

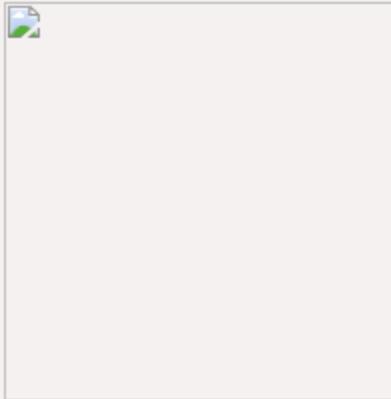
From: Intelligence Squared <info@intelligencesquared.com>

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Subject: New Debate: Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism

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Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism



Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism

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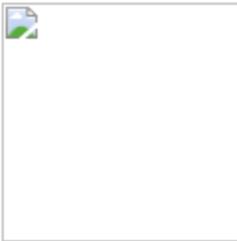
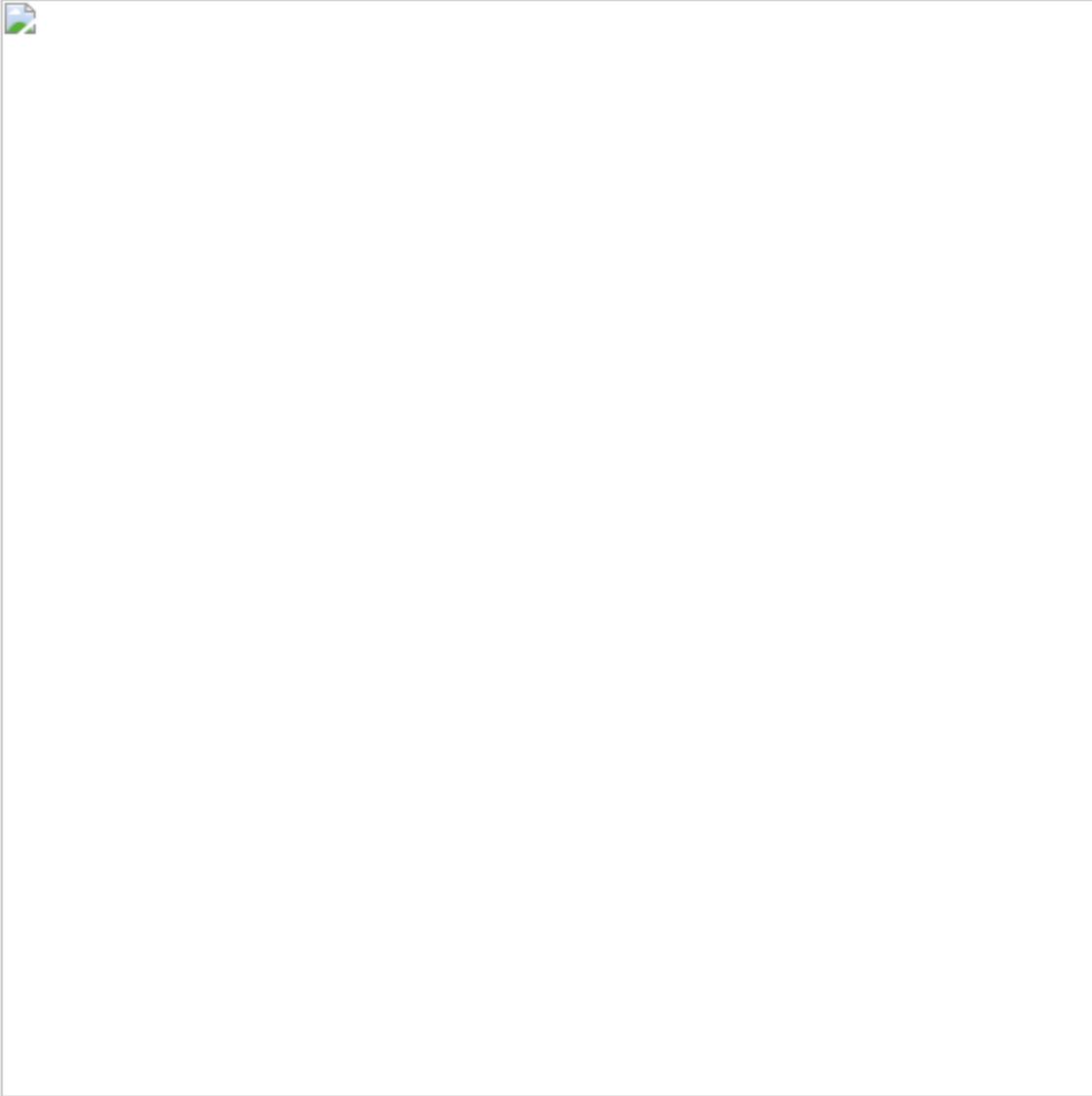
Is there a country in the world that attracts so much criticism as Israel? Studies consistently show Israel to be one of the most disliked nations in the world (along with Iran and North Korea). But how much of this is to do with genuine concern about Israel's actions, and how much is actually a cover for the age-old hatred of the Jews? Is what we are seeing here anti-Zionism – broadly understood as opposition to the existence of a Jewish state in the territory of

