



## Israel & Occupied Palestinian Territories

13 October 2010

**Israel: The Knesset must put an end to the undemocratic loyalty oath for new citizens!**

**On October 10, 2010, the Israeli Cabinet approved an amendment to the Citizenship law 5712-1952 that would, as a condition for naturalisation in Israel, requires individuals to declare their loyalty to the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.**

As stated by FIDH member organisations in Israel, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) and Adalah, in letters sent to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, "passage of this amendment would mean that non-Jews seeking naturalisation in Israel would not only have to declare their intention to follow the laws of the state, but also their allegiance to a Jewish state, in other words, their loyalty to an ideology- which is a serious violation of freedom of expression".

Imposing such an oath on non-Jews contradicts Israel's explicit commitment to equality among all of its citizens. According to ACRI, "as such, the amendment is the latest example of anti-democratic laws which ostracise and delegitimise minority views, particularly those of Arab citizens in Israel."

According to Adalah, « this new amendment is but one link in a long chain of Israeli government policies that target Arab citizens of Israel and their spouses from the OPT, a main example of which is the 2003 Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law, which bans family unification ».

FIDH calls on the Knesset members to not discuss the amendment to the Citizenship Law during the current legislative session and urges the Israeli Government to repeal the amendment it adopted on Sunday.

<http://www.fidh.org/Israel-The-Knesset-must-put-an-end-to-the>