cabinet announced that the bodies of all Palestinian alleged attackers be withheld and not returned to their families. With this new decision, the government admits that it is holding all Palestinian bodies as “bargaining chips”, which, in Adalah’s view also violates the Rome Statute. Adalah then amended its petition, and several hearings have been held. At a hearing on the case on 18 March 2021, the court ordered the state to provide it with an update on the case by early July 2021. [More information](#)

- [Ahmad Erekat’s family petitions High Court for body of alleged checkpoint rammer](#), *The Times of Israel*, 3 July 2020
- [Ahmed Erekat: No closure for Palestinian's family as Israel withholds body for weeks](#), *Middle East Eye*, 20 July 2020
- [Israel to withhold bodies of all Palestinian militants](#), *Agence France-Presse*, 2 September 2020
- [Cabinet approves Israel holding onto all bodies of Palestinian attackers](#), *Jer Post*, 2 Sept 2020
- [Israel warned against using dead Palestinians as ‘bargaining chips’](#), *Morning Star (UK)*, 3 September 2020
- [Cabinet okays policy to hold bodies of all alleged attackers](#), *Times of Israel*, 3 September 2020
- [Israel: Release Body of Slain Palestinian](#), *Human Rights Watch*, 14 September 2020

Supreme Court petition demanding re-opening of criminal investigation into the 2014 Israeli military’s killings of the Bakr boys on the Gaza beach. On 16 July 2014, during Operation Protection Edge, Israeli air forces fired two missiles on civilians present on the beach in Gaza City, resulting in the killing of four children – the Bakr boys – and the injury of four others. These events took place in full view of numerous witnesses and international journalists, who covered the story widely in the international press. Immediately after the killings, Adalah, Al Mezan and the PCHR demanded that the Israeli authorities open an investigation into suspected war crimes. The investigation was opened and closed a year later; and an appeal to the Israeli Attorney General was rejected four 4 years later. On 18 November 2020, Adalah, on behalf of the groups and the family, submitted a petition to the Israeli SCT contending that Israel’s processes show “genuine unwillingness” to investigate, and that, in fact, these processes shielded the perpetrators (e.g., no evidence was collected from witnesses or journalists, only from Israeli soldiers). *Update:* A SCT hearing has been scheduled for 10 January 2022.

Israeli army bulldozer dragging human body in Gaza is a war crime; open immediate criminal investigation. Adalah sent an urgent letter on 23 February 2020 to the Israeli Chief Military Attorney General (MAG) demanding he immediately open a criminal investigation into the incident that occurred on the same day near Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, in which an Israeli military armored bulldozer was filmed dragging a human body along the ground and repeatedly lifting it up in the air and dropping it down in the mud. The Palestinian Center for Human Rights in Gaza continued with the case. [More Information](#)

- [Israel Strikes Militants in Syria and Gaza After Clash Over Body at Border](#), *The New York Times*, 23 February 2020
- [Israel targets Islamic Jihad in Gaza, Syria after Palestinian militants fire rockets for second day](#), *The Washington Post*, 23 February 2020
- [Gaza: Israeli army filmed dragging corpse of suspected militant with bulldozer, as cross-border violence surges](#), *The Independent*, 24 February 2020
- [Israel slammed for 'necroviolence' on bodies of Palestinians](#), *Al Jazeera*, 24 February 2020

Demanding compensation for damages for serious wounding of Palestinian boy in Gaza. In November 2018, the Beer Sheva District Court ruled that Israel was *not liable* for damages for the shooting and serious wounding of an unarmed 15-year-old Palestinian boy, Attiya Nabaheen, in Gaza near his home in 2014, and that Gazans are not entitled to seek compensation for damages from Israel as they live in an “enemy entity”, as Israel declared Gaza in 2007. Adalah and Al Mezan appealed this decision to the SCT in 2019, arguing that the 2012 amendment to the Civil Wrongs Law was unconstitutional and that Israeli and international law require that protected civilians be entitled to effective legal remedies, including compensation. After many delays, a SCT hearing was held on 14 June 2021. [More information](#)

3. Economic and Social Rights

Demanding equitable development benefits for Arab towns in Wadi Ara, in the Triangle. Adalah, in cooperation with the Arab Center for Alternative Planning and local partners, and on behalf of all Arab towns in Wadi Ara and 74 area residents, petitioned the SCT in August 2020, demanding that the government provide state development benefits to Arab towns at levels enjoyed by neighboring Jewish towns. Arab towns located in the northern Triangle area in Israel suffer from decades of deliberate state discrimination and neglect in the distribution of housing, construction, and land development benefits, compared to the adjacent wealthy and far less crowded Jewish towns. The Arab localities did not receive the “National Priority Area” (NPA) designation that would make them eligible for development and housing benefits and land discounts from the Israel Land Authority, despite a [precedent-setting Supreme Court ruling](#) from 2006 on another Adalah petition; in that prior case, the Court rejected the government’s arbitrary determination of criteria for NPA status that discriminated between Arab and Jewish localities in Israel on the basis of ethnicity or national belonging. [More information](#)

Update: In a positive development, on 22 April 2021, at a hearing on the case, the SCT issued an *order nisi* (temporary injunction) on the petition in which it ordered Israeli state authorities to explain why Arab localities in the “northern triangle” are not slated to receive the same development benefits received by neighboring Jewish localities with higher socio-economic rankings. The temporary injunction indicates that the SCT sees solid legal basis for the arguments made by the petitioners. [More information](#)

