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A specter hovers over the face of the State of Israel. It is the spirit of Israeliness which we have abandoned. Instead, we preferred to be Jews, Arabs, ultra-Orthodox, Ethiopians, progressives, conservatives, Ashkenazim or Mizrahim. The spirit of Israeliness seeks to fill the spaces, rooms and walls of our shared home. Can it penetrate through the sealed walls and closed windows? For several decades, most of the political elements have joined in an all-out war against Israeliness – representatives of Jewish democrats, the Jewish right, messianic nationalists, the ultra-Orthodox, Arabs, "new-age" spiritualists – all of whom have successfully fought the common Israeli state identity. They wounded it, leaving each group within its own limited identity, at odds with the others. But daily life in Israel has once again raised the need for a common Israeli spirit – one that can enable us to spread our wings toward a promising future. The time has come to formulate "Israeliness" – the means for its constitutional establishment and its broad goals.

During the twentieth century, we gathered from the four corners of the earth to an inspiring pioneering enterprise, and in 1948, the State of Israel was established as a miracle of history. Over the years, immigrants from East and West came to Israel and, together with its Arab citizens, worked to build the state. The Israeli edifice gloriously rose out of nowhere, replete with extraordinary achievements – absorbing masses of Jewish refugees, building cities, neighborhoods and settlements, developing advanced agriculture, establishing innovative industry, creating a strong army and initiating magnificent technologies – all as an expression of the power of creativity, vitality and Israeli excellence. Above all, a country was established with state institutions that sought to organize the public space as a common area where we all live.

However, in the rush to establish the state, the founding generation did not sufficiently deal with the foundations of the "common home," its growing number of tenants and the rules required for living together. The state that was established in the pressure of the moment had to

make do with temporary arrangements between religion and state, the judiciary, legislative and executive branches, the central and local governments, and between the citizen and the state. Over the years, patchwork solutions were applied to the shared home. After more than seventy years, these solutions no longer work, and the perception that the construction process is not complete has caused a rotting framework. The framework is decaying, and the building is teetering. Israelis have lost faith in the teetering structure, its incomplete rules, their leaders, their institutions, in each other and their shared future. At the root of the historical crisis in which we are trapped is the "mother of all problems" – disagreement over the rules of the game. Entire groups announce that they will not agree to a structured order that will make the state not theirs – Arabs do not agree with the national identity of the state; Mizrahim do not agree to the division of labor and property; Haredim do not agree to take part in the maintenance of the home; Messianic nationalists prevent the determination of the necessary borders of the state; Proponents of the old order seek to preserve old arrangements that are based on distributive injustice. The lack of trust in the shared home and its occupants has led to identity politics and grudges, unraveling the threads of solidarity and brotherhood.

The historic hour for the State of Israel and its citizens has arrived. Our generation is tasked with completing the Declaration of Independence, which is the Declaration of the establishment of the country, with an Israeli Covenant, which is the Declaration of the Viability of the State. Together, we must decide basic questions and establish a new order based on a fresh Israeli framework of thought.

A reshaped Israel can be the historic destiny that awaits us all. Its realization will demand from us the same enthusiasm that enabled the establishment of the state, the same power that led to its establishment, the same spirit that brought about its prosperity, and the trust and brotherhood required for its existence. It will ensure a joint and cooperative creation of multifaceted Israeliness.

To this end, we hereby submit our proposal for an Israeli charter, with the aim of establishing a state based on a common Israeli civic identity – and on the principle that the citizens of Israel are sovereign in their state. The Israeli state will be based on the values of equality and human dignity, justice and liberty, distributive justice, social and economic rights, fairness and integrity, and its existence will be guaranteed by its citizens out of brotherhood and a feeling of shared destiny.

The Identity of the State: An Israeli State

We Israelis are in a constant struggle for the identity of our shared home. Representatives of the various political forces promote identities that will never be adopted by all Israelis. The Jewish right defines Israel by law as the nation-state of the Jewish people, a state for a Jew in Brussels more than for a Druze in Daliyat al-Karmel. Messianic nationalists see the state as an instrument for redemption, the rebirth of the Kingdom of Israel, and the building of the Temple. Haredim aspire to apply Jewish law in the public sphere. Arabs seek to change the character of the state and turn it into a neutral state, unrelated to the circumstances of its establishment and the identity of its founders. Those on the center-left lament the passing of the "old order" and feel that they have been robbed of the country to which they came. Like in an experiment that has not ended, the various groups continue to struggle for the identity of the state, ignoring reality, the state as it is – a state whose identity stems from daily experience, 75 years of Israeliness, a state whose identity is composed of the identity of its Israeli citizens.

This is the anomaly of Israeli existence – a situation in which each group wants to live only within its "Israel" and finds it difficult to give up its dream. The desire for Israel to be tailored to the dimensions of one group or another leads to its division – a rift that is already visible. The Haredim live in a type of mental autonomy in which the existence of the state is denied. Settlers deny the existence of citizenship. Arab

citizens live in political exile and view the state as an oppressive body. Residents of the periphery feel like second-class citizens, like the second Israel. In the center of the country, thoughts arise about the establishment of the "State of Tel Aviv." The lack of a shared identity, a shared story and social solidarity endangers the common home when each group sees the other group as endangering its existence. Already, various groups in society are talking about separation and dissolution into sub-units.

