

MFA response to World Bank report regarding water in the Palestinian Authority

Communiqué, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 28

The Israel-Palestinian water policy is based on an interim agreement between the two parties, particularly on [Article 40 of Annex III to the agreement](#), which relates to the question of water and sewage. According to the agreement, 23.6 million cubic meters of water will be allocated to the Palestinians annually. In actual effect, they have access to twice as much water.

Israel has fulfilled all its obligations under the water agreement regarding the supply of additional quantities of water to the Palestinians, and has even extensively surpassed the obligatory quantity. The Palestinians, on the other hand, have significantly violated their commitments under the water agreement, specifically regarding important issues such as illegal drilling (they have drilled over 250 wells without the authorization of the joint water commission) and handling of sewage (The Palestinians are not constructing sewage treatment plants, despite their obligation to do so. Rather, they allow the sewage to flow unheeded into streams, polluting both the environment and groundwater).

The authors of the report met with MFA officials, and were briefed on all the factual details. They were also presented with the Israeli position paper on the subject, which contained verifiable facts that contradict all the objections presented in the bank's report.

Significantly, the authors chose to ignore the MFA position, and declined to take the facts presented to them into consideration in the published report. They rely totally on unsubstantiated information supplied by the Palestinian Authority, which raises a serious question mark over the credibility of the report and the intentions of its authors.

Despite that, it is important to note that Israel and the Palestinian Authority have several channels of communication and cooperation regarding water, including bilateral ad-hoc committees and coordinating committees between the water authorities of both parties. These meet at least once a month and solve water-related problems in accordance with understandings and cooperation.