Demanding equitable subsidies for after-school programs in Arab towns. Adalah, on behalf of parents of Arab children and the Follow-Up Committee for Arab Education, filed a petition in September 2020 to the SCT demanding subsidies for after-school programs in Arab towns within the

Misgav Regional Council (MRC). The MRC, which is comprised of 35 towns, has a socio-economic ranking of 7 (of 10), while the six Arab towns within it are ranked at level 1 or 2, among the poorest in the country. The Education Ministry-run program aims to offer educational benefits to children and allows their parents to work longer hours. However, the poorest Arab villages are treated as part of the generally prosperous MRC, and the parents are forced to pay participation high fees similar to that of the neighboring wealthy Jewish towns. The result is that the families in the six Arab towns cannot afford to participate in the program. Adalah demanded that the Education Ministry alter its eligibility criteria by allocating subsidies based on the individual town's ranking rather than the entire MRC. The SCT ordered the state to respond in December 2020. The state replied that they are working on it, that there are new regulations, that it involves several different ministries, and that the petition should be deleted. Adalah replied and insisted that the case remain pending, and that no remedy is in fact in place.

Update: The SCT ordered the state to update regarding the status of the budget in March 2021. At a SCT hearing on 20 April 2021, the state said that it needed more time to examine the ramifications of changes to this program nationwide. On 5 May 2021, the SCT gave the state until 2 August 2021 to provide it with a further update on the case. [More information](#)

During 2020, Adalah began working on a number of other cases in the fields of the **rights to education, health and food security**, that it is continuing to pursue in 2021. These cases include demands to open a preschool in the unrecognized Bedouin village of Ruwais in the Naqab; to provide adequate transportation for school children living in remote neighborhoods; to provide preparatory classes in Arabic for the psychometric examinations (required for university admission); to implement the National Food Council Law and adapt it to the needs of the most impoverished families in the country, including PCI; and to establish a health clinic in the unrecognized Bedouin village of Tel Arad. Adalah will report on any developments that occur in these cases during 2021.

Demanding protection of Gaza farmers and fishermen. Gisha, Al Mezan and Adalah sent urgent letters to Israeli military authorities and the AG in 2020 demanding the halt to Israeli aerial herbicide spraying of crops in Gaza, resulting in the severe damage to crops and the health risks to Gaza residents (January and April); an immediate halt to the military's destruction of land in the Gaza, an investigation into the recent incursions, and compensation to Gaza farmers for the damage (November). Between January and October 2020, Israeli forces carried out 42 incursions inside Gaza (PR). The groups also demanded that the military put an immediate end to the harassment of fishermen and investigate past incidents. The Israeli navy increasingly used violent enforcement measures at sea, with incidents of live fire directed at fishermen off the coast of Gaza rising by 70% in April 2020 as compared with January-March 2020. The use of live fire threatens fishermen's lives, and causes severe damage to their boats, other equipment, and livelihoods. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

- [Israel Resumes Spraying Herbicides Along Gaza Border After Yearlong Halt](#), *Haaretz*, 22 January 2020
- [Human rights groups urge Israel to halt aerial herbicide spraying along Gaza fence](#), *Middle East Monitor*, 17 January 2020
- [Gaza's Health System is Collapsing. Where's That Headline?](#), *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, March/April 2020 (released February 2020)

Challenging a 2016 law before the SCT permitting the denial of social benefits to the parents of minors convicted of throwing stones, overwhelming Palestinians from East Jerusalem. On 30 March 2020, Adalah filed motion to SCT seeking to freeze the implementation of the law, stressing that COVID-19 places great economic burdens on families and that no further disproportionate burdens should be imposed. The motion was dismissed after the state responded that the law was not being implemented in the case of any minor. The state has announced its intention to amend the law, after

admitting that it was unclear and difficult to implement. On May 2020, the SCT asked the state to provide an update about the latest legislative amendments on this issue. Case pending for decision. [Press Release 1](#) | [Press Release 2](#)

4. Land and Planning Rights

Motion to cancel eviction court decisions (29 lawsuits) in Segev Shalom. In November and December 2020, Adalah filed 29 motions to cancel eviction court decisions submitted against residents of the government-planned Bedouin town of Segev Shalom. Prior to a hearing of the case on the merits, the decisions were frozen because Adalah challenged the fact that the decisions were delivered against the residents of the village without their knowledge and *in absentia*. The case is unique in that the affected families live in a government-planned town, and the master plan drafted for the area is supposed to recognize their homes. In this case, Adalah is working closely with Arab MK Said Elkhroumi, whose family is among those threatened with eviction.

Objecting to the Beer Sheva – Dimona train line. On 7 December 2020, Adalah, together with Bimkom, filed an objection to a master plan to upgrade the train line between Beer Sheva and Dimona. The objection was filed on behalf of 130 women and men living in unrecognized villages affected by the plan, including those whose homes are under threat (the villages are home to a total of 15,000-20,000 people). As the objectors argued, the plan ignores the very existence of people living in villages located in the vicinity of the railway, and offers them no access to the train service. A hearing on the objection was held on 24 February 2021.

Discriminatory restrictions on Bedouin youth in rights to purchase residential land. In November 2020, Adalah sent a legal letter demanding a change in age criteria imposed on those making bids for residential plots in Bedouin towns and recognized villages. The letter was sent after Adalah noticed an item on the agenda of the ILA Council’s monthly meeting pertaining to a proposed increase in the minimum age of prospective individual bidders from 18 to 27 years of age. Adalah argued that the age restriction was arbitrary and discriminatory, since it only and specifically applied to Bedouin youth in the Naqab. The item was withdrawn from the ILA Council meeting agenda following the submission of the letter.

