

Hafrada

Hafrada () is the English transliteration of the Hebrew word for separation.

In Israel, the term is used to refer to the concept of separation, and to the general policy of separation the Israeli government has adopted and implemented over the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israeli West Bank barrier, (in Hebrew, Geder Ha'hafrada or "separation fence") and from Gaza have been cited as examples of hafrada.

Other names for hafrada when discussed in English include unilateral separation or unilateral disengagement.

Since its first public introductions, the concept-turned-policy or paradigm has dominated Israeli political and cultural discourse and debate.

In it, Schueftan reviews new and existing arguments underlying different separation stances, in order to make the case for separation from the Palestinians, beginning with those in the West Bank and Gaza. Schueftan favours the "hard separation" stances of politicians like Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak, while characterizing the stance of politicians like Shimon Peres, as "soft separation".

Yitzhak Rabin was the first to propose the creation of a physical barrier between the Israeli and Palestinian populations in 1992, and by 1994, construction on the first barrier - the Israeli Gaza Strip barrier - had begun. Following an attack on Bet Lid, near the city of Netanya, Rabin specified the objectives behind the undertaking, stating that, "This path must lead to a separation, though not according to the borders prior to 1967. We want to reach a separation between us and them. We do not want a majority of the Jewish residents of the state of Israel, 98% of whom live within the borders of sovereign Israel, including a united Jerusalem, to be subject to terrorism."

The first Israeli politician to campaign successfully on a platform based explicitly on separation, under the slogan of "Us here. Them there," was Ehud Barak

In the U.S.-based journal Policy Review, Eric Rozenman writes: "Barak explained hafrada — separation — this way in 1998: 'We should separate ourselves from the Palestinians physically, following the recommendation of the American poet Robert Frost, who once wrote that good fences make good neighbors. Leave them behind the borders that will be agreed upon, and build Israel.'"

After assuming office in 1999, Barak moved to "stimulate cabinet discussion of separation" by distributing copies of Haifa University Professor Dan Schueftan's manifesto, Disengagement, to his ministers.

In February 2001, Meir Indor, Lieutenant Colonel in the Israeli army submitted that "hafrada (separation) - they are there and we are here" had become the "new ideology" and "new word for those who fantasize about peace." Indor aimed strong criticism toward Ariel Sharon's proposed peace agreement put forward during the 2001 elections in which Sharon claimed he would provide "peace and security" by making "a hafrada the length and breadth of the land." Indor stated that in his opinion, "If it were possible to make a hafrada, it would have been done a long time ago." He also noted that, "Binyamin Ben Eliezer himself said hafrada is impossible to implement."

Unilateral separation and unilateral disengagement

In 2002, Rochelle Furstenberg of Hadassah Magazine reported that the term "unilateral disengagement" or "Hafrada Had Tzdadit" had been unknown to the public eight months previous, but that the notion had gained momentum.

That same year, a television broadcast of The McLaughlin Group on the subject of Israel's separation policy opened with the words: "Jews call it hafrada, 'separation,' in Hebrew. Critics call it apartheid. The more technical neo-nomenclature is, quote, unquote, 'unilateral disengagement.' It's an idea that has gained ground in Israel."

Construction on the Israeli West Bank barrier or "separation fence" began in 2002. Forming "a central pillar" of Ariel Sharon's "unilateral separation plan" or what is known today as Israel's unilateral disengagement plan,

The barrier has been described by Daniel Schueftan as constituting, "the physical part of the strategy," of unilateral separation. Schueftan has explained that: "It makes the strategy possible because you cannot say 'this is what I will incorporate and this is what I will exclude' without having a physical barrier that prevents movement between the two."

Sharon had originally dubbed his unilateral disengagement plan - in Hebrew, Tokhnit HaHitnatkut, or Tokhnit HaHinatkut - the "separation plan" or Tokhnit HaHafrada before realizing that, "separation sounded bad, particularly in English, because it evoked apartheid."

Formally adopted by the Israeli government and enacted in August 2005, the unilateral disengagement plan resulted in the dismantlement of all settlements in the Gaza Strip and four in the northern West Bank.