This crisis can also be seen as an opportunity. We have come to the realization that the existing order is dangerous for all of us, and we must work together to consolidate the state and complete its establishment as a body in which all of its citizens are full partners. To do this, we need to define the identity of the state based on a broad common denominator and by establishing its borders.

The identity of the country also derives from its history. In the beginning, the shared home was built by Jews for Jewish refugees, and signs and symbols were placed in the state.

Its name is Israel, its language is Hebrew, its flag is blue and white, the anthem is "Hatikvah," and the shekel is its currency. Since they have long been fixed, these characteristics must be accepted as they are. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the residents of the house have increased and changed, and the contents of its rooms does not match the external structure. Therefore, it is our duty to instill significant hope for a shared life by instilling a common civic identity, enabling all its residents to reflect their identity in the identity of the state, and giving them the feeling that the state also belongs to them.

The unique historical circumstances surrounding the establishment of the State of Israel in the shadow of the Holocaust, the uniqueness of the story of self-determination of the Jewish people, which came together to realize its political identity in a country in which most of them did not live, and the recognition of antisemitism as a phenomenon

with recurring manifestations justify recognition of the Law of Return, which allows Jews from around the world to see Israel as a country of refuge, to go there and obtain residency. However, the transformation from wanted visitors to actual members of the home will occur only if they choose to enter the gates of the political community and become part of the Israeli nation.

Judaism plays a central role in Israeliness, but it is not exclusive. Most of Israel's citizens are Jewish, the majority of the Jewish people live in Israel, the language spoken in Israel is Hebrew, and Israeli culture derives from Jewish culture. But Israeliness is not the same as Judaism. It must also embody the culture, language and history of its Arab citizens, who assimilated and participated in shaping Israeliness over the years. Israeli immigration policy should allow relatives to obtain citizenship for first-degree relatives for all citizens, even for those who are not Jewish, who are refugees.

Israel's identity as a state of all Israelis requires recognizing the stories and suffering of various groups that were excluded or oppressed in the early stages of establishment and disappeared from the formal Israeli narrative. Israeli history includes the story of Mizrahim who were relegated to the geographical, social and historical margins of the young state, placed in transit camps, and over the years, placed in lesser positions and excluded from positions of power and responsibility. It includes Arab citizens who were placed under military rule for 18 years and relegated to the status of suspected citizens who do not deserve equal status and whose rights to land or state resources are frequently violated. According to the spirit of Israeliness, they, too, are the "builders of the land," who play a significant role in the history of Israel's construction and existence.

Israeliness will enable disadvantaged groups to participate fully in leading, managing and shaping life in the country through their full integration into its institutions. Israeliness will come to fruition when members of diverse groups gain a significant presence in the media,

legal institutions, academia and senior positions responsible for managing the daily lives of Israelis. Israel will become the state of Israelis when all its citizens can see a positive reflection of themselves in state institutions.

The formation of the identity of the state requires fixed and clear borders. Today, Israel maintains parallel legal systems, some in its sovereign territories and some in areas under temporarily defined control. We do not know what the body of the state is nor its borders. We've created a repressed rear courtyard and developed split identities who are in a struggle with each other. When is state sovereignty violated? Who is a subject, and who is a citizen? What are the parts that make up Israeliness? These questions are difficult to answer today. The delineation of borders and the end of the temporary state of occupation are necessary conditions for defining Israeli identity. The State of Israel begins and ends where its sovereignty exists, and one legal regime applies to everyone living within its borders. Everyone living under Israeli sovereignty is entitled to equal status before the law and rights and obligations defined in the state apparatus.

Not all Israelis are Jewish, and not all Jews are Israelis. In light of this, the possible state identity is the official identity, which will encompass everyone. Every Israeli citizen has an ID number, which is the official guarantee of his relative share of ownership of his country. Every Israeli is a brick that makes up the state and its identity. Under the umbrella of official civic identity, the various identities that make up the mosaic of Israeliness can grow into a shared home with solid foundations. Only then will Israel become the country of Israelis who are proud of their shared life and celebrate together its success and prosperity.

Religion and State: Side by Side

Is it possible to have an Israeli story shared by members of different religions, just as there is an American, French or English story, under which diverse religious communities flourish? Will the spirit of Israeliness be able to fill the public space of the home and allow religious lifestyles to take place privately or communally within its rooms? The Israeli circumstances are different – as long as Judaism is a religion that also serves as the definition of a people, the relationship between religion and nation has been bound by a tangled bond that is difficult to unravel. The time has come for courageous decisions and the establishment of renewed relations between religion and state in Israel. We must liberate the state from the shackles of religion and religion from the shackles of the state.