Challenging exclusion of Arab towns and villages from nationwide affordable housing plan. In September 2020, Adalah sent a letter, together with partner NGOs ACAP and Sikkuy, to the ILA to challenge problematic criteria of qualification for a nationwide affordable housing plan that was initiated by the Ministry of Housing and Construction and is aimed primarily at young couples. Several of the criteria are likely to result in the exclusion of young couples living in Arab towns and villages, and the result of the plan is therefore liable to be discriminatory. The plan was passed by the ILA Council in December 2020. Adalah is following up and will take further legal action accordingly.

Defending residents of Ras Jrabah in the Naqab against evacuation of their village. Adalah continued to represent 127 residents (men and women) of Ras Jrabah (pop. 500), an unrecognized Bedouin village, in 10 eviction lawsuits filed against them by the state in May 2019. The state, through the Israel Land Authority (ILA), is seeking their eviction in order to expand the adjacent Jewish city of Dimona and to “use the land for the public good”. Adalah submitted defense arguments in November 2019, arguing that the residents have lived in Ras Jrabah for generations, even before Dimona was established, and that any attempt to portray them as “invaders” or “trespassers” is false. The evacuation of Ras Jrabah is part of the government’s wider plan of “development induced displacement” of Bedouins in the Naqab, a policy guided by support for the settlement of Israeli Jewish citizens. At a pre-hearing in July 2020, the court unified the cases. A hearing is scheduled for July 2021. [More information](#)

Halting construction of a dangerous phosphate mine on Bedouin land in the Naqab. Adalah, together with 168 Al-Fura'a residents (including 60 women), Bimkom, and partners petitioned the Israeli SCT in January 2019 to stop the construction of a phosphate mine in the Al Fura'a (pop. c. 6,000). Following a hearing, the Court issued an *order nisi* in February 2019 requiring the state to explain why the construction of the phosphate mine, which will result in home demolitions and grave health risks for the villagers and surrounding neighbors, is legal. In June 2020, the Court held a status hearing on the case, as the state has failed to respond to the order nisi, due to deep disagreements between the different authorities involved, the year-long elections processes, and the C19 pandemic. Update: As of March 2021, the court had suspended its proceedings in this case, until it issues another decision in a related case in Caesarea. A hearing is scheduled for 24 July 2021. [More information](#)

II. International Advocacy

Due to COVID-19, Adalah undertook its International Advocacy work in 2020 using different means and methods than originally planned. As advocacy missions abroad could not be undertaken and conferences and study tours were cancelled, and most regular UN human rights committee review processes were postponed, Adalah turned instead to webinars and reports.

During 2020, Adalah staff gave talks at over 50 webinars for both local and international audiences. These activities essentially replaced in-person, face-to-face meetings, as well as advocacy missions. Through these webinars, which were generally well attended, Adalah was also able to create new partnerships. Examples of groups abroad that we worked with on these events include the Foundation for Middle East Peace, Columbia University Law School, the American Bar Association (Middle East Section), the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, the New Arab, Mondoweiss, the International Commission of Jurists the NIF-US (twice), the NIF-Germany, and the ESCR-Net. Adalah also made use of online advocacy to reach a wide range of UN, EU and other international actors.

Adalah's international advocacy work focused on four main themes:

1. COVID-19 and Human Rights
2. The Right to Housing and Forced Displacement of the Arab Bedouin in the Naqab
3. Annexation / Jewish Nation-State Basic Law
4. Accountability

Highlights of Adalah's work and networking partners follow.

1. COVID-19 and Human Rights

UN Corona Report: Adalah submitted a report in July 2020 to UN Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts in response to the OHCHR's request for submissions on COVID-19 and human rights. Adalah's report details Israel's initial response to the COVID-19 crisis and its negative impact on the human rights of PCI and Palestinian residents of the OPT. In the report, which received high praise from UN human rights experts, Adalah covered a broad range of issues based on its legal casework, including the following:

- The Government's excessive use of and reliance on Emergency Regulations to manage the crisis in most aspects of life, including the total ban on visits of families and lawyers to Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in Israeli prisons;
- Discrimination against PCI in access to medical services, education and economic support;
- Lack of data collection and publication of statistics on COVID-19 and PCI by the state;
- The delayed and limited release of critical health information in Arabic by the Health Ministry;

- Large gaps in access to testing, emergency medical services, appropriate isolation centers for PCI and for Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem;
- The denial of access to online distance learning, especially for Bedouin children, who lack electricity and/or Internet connections in their homes and villages in the Naqab;
- Insufficient and inequitable economic measures taken to help Palestinian citizen workers, households, and businesses;
- The exploitation of West Bank Palestinian workers in Israel: Israel has issued various decisions aimed at keeping the Israeli economy from collapsing. Palestinian laborers from the West Bank were the primary victims of these policies, compelled, if they wanted to work, to live in inhuman and degrading conditions in Israel.
- The lack of representation of PCI in the COVID-19 National Emergency Committee.

