

INTRODUCTION

This report examines the way in which Arabs, Islam and the Israel-Arab conflict are presented in the new textbooks introduced in school years 5761 (2000-2001) and 5762 (2001-2002) for use in Israeli schools in State Schools, State Religious Schools and the Ultra Orthodox Schools. The books surveyed are in the following subjects: History, Civics, Literature, Geography, Language and the Scriptures.

This report is an update of the previous report published by the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace in September 2000, which surveyed 360 Israeli textbooks that were in use for 5760 (1999-2000).

The purpose of both reports is to examine whether attitudes and facts relating to the Arabs, developments in the Israel-Arab conflict and Islam are presented in the textbooks in such a way as to promote peace, tolerance, mutual recognition and respect.

Methodology

The books were carefully scrutinized in the light of two sets of criteria:

CMIP criteria of analysis

- 1. The image of the other peoples and communities (in this case the Palestinians and the Israelis). Does one side recognize the other? Are they accepted? Are they respected? Or are they stereotyped and prejudiced?*
- 2. Peace and the peace process. Does education foster peace? Does it support the peace process? Is there room for improvement?*

UNESCO relevant criteria

- 1. Are the data given accurate and complete?*
- 2. Are illustrations, maps and graphs up-to-date and accurate?*
- 3. Are the achievements of others recognized?*
- 4. Are equal standards applied?*
- 5. Are political disputes presented objectively and honestly?*
- 6. Is wording likely to create prejudice, misapprehension and conflict avoided?*

7. *Are ideals of freedom, dignity and fraternity being advocated?*
8. *Is the need for international cooperation, for the formation of common human ideals and the advancement of the cause of peace, as well as for the enforcement of the law, emphasized?*

This update report has been prepared in order to examine:

- A. *Whether there have been any changes in the new textbooks (or the new editions) in regard to these matters as compared with the attitudes that were expressed in the books in use in 1999-2000;*
- B. *Whether textbooks have been removed from the list of textbooks, approved by the Ministry of Education, for reasons connected with political views or the way in which they present the Israel-Arab conflict.*

A total of 105 textbooks were examined and these were selected from two sources:

1. *The lists of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education for use in State schools and State Religious schools, circulated to teachers by the Director General of the Ministry of Education in March 2000 – for school year 2000-2001, and in March 2001 – for school year 2001-2001.*
2. *The textbooks in use in the Ultra Orthodox sector, which is not subject to the supervision of the Ministry of Education.*