Israel – or is it anti-Semitism?

Many people who have been accused of anti-Semitism argue that the accusation is deeply unjust: what enrages them is not the Jewish people per se, but the nature of Israel, the Jewish state. Israel, they say, is a country based on ethnic nationalism, designed to privilege the Jewish majority at the expense of the Palestinians. Israel's critics claim that its creation in 1948 led to more than 700,000 Palestinians fleeing or being expelled from their land, and that today's Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank are still denied their basic rights. Israel's immigration policy allows any Jew in the world to gain automatic citizenship, yet Palestinian immigration to Israel is virtually impossible. The Israeli flag features the Star of David and its national anthem refers to the 'Jewish soul', but over 20 per cent of its citizens are Arabs. To be anti-Zionist isn't to be anti-Semitic – it's to take a legitimate moral stand against Israel's discriminatory practices.

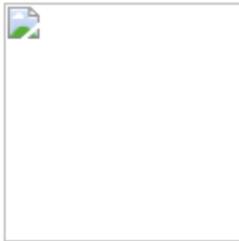
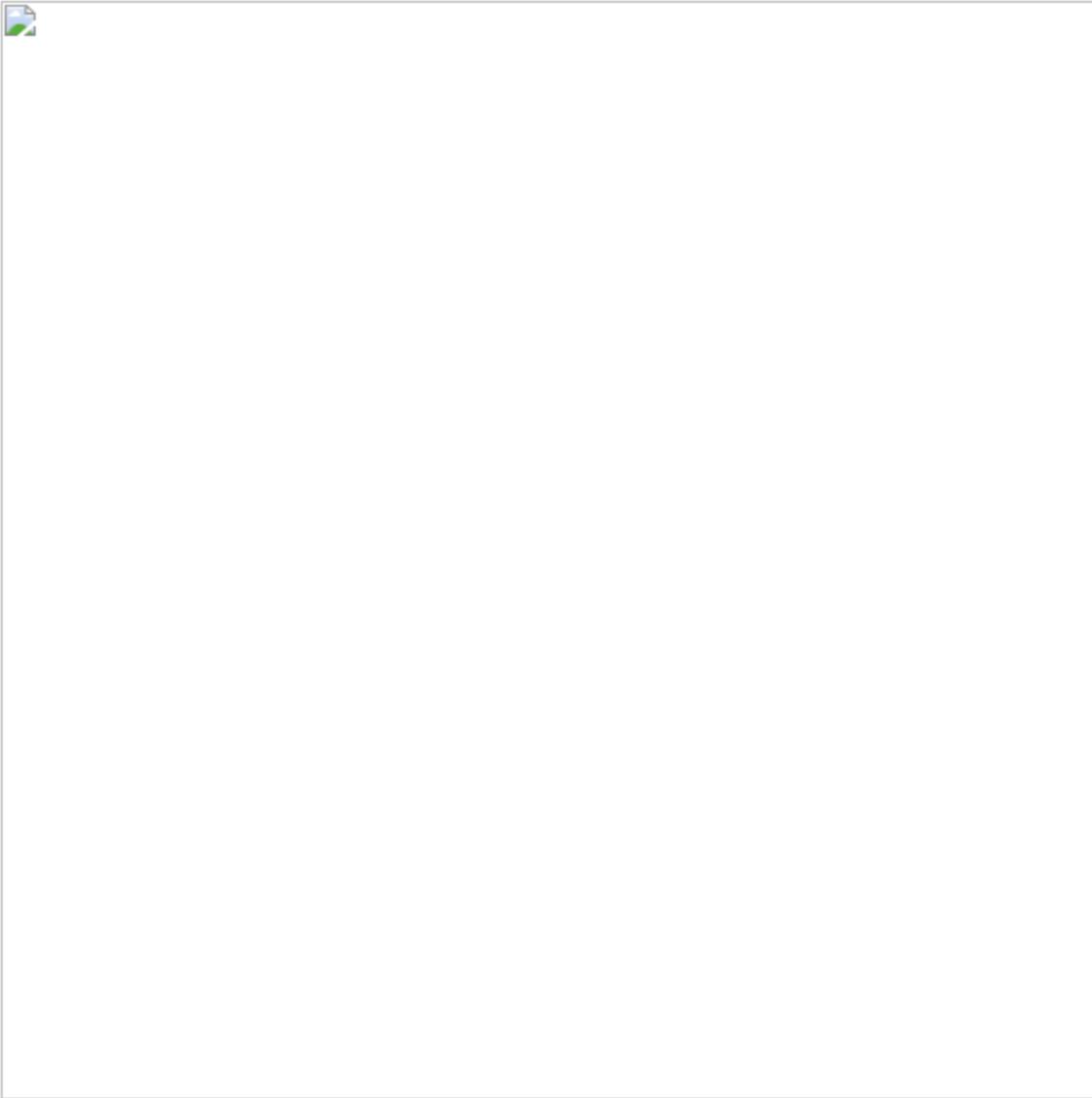
But others see anti-Zionism as a fig leaf for old-fashioned anti-Semitism. Yes, of course it's possible to be a staunch critic of Zionism and not to be anti-Semitic, but mostly you find that the two go together. Despite being the only functioning liberal democracy in the region, Israel is fanatically singled out for criticism by its enemies. Anti-Zionists, it is said, often rehash ancient anti-Semitic tropes, using phrases like the 'Israel lobby' as a racist dog whistle to signify an all-powerful Jewish conspiracy. Attacks against Jews are on the rise across the world, with many of their perpetrators claiming they are responding to Israel's policies, but in fact they are disguising their hatred of Jews in the garb of anti-Zionism – in France, anti-Semitic acts