Read: [The report](#)

Diplomatic meetings. Adalah organized two webinar briefings specifically for embassy staff and international organizations:

- A webinar for representatives of embassies in Israel, held by Adalah on 6 April 2020 on the subject of “Health, Human Rights and the Coronavirus: Palestinian Citizens of Israel”. The webinar attracted 30 participants from 18 countries, including the EU.
- A joint webinar with the Negev Coexistence Forum (NCF) for representatives of embassies and international organizations, held on 6 May 2020 on the subject of “The impact of the coronavirus on the human rights of Bedouin citizens of Israel living in the Naqab/Negev”. 26 people attended the webinar, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues. Bedouin staff members of both organizations working with affected communities and a Bedouin woman doctor volunteering with the Arab Emergency Committee in the south spoke at this event.

Examples of webinars held for wider audiences

- **23 March 2020, New Israel Fund:** “Equality and democracy in the time of COVID-19”. Speaker: Dr. Hassan Jabareen, General Director, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **14 April 2020, Columbia Law School:** “Innovating Advocacy: Legal Approaches in a New [Pandemic] Terrain”, featuring: Dr. Hassan Jabareen, General Director, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **15 April 2020, Al Quds University:** “Coronavirus and Palestinians behind the Separation Wall” (Arabic). Speaker: Adalah Attorney Suhad Bishara and others. [Recording](#)
News articles (Arabic): [Al-Hayat al-Jadida](#); [Hadf News](#); [Safa](#); [Wafa](#); [Al-Makdesy](#)
- **29 April 2020, Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP):** “Coronavirus & Israel’s Supreme Court: Disclosing Structural Failures & Inequities in Israeli Policies”, featuring: Dr. Hassan Jabareen, General Director, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **11 May 2020, The Association for Cultural Development in Haifa:** “Human rights during the coronavirus crisis” (Arabic), one-on-one interview with Sawsan Zaher, Deputy General Director. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **5 November 2020, International Commission of Jurists (ICJ):** “Palestinian prisoners’ right to health and the COVID-19 pandemic”. Speakers: Adalah Attorney Myssana Morany and others. [Recording](#)

Analysis paper of the Israeli Supreme Court’s decision in the Shin Bet (“Shabak”) COVID-19 cellphone surveillance case: The case challenged contact tracing of COVID-19 patients and their relatives/friends by the Shin Bet security services, during a civil emergency that is not a national security emergency. Adalah’s litigation in this case was pioneering and innovative, given the relatively novel legal issues raised, which have not been litigated before the Israeli courts. In its ruling delivered on 26 April 2020, the SCT decided that the government must cease using the Shin Bet in the absence of authorizing legislation, and that the proportionality of using mass surveillance tools as such should be examined, stressing the imperative nature of civil alternatives. The precedent-setting nature of the case attracted widespread attention locally and internationally, and Adalah was contacted by multiple organizations and practitioners in other countries seeking information about the case. Adalah used this analysis paper to inform these international actors about the case and the broader question of the use of tools of mass surveillance and intelligence services in response to the COVID-19 crisis. [The analysis paper](#)

2. The Right to Housing and Forced Displacement of the Arab Bedouin in the Naqab

Adalah worked closely with the new **UN Special Rapporteur (SR) on the Right to Adequate Housing** throughout the year, participating in three consultation calls and briefings:

- With ESCR-Net, a consultation with the SR on the right to housing and COVID-19, held on 16 June 2020;
- With ESCR-Net, a consultation call with the SR and CSOs on “20 Years: Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing: taking stock – moving forward”, on 7 October 2020; and
- Adalah organized a briefing for the SR on Palestinian citizens of Israel and the right to housing, land and planning, held on 17 December 2020. At the briefing, Adalah, NCF, and Bimkom detailed Israeli policies of forced displacement and segregation, particularly in the Naqab.

The organizations also provided a resources document to the UN SR with information on major land, planning and housing rights of PCI, with a special focus on the Bedouin in the Naqab.

Adalah’s increased engagement with the SR on Adequate Housing was due in part to our greater participation in the International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net), which has close ties with the SR, and in particular in its Strategic Litigation Working Group.

Study tours in the Naqab: Before the onset of COVID-19, Adalah’s team conducted several study tours in the Naqab for diplomats, journalists and activists, often together with NCF. These tours allowed the participants to see and experience life in the Naqab, meet with community leaders, and gain first-hand knowledge of our legal cases and interventions. In addition, Adalah participated in an UN OHCHR roundtable for civil society organizations on the subject of human rights violations in the Naqab on 8 December 2020.

3. Annexation/The Jewish Nation-State Basic Law

Briefing paper: Initial analysis of the Israeli Supreme Court's decision in the Settlements Regularization Law Case. Adalah published this paper in June 2020, following the Supreme Court’s decision. It was distributed widely via Adalah’s newsletter and social media platforms, and via email to UN human rights bodies, and Adalah’s networks, partners, and diplomats. [Analysis paper](#)

UN Human Rights Council: Intervention on Annexation/UN SR Statement: At the June 2020 session, Adalah presented an oral intervention co-sponsored by four partner Palestinian and regional human rights organizations, calling on the UN and the international community to oppose Israel's annexation of large swaths of the occupied Palestinian West Bank and to push for the dismantling of all Israeli

settlements. On 16 June 2020, 47 UN special rapporteurs issued a biting denunciation of Israel's West Bank annexation plan, calling it “a vision of 21st century apartheid”. [Press Release](#)

Advocacy meetings: Adalah, Yesh Din and Bimkom participated in a number of meetings with German decision-makers and influencers in September 2021 on the subject of annexation, organized by BFTW and Miseror. The organizations met, via ZOOM, with spokespersons, consultants and officers on foreign affairs for different political parties; members of parliament; and representatives of the Foreign Ministry. Adalah provided our briefing papers on the Settlements Regularization Law case, and the State of Israel’s use of the “good faith” doctrine to confiscate private Palestinian land in the West Bank (published 2019).