Schueftan has characterized Sharon's unilateral disengagement plan as only the first step in a "wider historical process." Telling The Jerusalem Report in 2005 that he could "even pin the dates on it," he suggested that in 2007 or 2008, there would be another major disengagement in the West Bank; and that before 2015, Israel would unilaterally repartition Jerusalem along lines of its own choosing. Schueftan argued that the "underlying feature" of disengagement is not that it will bring peace, but rather that it will prevent "perpetual terror".

Implementation of hafrada has continued under the government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

Additional examples of the term's usage in languages other than Hebrew

By Israelis

*Eitan Harel, professor of Biology at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, told Le Monde Diplomatique in May 1996: "Our priorities have changed. The dream of a Greater Israel has been replaced by the reality of a small Israel. What matters to people is to live better here, and if you ask them what they wish for and wait for, the majority response is : hafrada, separation."

*Esther Zandberg described an art exhibition entitled "Hafrada (Separation)" in a June 2005 edition of Ha'aretz as consisting of pictures of 12 separation sites photographed by Yair Barak, Orit Siman-Tov and Amit Grun that represent, "apartheid walls between Caesarea and Jisr al-Zarka and between Nir Zvi and the Arab neighborhood of Pardes Snir in Lod; the architectural monstrosity of the Carmel Beach Towers in Haifa, which stick up like a raised fist opposite the distressed neighborhood of Neveh David; the threatening wall surrounding the luxury residential Holyland neighborhood in Jerusalem; and several other sites."

* In a paper entitled "Nishul (Displacement):Israel's Form of Apartheid," Jeff Halper of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, wrote that: "Hafrada (Apartheid in Afrikaans) is the official Hebrew term for Israel's vision and policy towards the Palestinians of the Occupied Territories - and, it could be argued (with qualifications), within Israel itself."

By Palestinians

* Since 2003, Reverend Naim Ateek of Palestinian Christian Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Sabeel, based in Jerusalem has insisted on using the term hafrada to describe Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, while noting its similarity in meaning to the word apartheid.

* In a 2006 discussion on the prospects for peaceful resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict sponsored by The Institute of Strategic and Development Studies, Mazin B. Qumsiyeh, a former Yale professor and geneticist and advocate for a one-state solution, said: "Now, Israel today uses a new word. You probably have heard it mistranslated. In Hebrew it's called hafrada. Hafrada means literally segregation or separation. But in the worst Israeli propaganda machine at CNN and other news outlets, they use the word 'convergence' - you heard about , Olmert's convergence. Convergence doesn't mean anything. What is convergence? It's not a translation of hafrada. Hafrada means segregation, separation; that's what it means."

By activists & advocacy organizations

* The Israeli West Bank Barrier or Geder Ha'hafrada is known in some activist circles as the Hafrada Wall.

*In 2006, James Bowen wrote in an opinion editorial in Ha'aretz that he and fellow activists from the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign see, "hafrada (separation) s the Zionist form of apartheid" and argued that "...Israel should be treated like the old South Africa."

* In a 30 May 2006 media communique entitled Sunday Herald's Linguistics Gymnastics, Honest ReportingUK addressed the use of the word hafrada by Sunday Herald editor David Pratt. It stated that, "just a cursory glance at a Hebrew-English dictionary reveals that the term 'Hafrada' does not literally mean 'apartheid'. Also, as a concept, 'Hafrada' has certainly not entered the Israeli lexicon, but rather, the term 'Geder Hafrada' ('Separation Fence') referring to Israel's security barrier. Thus, Pratt deliberately and dishonestly claims that Israelis have begun to privately use their own term for "apartheid" while inaccurately stating that Israel's security barrier and the apartheid ideology are one and the same." This argument, however, ignores the fact that the literal meaning of the Afrikaans word "apartheid" is indeed "separateness", and that the official English synonym was "separate development". It was originally coined by the South African government in an attempt to avoid use of the more active term "segregation".

By journalists

* On 26 May 2006, David Pratt, Scottish Sunday Herald Foreign Editor wrote that: "Even among Israelis, the term 'Hafrada', 'separation or apartheid in Hebrew' has entered the mainstream lexicon, despite strident denials by the Jewish state that it is engaged in any such process."

*In a January 2007 article entitled "Further footnotes on Zionism, Yoder and Boyarin," Alain Epp Weaver wrote that it was, "strategic demographic and territorial goals" that gave birth to "a policy of hafrada, Hebrew for separation."