At the time of Israel's declaration of independence, Judaism was not prepared for a life of national sovereignty. The leaders of the young state refrained from deciding on the separation of church and state, preferring to base it on temporary arrangements in order to receive support from representatives of the ultra-Orthodox. The status quo enshrined laws relating to marriage, conversion, kashrut and Shabbat as laws of the state, under the rabbinical institution and under its control. The state has enabled separate educational frameworks, which have given rise to entire generations of citizens who perceive state authority as secondary to religious authority. What began as a temporary arrangement has grown over the years into a civil crisis that threatens the possibility of a productive life together. Entire floors within the shared home of the State are managed according to Halachic Judaism, a public space is designed according to beliefs and the influence of religion is spreading, to the dismay of citizens who are not religious or non-Jewish. As the teetering structure fills with vital religious forces full of faith that do not recognize the necessity of its existence, the chances of its collapse are growing. It is for this reason that we propose the cancellation of the temporary arrangements and the decision to separate religion and state. They are essential for

deepening the foundations of the structure of the state and ensuring its stability in the future.

The existence of a strong tension between religion and state in a situation where the state is still in the process of formation has led to the fact that the religious forces which see the state as an instrument for religious purposes and not an institution whose purpose is to regulate the joint life of citizens weaken the foundations of the structure of the Israeli state. The ultra-Orthodox political elements are eroding the foundations of the institution of the Israeli state from within. They participate in the game but deny its laws. They see the state as a means of living in autonomous separatist communities and an instrument for receiving budgets. At the same time, the political forces of Messianic nationalists see the state as a means to the end of redemption, the coming of the Messiah and a Halachic state. Neither group accepts the fundamental idea that the state is the authority that regulates relations between the residents of the common home among its diverse citizens.

Moreover, the combination of nationalism and religion also endangers the Jewish religion itself. The focus of Messianic nationalists on ascending to the Temple Mount, while declaring that the goal of the believer is the establishment of a Temple, has been detaching Judaism from its foundations for the past two thousand years – Torah study, work, and charity – and depicts it as a ritual religion of sacrificial offerings.

Indeed, not all religious people accept the line dictated by the political leadership. Many seek to integrate into daily life, accept the state, see the importance in education and integration into society, and perceive the state as home. A permanent relationship of religion with the state can also be an opportunity for their integration into society, for the flourishing and prosperity of religious communities, without requiring a political affiliation.

Many Israeli citizens define themselves as traditional, and their pragmatic lifestyle, which combines selected religious beliefs and practices, has provided them with a significant role in state-building. Their practical and moderate approach serves as a model according to which the state is perceived as the supreme authority, which organizes life in the public sphere, and religious lifestyles are maintained in the private and communal spheres.

The separation of church and state is therefore necessary in order to ensure the existence of the Israeli state not as a means, but as the purpose of shared civil life and authority and as the ultimate authority with regard to regulating relations between the various groups that exist in it – an authority that supersedes any other religious or communal authority.

This separation will also enable the establishment of Israeli identity as an inclusive identity of all its citizens, Jews and non-Jews alike. An Israeli identity detached from religion will enable the creation of a common story that is essential for creating Israeli social cohesion and will contribute to dialogue and mutual fertilization between the groups. When the administration of the state is freed from religious considerations, the imposition of religious beliefs and lifestyles in the region will also be prevented in the public space and gender equality will be assured.

We call on the Israeli state to part amicably from religion and adopt a model of religious neutrality. It must be determined that the state has no religion and does not promote or interfere in religious activities. The State shall recognize that the connection between religion and an individual or community must be free and unencumbered. Judaism, as a communal religion, will thrive in a framework where there is freedom to choose or avoid. Therefore, the state must guarantee freedom of religion and freedom from religion and will allow religious communities to organize locally and provide education consistent with their values without sacrificing the principles that require the existence of a civilized state.

The range of rights and obligations imposed on every citizen will also apply to religious people, such as uniform core studies in the education system, enlistment for national service or the army and joining the employment world. Religious marital law will be voluntary – anyone who wishes to conduct marriage and divorce through the religious communities will be able to do so, but the state will not impose this on its citizens and will allow an egalitarian alternative. Conversion processes are an internal religious matter, and the state has no interest in them.

Although the state will not have a religious identity, it will enable and encourage religious communities to organize local religious services that will be funded, for those who desire, from the payment of local taxes. Along with abolishing the institutionalization of religion, i.e., abolishing the Chief Rabbinate, communities will be able to establish regional religious councils on a regional basis for the management of religious services.

Despite its religious neutrality, the state will also be able to establish values in its constitution that have a Jewish background while maintaining the principle of equality – first and foremost, the value of sanctification of life; the importance of Jewish debate as the basis for a democratic society; the value of learning and education, and at the same time, the establishment of Shabbat as a day of rest and the application of kosher laws in the kitchens of public institutions.

Within the heart of a believer is his faith, and therein is his test. The integration of the state and its institutions into religion is alien to faith and foreign to the test. The immortality of faith does not depend on the State framework and must be left in its world, between man and God, and not adulterated between authorities.

A Regional electoral system – representation of all Israelis

How will the common house stand firm against the ravages of time and history when politics produces rifts, resentment and divisions among citizens? How can we create a shared Israeli identity when politicians are busy spreading hatred and failing to address existential problems? For many years, the Israeli public ignored the destructive impact of the electoral system on the political and social order, but the historic crisis has brought us to a boiling point in relations between the groups. After five election campaigns were accompanied by political polarization and paralysis of government systems, and after minority groups disproportionately increased their political power under the current system and dragged the entire country into dangerous ideological realms, the need has arisen to change the electoral system. The current electoral system is the result of a temporary compromise created in 1949. Elections to the Constituent Assembly in January 1949 were determined by a proportional system, similar to the electoral system for the national institutions, but it was agreed that the elected Constituent Assembly would determine the new electoral system. The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly before it had finished fulfilling its functions, i.e., writing a constitution and establishing a regime structure, left the State of Israel with an electoral system that over the years became permanent.