Examples of webinars on annexation:

- **21 May 2020**, The New Arab: “The spectre of annexation 72 years after the Nakba”, discussion with Adalah Attorney Suhad Bishara, Director of the Land and Planning Unit, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **10 June 2020, Birzeit University:** “Annexation plans: Political and Legal Dimensions” (Arabic). Speakers: Dr. Hassan Jabareen, Adalah’s General Director, and Adalah Attorney Suhad Bishara, Director of the Land and Planning Unit, and others. Invitation: [Annexation plans: Political and Legal Dimensions](#)
- **24 June 2020, NIF Germany:** Online Panel: “Israeli Annexation of Palestinian Territories”. Speakers: Adalah Attorney Sawsan Zaher, Adalah’s Deputy General Director, and others. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **28 June 2020, Tel Aviv University, Faculty of Law:** “Annexation? Applying sovereignty? Legal Aspects of Applying Israeli Law in the wake of President Trump's Centenary”. Speakers: Dr. Hassan Jabareen, Adalah’s General Director, and others.

4. Accountability

Adalah Report: Gaza: A Legal Black Hole – Adalah’s Response to the Israeli Attorney General’s Memorandum regarding the lack of International Criminal Court (ICC) Jurisdiction on the Situation of Palestine. In June 2020, Adalah issued this report which shows how Israel has created a ‘legal black hole’ regarding Gaza, where a policy of total impunity and lack of accountability prevails in both civil and criminal law. It argues that the ICC must therefore exercise jurisdiction in defence of victims in Gaza. Several groups that submitted *amicus curiae* briefs to the ICC cited Adalah’s report, and it is increasingly being used as a reference by academics and practitioners, given the ICC’s decision in 2021 to launch a formal investigation. [Report](#)

UN Human Rights Council – Intervention on Accountability, Gaza: At the July 2020 session Adalah delivered an oral intervention that was co-sponsored by three partner Palestinian and regional human rights organizations, calling on the international community to intervene to ensure accountability and justice for Palestinian victims, especially in Gaza. The statement presented Adalah’s analysis of the legal ‘black hole’ in Gaza based on our report published in June 2020. Adalah also participated in a webinar for diplomats (a “virtual side event”) organized by Palestinian, regional and international human rights organizations, on “Collective Punishment in Gaza: 13 years of Illegal Closure with Impunity”. [Press Release](#)

5. Networking

Legal Task Force (LTF): Adalah participated in the Legal Task Force network meetings on a weekly basis during the first wave of the COVID-19 virus. The participants, including Adalah, provided updates on their legal submissions and court decisions, and coordinated advocacy initiatives.

ESCR-Net: Adalah actively participated in the ESCR-Net. Our IA Coordinator presented the three-year evaluation and analysis of the Strategic Litigation Working Group in the network's global call with partners, and participated in a number of meetings, including on surveillance and COVID-19.

EUROMED Rights: Adalah continued with its participation in the EuroMed Rights PIP Working Group (WG). Adalah attended bi-annual meetings of the group and participated in various EU advocacy initiatives. Adalah's IA Director, Rina Rosenberg, is the facilitator of the WG.

III. LEGAL EDUCATION

The two main areas of Legal Education undertaken by Adalah in 2020 were training for legal apprentices and law students, and public outreach and awareness-raising for the local Palestinian community around COVID-19 issues.

1. Training for legal apprentices and law students

Adalah trained 4 legal apprentices (stagiaires) and law students in 2020:

- **Mr. Wesam Sharaf** from Haifa University worked as a stagiaire with Adalah in 2019 and until the end of February 2020. He passed the Israel Bar exam in the fall of 2020, and joined Adalah as a staff attorney in January 2021
- **Ms. Adan Tatour** from Tel Aviv University worked as a law student trainee with Adalah from 2018 through February 2020. Adan re-joined Adalah as a stagiaire from June 2020 to February 2021, and is now studying for the Israel Bar exam.
- **Ms. Mais Abdallah** from Tel Aviv University joined Adalah in June 2020, as a law student trainee. She is continuing to work part-time with Adalah in 2021.
- **Ms. Mai Diab** from Hebrew University as a law student trainee with Adalah from June to December 2020.

One LLM student from abroad volunteered with Adalah in 2020. We are extremely grateful to her for her very valuable contribution to Adalah.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Adalah could not hold our annual Palestinian law students' conference, which brings together Palestinian students from Israeli and Palestinian universities, over three days, in a legal, academic context. We hope to reconvene the conference in 2022.

2. Public Outreach

In addition to participating in dozens of public, webinar events by invitation, Adalah convened five webinars in Arabic, featuring speakers from our own staff alongside prominent human rights lawyers and activists for the **Arabic-speaking public on COVID-19-related issues**.