increased by 74% last year. And when anti-Zionists talk about Israel's founding and its impact on the Palestinians, they conveniently omit the fact that in 1948 Israel was immediately attacked by its Arab neighbours who sought to wipe it off the map. It's the only Jewish-majority country in the world, a homeland and haven for the Jews created in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Sure, you can criticise the policies of Israel's government, but if you deny its right to exist you are inescapably an anti-Semite.

Who's right and who's wrong? On Monday 17th June, join the debate and hear leading experts including **Mehdi Hasan**, **Ilan Pappé** and **Einat Wilf** go head to head.



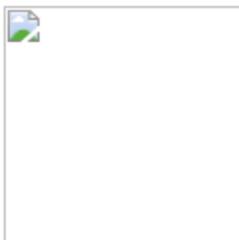
Einat Wilf

Israeli politician who was a Member of the Knesset for the Labor and Independence parties. She also served as a Foreign Policy Advisor to Shimon Peres, and was the Baye Foundation Adjunct Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a Senior Fellow at the Jewish People Policy Institute.



Mehdi Hasan

Journalist, broadcaster and prominent critic of Israel. He is the host of UpFront and Head To Head on Al Jazeera English, as well as a columnist for The Intercept and Contributing Editor for the New Statesman.



Ilan Pappé

Israeli historian, anti-Zionist activist, and professor at the University of Exeter. He is one of Israel's 'New Historians', who have challenged traditional versions of Israeli history, including Israel's role in the Palestinian exodus in 1948 and Arab willingness to discuss peace. He is the author of *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* and *Ten Myths About Israel*.

Remaining speaker and chair to be announced



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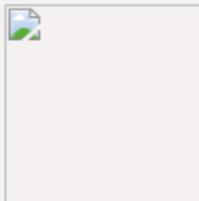


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