The current electoral system is out of step with the times. In the early years of the state, Israeli society united around the common ethos of the rebirth of the country. Today, the social structure is divided into tribes, and the representatives act for sectoral interests. The primary means of achieving electoral gain is by differentiated provocations. Identity politics fosters hatred of the opposing party, representing a competing ethnic or social group. The current electoral system inherently encourages the dismantling of Israel into tribes and fanning an all-out war.

The electoral system has created many contradictions between sectoral interests and the common good, and the good of the country. The election campaigns have intensified political polarization and hatred, rival groups face each other on the brink of civil war, hold mutual resentment, and refuse to trust state institutions and the political system until the perception of the state has almost been completely erased from the political field. The sectoral-political struggle for power and resources deepens the identity divide and harms the establishment of Israeliness as the common identity of all citizens.

We must establish a new electoral system and a new political structure so that the general interests of the state are adequately expressed alongside local interests. We must strive to narrow gaps and promote civil political discourse that reveals the areas of agreement and shared interests.

We call for the division of the country into constituencies and the adoption of an electoral system that will allow each region to send a representative to the legislature. This representative will integrate the struggle for the interests of his constituency with the state interest and the common good. In this way, the distance between voters and elected officials will be shortened, and the latter's responsibility towards those who send them will increase. As a result, governance will stabilize, and trust will be restored in the state and its institutions.

An electoral system based on the division of electoral districts will give rise to a more moderate political discourse. A candidate's chances of success will be affected by direct contact with local constituents. Candidates will be required to create a political agenda based on solving the day-to-day problems of the citizen, and in fact, will foster civic politics over identity politics. In order to increase their chances of being elected, candidates for the Knesset will be required to appeal to all the groups that make up their constituency and act in the interests of all of the citizens.

A system based on the division of voting constituencies will increase the degree of representation of elected representatives. Today, most politicians live in the center, and there are almost no representatives in the legislature residing in the distant periphery. This situation creates an imbalance in political representation and causes many Israelis to feel they are not participating in the game and are not part of the state's institutions. A regional electoral system will enable appropriate and broad geographic representation and will give political significance to residents of the periphery, who will receive a real sense of partnership in the Israeli state's enterprise.

Regional elections will create a political culture of accountability among those elected. The proximity to the voter base will force elected officials to receive their direct support, and voters will be able to examine the representatives closely and personally. Accountability is absent from Israeli politics, so there are no real political sanctions against a political representative who has let down the voters. The proximity between the voter and his representative will lead to an appropriate overlap between responsibility and authority, and for the first time, political representatives will receive not only power and authority but also concrete responsibility toward the voters.

The transition to a regional electoral system is not a purely technical move, but a profound change in the voting structure to distribute power. In this system, state resources will be distributed proportionately and dispersed from Tel Aviv and the center to the rest of the country. This structural change will bring about a conceptual change and a new conceptual system. The concept of "the common good" will replace the concept of "sector," and instead of the divisive dichotomy of "either them or us," a political infrastructure will be built for "also and." No more Ashkenazim versus Mizrahim, Jews versus Arabs, religious versus secular, "First Israel" versus "Second Israel," but a spectacular aggregate picture composed of diverse regional identities, which together form an Israeli identity.

The regional electoral system is a bridge from tribal society to civil society; from a temporary and dilapidated political structure to a permanent structure on solid foundations; from identity politics to resource politics, and from sectoral to Israeli. This is a structural and conceptual change that will enable deciding the basic questions, writing a constitution, fixing the borders, and ensuring the existence and resilience of a leading and prosperous, secure and sustainable country.

Regional Governance – For Social Cohesion

The division of geographical space into crowded municipal units created structural and mental barriers, encouraged competition and thwarted cooperation. The spirit of Israeliness is repulsed from the walls. In the shadow of the current crisis, there are calls for Israel's geographical dissolution, division into separate autonomous units and the creation of a federation. However, Israeliness has the power to strengthen the state identity of all citizens and, at the same time, allow sub-regions the necessary authority and responsibility to manage their lives.

The structure of local government in Israel is a reflection of the reality of the year 1949. Israel was a young country and worked to stabilize its borders by establishing existing cities, regional councils, and development towns on the border. The municipal division was based on population characteristics (ethnic, economic, national, or religious), and as a result, identity politics deepened, and a war broke out over sources of income and budgets between neighboring municipalities. Today, one of the most useful tools for measuring inequality is the socio-economic ranking of municipalities, which are assigned to the cluster according to the economic situation of their residents. The overlap between ethnic, national or religious identity and the socio-economic hierarchy of local authorities has turned demographic rifts into geographical rifts, making municipal boundaries frontiers of rivalry between different communities and torpedoing any chance of a sense of shared destiny between them.