- **2 April 2020**, Adalah: "Palestinian prisoners: Escalation under isolation and lack of protection under coronavirus". Moderator: Soheir Asaad, Adalah's IA Coordinator; Speaker: Aiah Haj Odeh, Attorney, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)

- **9 April 2020**, Adalah: “Palestinians in the Naqab: Years of Injustice Portend a Health Catastrophe”. Moderator: Soheir Asaad, Adalah’s Int’l Advocacy Coordinator; Speakers: Sawsan Zaher, Adalah’s Deputy General Director; Marwan Abu Frieih, Field Researcher and Coordinator of Adalah’s Office in the Naqab, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#) (Facebook reach: 6,700)
- **16 April 2020**, Adalah: “A double siege: Gaza facing the coronavirus”. Moderator: Soheir Asaad, IA Coordinator, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **23 April 2020**, “Jerusalem and Area C: The threat of the coronavirus under the policies of inclusion and displacement”. Moderator: Soheir Asaad, IA Coordinator; Speaker: Adalah Attorney Suhad Bishara, Director of the Land and Planning Rights Unit, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)
- **30 April 2020**, “Economic policies towards the Palestinians under the Coronavirus”. Moderator: Soheir Asaad, IA Coordinator; Speaker: Adalah Attorney Myssana Morany, Land and Planning Rights Unit Coordinator, and other speakers. [Invitation](#) / [Recording](#)

IV. Media and Social Media Outreach

Adalah produced, wrote and distributed about **80 press releases** in each language – Hebrew, Arabic and English – in 2020. A full list of Adalah’s press releases in English is available on our website, [here](#).

Adalah’s communications team circulated the press releases, as well as media alerts, short statements and responses to breaking news events related to Adalah’s work to a wide range of journalists, and in English, to diplomats. In figures, our lists include:

- International journalists and diplomats: 1,067
 - Arabic journalists: 639
 - Hebrew journalists: 1,375 (a five-fold increase from 250 in 2019)
- Total = 3,081 (2020); 2,050 (2019), an increase of 1031**

Adalah’s work was featured on hundreds of news websites and newspapers, mainly through favorable coverage of our messages, creating greater visibility for human rights issues involving PCI in the media. Adalah staff and the cases on which they worked appeared in English-language coverage from MSNBC, and i24 News; AFP, The Associated Press and Reuters; The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Independent (UK), Mondoweiss, and Middle East Monitor; and Ha’aretz, The Jerusalem Post, +972 Magazine, among other new outlets. Highlights of media coverage obtained are indicated above throughout the Legal Action section of this report.

Several legal representations received substantial media coverage:

- The COVID-19 cases overall, and the Shabak surveillance case in particular;
- The Jewish Nation-State Law case, and the related Karmiel school transport case;
- The state’s refusal to release the body of Ahmed Erekat;
- The Israeli national elections cases;
- The Gaza cases;
- The Settlements Regularization Law case;

Heightened profile in local Hebrew-language media

Many of Adalah’s COVID-19 cases affected the rights of all citizens of Israel – Jewish and Palestinian – and the Hebrew-language media took notice. A broader range of Hebrew-speaking journalists and news outlets relied on Adalah as a source of information during the COVID-19 crisis, seeking

information for stories based on Adalah's cases. Adalah's focus on universal elements of these cases, as affecting the rights of all Israeli citizens, e.g. the surveillance of COVID-19 patients by the Shin Bet, pregnant women dismissed from their workplaces, the government's excessive resort to emergency regulations in its pandemic response, made this outcome possible. See for example:

14 May 2020, +972 Magazine: "How Palestinian citizens are spearheading the fight for democracy and equality in Israel", one-on-one interview in English with Dr. Hassan Jabareen, General Director: [Recording](#)

Read Meron Rapoport, "[How Palestinian citizens are putting Israel's coronavirus powers in check: From Shin Bet surveillance to women's employment, one Palestinian NGO has been at the forefront of defending civil rights for all during the pandemic](#)," +972 Magazine, 12 May 2020 (from the original Hebrew)

A separate example of strategic media outreach in the Hebrew media is the case involving the Municipality of Karmiel's refusal to fund bus transportation for Arab children living in the city to their schools in other towns, due to the lack of Arabic-language schools within the city. The case was likely to have been passed over by media outlets as it was, given its limited significance. However, by tying it to the Jewish-Nation State Basic Law, Adalah managed to garner extensive media coverage, through which it expanded the discourse about the negative applications of the Law vis-à-vis Palestinian citizens on Israel.

Social Media Content

Top English Facebook posts

- [Coronavirus/land & planning memes](#), 19 March 2020 (8282 reached; 120 shares; 359 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
These memes went viral on social media channels and also stimulated mainstream media coverage from high-quality outlets
- [Photo from Supreme Court hearing on COVID-19 related dismissal of pregnant women from places of employment](#), 20 April 2020 (2605 reached; 7 shares; 250 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
- [Photo from Supreme Court hearing on distance learning for Bedouin schoolchildren](#), 20 May 2020 (2501 reached; 4 shares; 177 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
- [Hassan Jabareen featured in TheMarker](#), 2 September 2020 (2101 reached; 14 shares; 146 reactions/comments; w/o boost)

Top Arabic/Hebrew Facebook posts

- [Hebrew-language coronavirus/land & planning memes](#), 19 March 2020 (7075 reached; 24 shares; 173 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
- [Arabic-language webinar on digital safety and rights violations under coronavirus emergency regulations](#), 30 March 2020, (5420 reached; 23 shares; 78 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
- [October 2000 Arabic meme designed by Amal Shoufany](#), 1 October 2020 (5434 reached; 18 shares; 155 reactions/comments; w/o boost)
- [Hebrew meme designed in-house promoting October 2000: Local Call webinar with Hassan Jabareen](#), 1 Oct 2020 (5253 reached; 10 shares; 182 reactions/comments; w/NIS 75 boost)
- [Arabic Adalah webinar on October 2000](#), 5 October 2020 (5200 reached; 2000 views; 8 comments; w/o boost)

Social Media Outreach

During the reporting period, Adalah frequently updated its [trilingual websites](#) and maintained and updated its two Facebook and Twitter pages (Arabic and Hebrew; and English) and Instagram.

