



**State of Israel
Ministry of Justice**

Office of the Deputy Attorney General (International Law)

**GOI Reply to the Questionnaire by the Special
Rapporteur of the Right of Everyone to the
Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standards
of Physical and Mental Health:
Sport and Healthy Lifestyles as Contributing
Factors to the Right of Everyone to the
Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standards
of Physical and Mental Health**

November 2015

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Further to your letter dated September 2, 2015, Israel's response to your questionnaire on Sport and healthy lifestyles as contributing factors to the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health.

We hope you will find this information useful.

Question no. 1

GOI Reply: Every state should encourage its population to participate in sport activities, develop and implement active and healthy lifestyle, *inter alia*, by development of nurturing environment, supportive policies, and providing updated information that is, among other things, culturally accessible regarding health issues. In this frame, a state should be responsible for construction of infrastructures for physical activities, development and dissemination of clear and updated information concerning health issues, providing information on opportunities for the integration of healthy lifestyles in the education system, public institutions, work places and in the general community and providing counseling on this matter to minority populations, and populations at risk.

In addition, a state must require pupils to be active at least one hour each day throughout their entire school years. And it is recommended to educate for healthy nutrition and physical exercise as early as kindergarten.

This is highly important, especially in order to prevent non-communicable diseases such as over-weight, diabetes and smoking

Question no. 2

GOI Reply: One of goals of the Ministry of Culture and Sport is to increase the number of persons conducting physical activity in Israel: "Increase the number of persons conducting physical activity, including children and youth; increasing the number of persons conducting physical activity with an emphasis on localities in peripheral areas and in low social rank; increasing the number of women who conduct physical activity; building a national and local database regarding sport; institutionalizing and promoting activity in the field of scuba diving sport.

In addition, Israeli policy in this regard is also anchored in Government Resolution no, 3921 (MK/237) of December 8, 2011, in which the Government approved the

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National Program for the Promotion of Active and Healthy Lifestyle that leads the national effort to promote health, healthy nutrition habits and physical exercise of all Israeli residents.

The program's goal is to create an environment that allows the Israeli population to preserve its health and correct bodily weight by healthy nutrition and physical activity in order to decrease the rate of chronic diseases. This program's aim is to increase the number of persons performing regular physical activity as recommended by the WHO (for children at least 60 minutes per day and for adults at least 150 minutes per week). According to the program's main principles, every person has the right to healthy and active life and to an environment that allows it, and the right to influence on the implementation of this right in the personal, communal and public levels. This program created many co-operations, initiatives and other connections between the national and local public sectors and the business sector.

Hereinafter are the main principles set by this program:

1. Creation of supportive social and physical environment that include construction and expansion of walking and bicycle riding lanes,
2. Creation of open spaces intended for physical activity within urban areas. Construction of open-air workout gyms, that are safe and well lit.
3. Construction of sports halls that are open to the public for regular physical activities suitable for anyone.
4. Increasing public knowledge and awareness regarding the importance of regular physical activity, including by organizing mass sport events.
5. Improving and enhancing communal infrastructures aimed at promotion of health lifestyle, including by offering subsidized sport classes for all ages.
6. Establishing of walking groups and bicycle clubs for all ages.

Hereinafter are several examples of activities aimed at promotion of healthy lifestyle:

Education system

- Sport flowers programs – aimed at increasing the number of children conducting sport activities between the ages of 8 and 12

Local authorities

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- Conducting a pilot program titled "Promoting active and healthy lifestyle" in ten local authorities of which 30% are Arab authorities

Health system

- Conducting a pilot program in which family physicians will be able to prescribe physical activity for patients.

Workplaces

- Recognition for tax purposes of vegetables served as light refreshments in workplaces.
- A pilot program for healthy workplace and physical activity.

As part of this plan the Government has enacted, *inter alia*, the *Supervision on the Quality of Food and Proper Nutrition in Education Institutions Law* (5774-2014), which obligates the State to supervise the nutritional values of all the food served and sold in educational institutions. In addition, several other legislation initiatives are being examined, among them: easements in the requirements for joining a gym, restriction on advertisement of harmful foods at children' television viewing hours etc.

Question no. 3

GOI Reply: The relevant authorities identified the main challenge as lack of authority to the Ministry of Health, responsible for the public health, in several areas that affect the ability of the population to maintain healthy and active lifestyle, for example, within the education system, workplaces, local authorities, the food industry and the media.

The solution that was offered in this regard by the WHO and which has been implemented in Israel in the frame of the abovementioned National Program, is inter-ministerial and inter-sectorial cooperation, with local authorities, other Government Ministries, NGOs and civil society in general, with the media and where possible with the private sector.

Question no. 4

GOI Reply: According to the relevant authorities, United Nation member states will be able to promote participation of individuals in sport and in adoption of healthy lifestyles, by high ranking decisions (such as government decisions) and by acting

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through existing organizations and bodies that are operating in the field level, such as: local population centers, local sport societies together with cooperation with the Health, Education and Sport Ministries and local authorities.

In addition, states should be responsible that the population has access to sport and physical exercise infrastructures, such as: accessible public gardens, well lit walking and bicycle lanes etc. Furthermore, national policy that allows and provides group sport activities, sport classes to persons of all ages at a low cost or alternatively free of charge is considered very useful.

For further information please see GOI reply to Question no. 2 (in regard to principles and examples).

Question no. 5

GOI Reply: According to the relevant authorities, states should adopt an inter-ministerial national plan that will apply to all populations for the promotion of healthy lifestyle, with an emphasis on gap reduction between various populations and on providing solutions to populations at risk.

The Israeli Government has approved in recent years several resolutions regarding nurturing physical activity among all populations, hereinafter are several examples:

Government Resolution no. 3416 of 2005, regarding advancement and promotion of women sports.

Government Resolution no. 3921 (MK/237) of December 8, 2011, regarding the National Program for the Promotion of Active and Healthy Lifestyle.

Government Resolution no. 1016 of December 8, 2013, concerning the promotion of sport among youth and children.

Government Resolution regarding integration of members of the Ethiopian population in all sport activities, both in the competitive and popular levels for the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle.

The Ministry of Culture and Sport supports activities carried out by local authorities and municipalities based on several related criteria, among them the number of residents, socio-economic rank and peripheral standard.

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On the local level there are many activities and tools for the promotion and encouragement of sport and physical activities, such as free sport events in public places, active recesses in education institutions, bicycle riding clubs for youths and adults etc. in regard to populations at risk, there is a need for cooperation in order to develop specific activities and initiative suitable for them. In Israel for example, by way of cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the JDC- the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, persons with disabilities were integrated as leaders of a local program relating to promotion of healthy lifestyles. This was carried out, among other thing in order to ensure that the activities offered to the general population are attractive and suitable for the needs of persons with disabilities.

Question no. 6

GOI Reply: In addition to actions taken at the United Nations or at the Member States level, national actors such as: local authorities, education systems, public health system (such as health funds and family physicians), workplaces, academic institutions and other influential bodies should also take actions in order to encourage the population to participate in sport and adopt a healthy lifestyle. The states should be required to supply these institutions and bodies the necessary tools, useful and updated information, professional training and in many cases the necessary budgets for this purpose. It is also vital to train professional regarding the importance of this issue that will become important partners in such a process.