External trends also led to an exacerbation of the crisis. In the past two decades, globalization processes have reduced inequality between countries but have significantly increased inequality within them. For the most part, in each country, one large city has become a global city, connected to the decisive trends of the Western world while coordinating economic activity and the connection with the movement of capital, goods and human resources. In Israel, since the 1990s, Tel Aviv has established itself as a global city and has become a geographical monopoly that draws most of the human capital, creativity and economic entrepreneurship, as well as the bulk of cultural and civic vitality.

In contrast, remote areas have been depleted of their human capital and economic activity and have deteriorated in their ability to provide basic services and an adequate quality of life. In the not-too-distant past, it was possible to speak of three competing urban centers – Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. Today it is clear that the greater Tel Aviv area is an economic, cultural and civic monopoly. Thus, in effect, Israel has lost its geographical equilibrium, and as a result, there are calls for separation – the State of Tel Aviv and the State of Judea.

In many democratic countries, there is a broad public discourse regarding the relationship between central and local governments. The discussion focuses on creating a balance between central government and local government. The State of Israel, after 75 years, is considered a particularly centralized state. The power of the government is considerably greater than the power of local municipalities. Of the 258 local municipalities, only a quarter are at a sufficient level of economic independence. Half of the local authorities are small and weakened municipalities that find it difficult to function democratically and provide services to residents and, in fact, are completely dependent on the government. The difficulty in the general functioning of local government in Israel is reflected in intolerable socio-economic gaps and government corruption in local authorities. As a result, public trust in institutions has been damaged. The government becomes more

centralized, and local democracy suffers. In light of the experience accumulated in many countries around the world and in light of the ongoing failure of many local authorities to provide services at an adequate level to their residents, we propose to promote structural change whose essence is the creation of a new layer of government in Israel – a regional governmental layer.

The regional governing layer will constitute a structural infrastructure that encourages and rewards cooperation between communities. This infrastructure will enable communities to celebrate their unique identity while creating a system of life based on shared regional interests. Local municipalities will continue to exist as an independent governmental stratum under the regional stratum. Several geographical areas will function as metropolitan areas (Jerusalem, Gush Dan, Be'er Sheva and its immediate surroundings, Haifa and its immediate surroundings) divided into quarters and neighborhoods with democratically elected representatives. The regional governing layer will prioritize local knowledge, improve human capital for the benefit of regional interests, and focus on narrowing gaps, mobility and social cohesion. The provision of services to the residents of the area, therefore, will be efficient and adapted to the regional character. In this way, public trust in government institutions will be strengthened.

The government, the Knesset and the judicial system will recognize the renewed status of the regional government and enable it to serve its residents in the best and most appropriate manner. As a result, the effects and pressures of national politics, which are not synchronized with the essential needs of the citizens in routine and emergency life, will lessen.

The strength of Israeli democracy is indeed tested by the necessary balance between the three branches (legislative, judicial and executive), but the stability of the shared home will stem from the fourth element – regional government. In fact, this is a new contract between the state and the Israeli citizen. The state will relinquish some of its

powers in favor of a local-regional government that will act for the welfare of its citizens. Powers will be transferred to the local-regional government tier in the areas of education, welfare, public transportation, environmental protection, community health, tackling the climate crisis, and housing. Higher education and employment will drive an inclusive economy. Different regions will be able to enjoy economic growth more equitably and fairly while realizing the area's assets.

The regional level of government will strengthen public trust in the government, reduce socio-economic gaps and promote social cohesion, and will become, in effect, the basis of the resilience of Israeli democracy.

An Israeli Economy of Solidarity

The neoliberal economic policies of recent decades have increased inequality, privatized social services, undermined the distributive justice of natural resources and land, and in fact, accelerated Israel's disintegration into ethnic, religious and geographical secondary identities. Israel is experiencing a severe housing crisis, characterized by the fact that the few own many apartments while hundreds of thousands of families cannot purchase a home. The cost of living has skyrocketed, leading many citizens to think twice before purchasing basic goods. Educational, health and transportation services have become cumbersome and expensive, privatized, and now quality services are accessible only to the economically able. In such a world, each person must fend for himself in the struggle for material resources and space. The public space is perceived as an arena of heated competition, based on the principle of natural selection. In such a world, solidarity is rapidly dissipating.

Therefore, the consolidation of Israeliness requires an economic concept that can strengthen the sense of fairness among citizens. While respecting the important diversity in Israeli society, we strive for comprehensive and non-sectoral solutions. This approach leads us to support welfare policy in Israel and even work to expand it. We

must resist reducing it, which does not leave enough room and thus inflames the struggle between different groups who wish to remain under the protection of the state.

Not only must we rehabilitate the welfare state in Israel, but we must build an ideological infrastructure that will give rise to broad public commitment – one that extends beyond economic models and contains considerations of social cohesion. The foundation of this infrastructure should be Israeli citizenship, that is, concern for the welfare of all citizens of the state – Jews and Arabs, religious and secular, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi – and the implementation of the principles of distributive justice for all. A welfare state is a contract between the citizen and the state, according to which the state undertakes to be a safety net for the citizen. In return, the citizen identifies with the state and sees it as the fulfillment of their social life. A situation in which citizens live on the basis of state allowances while expressing their unwillingness to join the world of employment and expressing contempt for the state or for the productive majority that finances its allowances is a violation of the contract between the citizen and the state. The spirit of Israeliness seeks to create new economic relations based on partnership and participation in creating social and economic goods.