Adalah used a broad range of visual materials, which helped to increase awareness of Palestinian human rights issues among a wide audience, and especially youth.

Overall, Adalah's social media platforms showed an *increase* in followers, while our traditional platforms – the website and the newsletter, which is distributed via email - showed some decrease in users and subscribers, respectively.

Total Users, Followers and Subscribers (2020) = 152,594 / (2019) 151,072 = increase of 1512

The breakdown of the figures are below:

Facebook

Facebook English (2020): 9,700; Arabic/Hebrew: 25,550

Facebook total (2020): 35,250; 34,000 (2019), *increase* of 1250 followers

Twitter

Twitter English (2020): 5,000; Arabic/Hebrew: 8,460

Twitter total (2020): 13,460; 11,500 (2019), *increase* of 1960

Instagram

Instagram (2020): 1,751; 1,300 (2019), *increase* of 451

Websites

Website users (2020): 87,884

Newsletters

Newsletter subscribers (2020): Arabic: 6947; English: 5570; Hebrew: 1532 = 14,049

Adalah produced 10 newsletters, *Adalah's News*, over the course of the year, which it distributed to thousands of subscribers to our mailing lists, as well as to various listservs, email groups and via Facebook.

January and February 2020: [Spotlight on the Elections 2020](#)

March 2020: [Adalah's COVID-19 Cases](#)

April 2020: [Major COVID-19 Cases \(focus on beneficiaries\)](#)

May 2020: [Socio-Economic Rights Cases](#)

June 2020: [SUCCESS – Supreme Court strikes down Israel's Settlement Regularization Law](#)

July 2020: [Focus on UN Advocacy](#)

August-September 2020: [Major New COVID-19 Cases](#)

October 2000: [October 2000 killings, 20 years later](#)

November 2020: [International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People](#)

December 2020: [Happy Holidays and Main Achievements of Adalah in 2020](#)

V. Institutional Development

Adalah engaged in various aspects of Institutional Development in 2020, including the following:

1. Staff capacity-building

Advanced legal training: Eight members of Adalah's legal and international advocacy staff participated in a specialized two-day, Diakonia-organized legal training workshop on international criminal law in February 2020. The session was led by lawyers who had worked before international criminal tribunals, and had both theoretical and practical components.

Freedom of Information Act: In February 2020, Adalah's legal and media staff participated in a half-day training workshop on how to prepare Freedom of Information Act requests more effectively. The training was provided by the Movement for Freedom of Information.

Salaries management trainings: Adalah's Office Manager participated in three five-hour training sessions on salaries management training and updates on taxes and National Insurance provided by the Hashavim College in September and October 2020.

Resource development (RD): Adalah's RD staff participated in a number of online fundraising trainings throughout 2020 in order to acquire the needed skills on how to fundraise during times of crisis and how to best use new technologies to raise funds for our work.

2. Planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME)

Adalah employed the following PME procedures over the course of the year:

(i) Annual planning and evaluation meetings: Each department within Adalah engaged in annual evaluation and planning meetings with the General and Deputy General Director, and continued inter-departmental planning, in order to build the organization's Annual Work Plan.

(ii) Monitoring meetings: RD and program staff undertook quarterly program monitoring meetings. Adalah also participated in meetings with donor/partners via Zoom on all aspects of Adalah's work.

(iii) Financial monitoring: Adalah's finance team carried out monthly reviews of the organization's finances and expenditures, including monitoring of project specific grants. Adalah engaged with a new, international auditing firm, BDO-East Jerusalem, which conducted our 2019 institutional audit. The audit was sent to all donors in August 2020.

External Evaluation

Adalah and the Negev Co-Existence Forum (NCF) completed a 27-month EU-funded project on advancing the rights of Arab Bedouin in the Naqab in December 2020. An EU ROM Monitor conducted an evaluation of the project in August 2020, and gave high praise to the relevance of the project to the needs of the beneficiaries, and to our swift and comprehensive actions regarding COVID-19.

3. Resource Development

Strategic resource development process (SRDP): Adalah continued with its SRDP, begun in 2019, together with an external fundraising consultant. The principal aim of the process is to put Adalah in a better position to substantially expand its resources, with the infrastructure, staff, and capacity-

building required for the financial viability of Adalah's future. In February 2020, for example, we hired Ms. Ranna Khalil to work with the team. Prior to working with Adalah, Ms. Khalil worked for years as a TV news producer for international media outlets, including NBC News and the Associated Press TV News, reporting on Israeli and Palestinian affairs, and in Berlin, covering worldwide news with a focus on the MENA region. Ms. Khalil brought much-needed additional capacity to Adalah's RD team.

New institutional donors and partnerships

WFD grant (application process in 2020): The World Peace Service (WFD), a German non-governmental organization, provided Adalah with a new grant of EUR 90,000 beginning in 2021, with support also expected in 2022-2024. Adalah's project with WFD aims to achieve greater international visibility for the human rights issues affecting Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Online fundraising / Fundraising from individuals

Global Giving: The amount of donations awarded to Adalah from its Global Giving (GG) projects **doubled in 2020**. We had about 100 donors (12 of whom are recurring monthly donors). Adalah created a new campaign for its "Coronavirus and Human Rights" project in April 2020, and maintained on two existing projects – "Defending Palestinians with Strategic Litigation" and "Protect the Protest in Palestine and Israel". GG is an online crowdfunding platform for charitable organizations. For all three projects, Adalah produced regular updates of our most recent achievements, with additional images and videos.

Additional online/virtual activities included:

- Participation in "Giving Tuesdays: May and December 2020", by launching online fundraising campaigns;
- Holding a virtual fundraising event for potential new private donors via Zoom on 1 May 2020, entitled "The Coronavirus and Human Rights from the Field. Adalah attracted several new donors and received contributions from this event.
- Producing an End-of-Year Holiday card and a photo slideshow on **Adalah's Main Achievements in 2020 in English and Arabic**. Adalah received substantial End-of-Year donations, as well as positive feedback for the content and new design from supporters. See the presentation: [Adalah's Achievements 2020](#)

Adalah's Staff, Board of Directors and Audit Control Committee

The bios of Adalah's staff, Board of Directors and Audit Control Committee are available on our website, [here](#).

Board of Directors

- Adalah held its annual General Assembly meeting in February 2020. Three new Board members joined the organization, while three Board members left due to the expiration of their terms. Outgoing Board members were: Dr. Eman Abu Hanna Nahhas; Nasim Shaqr, Advocate; Abed Alaziz Ibraheem, Advocate, CPA. We are very thankful to our former Board members for sharing their knowledge and experience with Adalah.
- After submitting our reports to the Israeli Registrar of Associations, Adalah received a "certificate of good governance" in 2020 and 2021.

Staff Honors

- **Adalah's General Director, Dr. Hassan Jabareen, was named by *The Marker* (a business daily published by the Ha'aretz Group) as one of 100 top influencers in Israel in 2020, on 1 September 2020.** "Jabareen, as Adalah's director, has led a long series of struggles for the rights of the Arab minority in Israel, utilizing legal tools – first and foremost petitions to the Supreme Court – ranging from political and economic rights to issues of land discrimination, and planning and construction rights ...During its years of activity, Adalah has become a vital player in the public, political, and legal activities of the Arab public in Israel." Further information is in this [Facebook Post](#).
- **Adalah's Communications Director & International Media Coordinator, Mati Milstein, was selected as Harvard Divinity School's 2020-21 Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative Fellow:** Milstein's project "will utilize photography to document American Jewish social justice activists, their connections to and actions in Palestine, and the resulting impact upon their cultural and religious identity". See Mati Milstein's [Facebook Post](#).

Adalah's Staff

Dr. Hassan Jabareen, Advocate, General/Legal Director
Sawsan Zaher, Advocate, Deputy General Director, Senior Attorney

Legal Department

Suhad Bishara, Advocate, Director, Land and Planning Unit, Senior Attorney (PhD studies)
Myssana Morany, Attorney and Coordinator, Land and Planning Unit
Fady Khoury, Attorney, Civil and Political Rights Unit (SJD studies)
Rabea Eghbariah, Attorney, Civil and Political Rights Unit (SJD Studies)
Nareman Shehadeh-Zoabi, Attorney, Economic and Social Rights Unit
Aiah Haj Odeh, Attorney, Economic and Social Rights Unit
Sari Arraf, Attorney, Economic and Social Rights Unit
Marwan Abu Freih, Field Researcher and Naqab Office Coordinator
Maria Zahran, Freedom of Expression Coordinator
Wesam Sharaf, Legal Apprentice
Adan Tatour, Law Student, Legal Apprentice
Mais Abdallah, Law Student
Mai Diab, Law Student

Communications Department

Mati Milstein, Communications Director, International Media Coordinator
Rami Haidar, Arabic Media Coordinator
Ari Remez, Hebrew Media Coordinator

International Advocacy and Resource Development Department

Rina Rosenberg (Jabareen), International Advocacy and Resource Development Director
Katie Hesketh, Publications Coordinator
Soheir Asaad, International Advocacy Coordinator
Ranna Khalil, Researcher and Resource Development Associate

Finance and Administration Department

Ghassan Kharouba, CPA, Finance Director
Fathiyya Hussein, Office Manager

Basheer Saleh, Accountant
Shireen Zmorrod, Administrative Assistant

Board of Directors

Prof. Mahmoud Yazbak, Chairman
Khalid Dagash
Dr. Rula Hardal
Dr. Hala Khoury-Bisharat
Manhal Khoury, Advocate
Dr. Mansour Nasasra
Ziad Omary

Audit Control Committee

Emad Jabarin
Moayad Miari, Advocate

Donors to Adalah

Adalah's work in 2020 was supported by grants from foundations, development agencies, and hundreds of individuals. We appreciate the generous contributions of all of our donors to our work. The following major institutional donors to Adalah were:

- [Open Society Foundations \(USA\)](#)
- [Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation \(Switzerland\)](#)
- [The European Commission](#)
- [New Israel Fund \(USA and Israel\)](#)
- [Bread for the World \(Germany\)](#)
- [Christian Aid \(Great Britain\)](#)
- [Broederlijk Delen \(Belgium\)](#)
- [Sigrid Rausing Trust \(Great Britain\)](#)
- [Medico International \(Germany\)](#)
- [Mazon – A Jewish Response to Hunger \(USA\)](#)
- The Galilee Foundation (Great Britain)

The views expressed on this report are those of Adalah and do not reflect the official position of the European Union or any other donor to Adalah.