The proper basis for a welfare state is not allowances but the constitutional anchoring of socio-economic rights. Indeed, in 1992, the Knesset established, after many years of anticipation, two Basic Laws dealing with human rights, Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, and Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation. These two Basic Laws enshrined, for the first time, basic rights as constitutional rights.

The Israeli Bill of Rights – very partially – was established for the first time. The primary right recognized is the right that recognizes the importance, uniqueness and value of man. From the right to human dignity, the Supreme Court has derived many rights which were not explicitly recognized by law – freedom of expression and the right to equality, freedom of religion, and freedom from religion. Over the

years, these rights became central constitutional rights in their own right. However, such a far-reaching interpretive move has not been made with regard to social rights. Although the court recognized the right to education, health, and a minimal dignified existence, the interpretation given to these rights was more limited, focused on the minimum required for subsistence, and they are perceived, to this day, as stepsisters of civil and political rights. This approach cannot be justified.

Social and economic rights, first and foremost the right to education, the right to health, the right to housing, and the right to an adequate standard of living, are basic rights that constitute a central pillar of the contract between the state and its citizens. Therefore, we call for the enshrinement in a future constitution of social rights – the right to education, which requires the expansion of the Free Education Law from one year old through university studies; the right to quality health care, which demands the establishment of additional hospitals and the improvement of the quality of health services in the periphery; the right to adequate housing, in light of which the public housing mechanism will be renewed, or equivalent alternatives and the scope of land concessions for construction will be expanded for eligible persons and young couples, to enable housing for those whose cannot afford a roof over their heads; the right to live with dignity, which would justify income support and more generous unemployment benefits. The right to culture and the arts must also be taken into account to anchor public broadcasting and broad support for the arts for the benefit of a variety of population groups and in all parts of the country. Another right is the right to public transportation, which requires government subsidies for public transportation which prevents congestion and reduces emissions. A welfare state must enable social mobility, which is necessary for the existence of a vital and fair society, by developing the abilities of every citizen to use their skills for self-realization and for the common good. In order to realize these rights, the state needs to increase its relative share of public expenditure out of the GDP.

Since we perceive social cohesion as Israel's greatest strategic asset, we see increasing public spending as an investment in national security, and it therefore should be financed by raising direct taxes, which are income tax, social security and corporate tax. We seek to avoid two easy but harmful ways to finance public expenditure – one is deficit funding. Such financing increases public debt and, in the long term, will lead to a reduction in welfare policy, as has happened many times in history. Financing by indirect taxes, especially VAT, the collection of which is very convenient, is also undesirable because indirect taxes are regressive, and therefore raising them increases inequality.

Social cohesion and Israeli consolidation are also closely linked to workers' solidarity and security, which will be achieved through extensive trade union activity. These will be responsible for working conditions, setting relatively high wages for employees, but also for the professional level of employees. Since a dynamic economy is characterized by the constant entry and exit of companies and workers, unions must cooperate with employers, find ways in which employees can be mobilized and find alternatives for them. Therefore, the rehabilitation of welfare policy requires facilitating professional association processes in the workplace and creating a new model of cooperation between employees and employers.

Globalization promotes the mobility of goods and services and even the mobility of people between countries, i.e., migration. Illegal immigration has become a factor undermining the social cohesion of various countries, including Israel. The weaker strata of society are more affected by the entry of immigrants than the stronger strata, due to competition in the labor market and because foreign immigrants are concentrated in the weaker neighborhoods of the cities. Therefore, a balance is required in immigration policy between the persecution of immigrants, which may slip into nationalism on the one hand, and excessive openness to immigration on the other. A policy of dealing with illegal immigration is required through the geographical dispersion of the refugees.

Israel as a Fair and Benevolent State

Many of us feel uneasy. Sometimes it seems that our relationships with neighbors, with drivers on the road, with strangers with whom we share a common space, with people who serve us – are quarrelsome, and beneath the surface, there is simmering fear, suspicion and hostility. Such widespread and constant mistrust is a disease of society. This disease penetrates into daily life, and it is what gives rise to the widespread feeling that we are not respected, not seen, not respected for who we are, and that the country is "difficult." These feelings may seem less urgent than "big" political issues, but they directly reflect the way in which society's institutions benefit, or do not benefit, us, the citizens. Feelings of suspicion, hostility and mistrust threaten the foundation of coexistence. The political institutions we live in are largely responsible for the relationship we maintain with others, and there will be no healing of this disease without significant changes in the state structure.

The story of Ruth the Moabite contains powerful political lessons for Israel of 2023. As you will recall, Ruth is not Jewish, and she belongs to the people of Moab, who were not generous towards the Hebrews. But Ruth excels at her level of kindness. She loves her mother-in-law, Naomi, tying her fate to her: "Your people are my people," she says, and no less amazingly, Naomi, her mother-in-law, accepts her without hesitation to her family and her people; Naomi sees Ruth as her equal, and as a worthy companion. Boaz notices Ruth for her extraordinary kindness and marries her, despite being poor and a stranger. If we internalize the moral lesson inherent in Ruth's story, we will see what is missing in the State of Israel today. Through the story, Judaism actually celebrates what people have in common, not what is different, and sees all people as equal. In order to join the nation, Ruth does not need years of conversion. Her identification with the Jewish people and her acceptance by one woman is sufficient for her to belong to the people equally and fully.

Naomi and Boaz do not see the non-Jewish woman as an enemy, and they do not take advantage of her vulnerability. Her kindness is the currency that passes from character to character, from each connection, and expands the circles of the group.

It is highly doubtful that Ruth's story could have taken place in Israel in 2023. Citizens acting out of tribal identification are quick to classify others as enemies, foreign or gentile. They have forgotten the human image of the people standing before them. They prefer loyalty to the reference group over the degree of kindness. Many do not seem to see grace as a supreme virtue, and this is expressed through the ethos of "not being a sucker." Therefore, perhaps, they do not trust the institutions that are supposed to protect them – the education system, the courts and the tax authority. Why? Because state institutions that do not help the stranger do not help the citizens either.

Israeliness aspires to build a decent society, one that encourages its citizens to trust the other. Two systems feed Israel's values as a decent society: One is the rule of law, and the other is the value of humanism, which is inherent in both religion and secularism.

We all want to live in a country where the law is the same for all citizens – where rich and poor, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi, Arabs and Jews, religious and secular, leaders and ordinary citizens will be subject to the same principles of fairness and justice. If this principle is not honored, sooner or later, citizens will despise power, fear it, or both. Sooner or later, they will feel that this regime oppresses them or discriminates against them. Sooner or later, they will decide to take the law into their own hands and use and promote their personal interests, even if it conflicts with the public interest. Perhaps the attack on the rule of law in Israel stems from its failure to apply it equally: Arabs and Mizrahim make up the majority of prisoners in prisons because they have been excluded and marginalized.

We must sanctify the rule of law, which, when it works properly,

functions as an invisible glue in our lives. We will not always recognize its contribution to our well-being, but it makes us trust leaders and institutions and believe they are not corrupt. It makes us willingly contribute to a society we respect, and it makes us want to help others who need it. Only when the rule of law disappears do we realize how vital it is to our lives. A society without the rule of law is a society of cynics – of citizens who lack basic trust in their environment. Living together becomes a war of everyone against everyone, of one group against another. A democracy that comprehensively, wholly and equally respects the rule of law creates a powerful moral core, a nucleus that creates legitimacy, cohesion, order and trust. Therefore, the State of Israel needs a constitution.

A constitution that defines the powers and relations between the various authorities and protects the rights of citizens and citizens is essential for ensuring the rule of law in a democratic country. The constitution shall enshrine the fundamental principles of the social contract, the rules of the democratic game and the protection of human rights. A clear formulation of these principles, rules and protections is necessary for moderating the power of an occasional political majority and is important in times of crisis, when the temptation to deviate from basic principles increases. A constitution is the foundation of the rule of law and its compass.

The rule of law alone is not enough to create fairness in society, although it is the basis for it. Kindness, if we return to Ruth's story, begets kindness and increases the power of citizens. Israeli humanism emerging from this fundamental insight must strengthen its hold on a comprehensive human core. State institutions cannot deny the basic dignity of man and must always protect him. Human beings are fundamentally equal – no man is superior to another, and no group is superior to another. Moreover, humans can resolve conflicts through compromise and logic. Human dignity includes respect for reason, freedom of thought and freedom of expression. Ethics and acceptance of the other are the foundation of a robust, reasonable and prosperous

society. Judaism offers a powerful system of humanistic values, and the way to save Judaism from extremism is to adhere to humanism.

Israeliness, then, carries with it a set of values and feelings worthy of being the foundation of a decent society – kindness towards foreigners, respect for a uniform and egalitarian rule of law and uncompromising humanity.

The State of Israel will not dwell alone. Israel is a member of the international community of nations and is committed to upholding the rules of international law. In particular, Israel is committed to upholding the human rights recognized in international treaties and to regional and international cooperation in the shared mission of ensuring a sustainable life on Earth.

The Israeli charter is a rallying cry for a turbulent Israel, threatened by its own exile, which has the power to topple the shared home with its outstanding achievements. Its continued existence is connected to its decision to be a country with solid foundations with a constitutional agreement for generations.

Appendix: Israel's Constitutional Future A Framework in Principle

The Israeli Charter proposes the basic principles for a new social order in Israel. These basic principles must be enshrined in the constitution. A constitution is the constituent legal document of the state, and all other laws of the country are subject to it. The constitution also has educational value: it explicitly declares the basic rules and, therefore, anchors agreements on the state rules of the game. The constitution excludes basic agreements outside the rules of the normal political game so that they are not dependent on one political majority or another. Thus, the constitution defines the political space and creates spaces for discussion and action.

The current crisis in Israeli society has exposed the depth of the regime and social problems that exist in Israel. A victory for supporters of the legal revolution or those who refuse to change the regime structure will lead to severe crises and increase the process of collapse of the state institution. Moreover, the protests, which started against certain constitutional changes, soon translated into calls for a complete constitution.

The demand for a constitution embodies a yearning for all that the temporary arrangements lack: certainty, stability, protection of individual rights, and above all: anchoring agreements in principle between the various parts of society. However, a rush toward writing a constitution without preconditions will lead to another regime crisis.

The establishment of a viable constitution is contingent on reform of the structure and identity of the state, relations between the state and religion and the various governmental structures that span the Israeli Charter. Moreover, in order for the constitution to succeed in embodying the Israeli charter, additional preconditions must be met, including a definition of the identifiable political community to which the constitution applies, agreement on the rules of constitutional establishment and the process of writing the constitution and agreeing on the basic principles underlying it.

Prerequisites for a constitution and the process of its establishment

1. The question of the constitution and the question of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are intertwined. A condition for the establishment of a constitution is the arrangement of the borders of the state. The first question to answer, even before the question of the content of the constitution, is to whom the constitution applies.

In general, the basic principle should be territorial applicability – the constitution shall apply in the state's territory. In the current

situation, according to the normative framework currently in force in the Occupied Territories, either the constitution will not apply to the settlements and to the settlers, or it will be applied to the settlements by order of the military commander, or the settlers themselves will apply it personally. We emphasize that in each of these cases, a constitution that would apply to the territory under Israeli control but that would benefit only some of the residents would be an "apartheid" constitution.

2. A constitution, in essence, excludes certain issues outside the usual rules of political decisions. The rules of constitutional adoption—constitutional politics—should be distinct and separate from the rules of ordinary politics. Following the Harari Decision of 1950, the Knesset functions in Israel as both a constituent and legislative authority. Constitutional politics and ordinary politics are intertwined in Israel in a way that is unparalleled in other countries. In light of this, it is of utmost importance to separate constitutional politics from ordinary politics to ensure that the process of establishing a constitution is not actually used to achieve narrow political goals. Therefore, the question of the constitutional mechanism and the process of adopting a constitution is critical, and agreement on the process of establishing a constitution is a preliminary to a discussion of its contents. One good option is, for example, the establishment of a constituent assembly based on regional representation, which would write the constitution, and ratification of the constitution to be adopted by referendum.

Content of the Constitution – Basic Principles

The purpose of the constitution is to anchor the basic agreements of the Israeli Covenant in three main areas: the identity of the state, the state regime and its institutions and the protection of human rights. In these three areas, the constitution takes the basic rules out of the normal political decision-making rules. The constitution has a legal function: being at the top of the pyramid of norms in the country, a law cannot contradict the constitution, and

a law that contradicts the constitution is void. The constitution also has a declarative-educational function: anchoring principles in writing makes it possible to return to them, study them and teach them.

The Constitution shall regulate the principles mentioned in the Israeli Charter

1. In the area of identity, the constitution will anchor the Israeli identity of the state as the state of Israeli citizens, taking into account the historical circumstances of the establishment of the state, the Law of Return and immigration laws.
 - (a) The constitution shall recognize the central place of Judaism within Israeliness, which derives from the circumstances of the establishment of the state, its historical role as a refuge for Jews, and the fact that most of the country's citizens are Jewish.
 - (b) The constitution shall recognize that Israeliness is not exclusively Jewish and that the history, culture, Arabic language and religions of the Arab minority in Israel also constitute part of the components of Israeliness.
 - (c) The constitution shall recognize the development of Israeliness over time, the fact that Israeli identity has emerged over the past 75 years and that it is dynamic and continues to evolve. The symbols of the state reflect its history, and therefore they must be preserved, although they can be added.
 - (d) The constitution shall enshrine the Law of Return, reflecting the historical role of the State of Israel as a home for Jewish refugees.
 - (e) The constitution shall enshrine the right of emigration to Israel of first-degree relatives of Israel's citizens who are not Jewish and who have refugee status.
2. In the area of government, the constitution will anchor Israel's constitutional democracy, the regional electoral system, the division into a regional governmental layer, the division of powers between the central and regional governments and the independence of the system of Law and judicial review of government institutions.

- (a) The constitution shall enshrine the regional-representative electoral system.
 - (b) The constitution shall anchor the division of powers between the central government and the level of regional government as part of the principle of representativeness and democratization of government institutions.
 - (c) The constitution shall enshrine the right of equal participation of Israeli citizens, as a whole, as part of the principle of representation and democratization of the state institutions.
 - (d) The constitution shall enshrine the independence of the judiciary, including the role of the professional bodies in the appointment of judges.
 - (e) The constitution shall enshrine judicial review of legislation and administrative authorities.
3. In the area of rights, the constitution shall enshrine the protection of human rights: civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, and the obligation of Israel to comply with international human rights laws.
- (a) The constitution shall include a detailed Bill of Rights. This Charter shall include, as equal rights status, both civil and political rights and social rights, as well as economic and cultural rights.
 - (b) As a basis for the Bill of Rights, the Constitution shall provide that the Bill of Rights shall apply in every territory under Israeli control.
 - (c) The separation of church and state is a condition for ensuring freedom of religion, freedom from religion and gender equality.
 - (d) The Constitution shall enshrine economic, social and cultural rights in recognition of the necessary historical amendment to these rights and out of the view that these rights must be interpreted in such a way as to ensure that the individual has a standard of existence that enables them to take a significant part in the social life and the political community.

