

Introduction

This is the fifth in a series of reports¹ by the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP) of thirty new Palestinian school textbooks. It reviews books for grades 5 and 10 that were published by the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Education in 2004 and introduced into the PA educational system in the 2004/5 school year. CMIP has in this report followed the same method and employed the same criteria as in the earlier ones, namely, quoting verbatim from the source material anything relating to the various subjects discussed, with a minimum of analysis, so that the source material will be able to speak for itself. Where necessary, short prefaces have been added and explanatory remarks appear either within square brackets in the quotations or in footnotes. CMIP's own assessment of the books is given in the Conclusion at the end of the report.

As with the earlier reports, the material has been evaluated in the light of two sets of criteria developed by UNESCO and CMIP which are as follows:

CMIP's Criteria of Analysis

- 1. The image of other peoples, religions and communities: Are they recognized? Are they accepted as equal? Or are they presented in a stereotyped and prejudiced way?*
- 2. Peace and the peace process: Does education, as reflected in the textbooks, foster peace? Does it support the peace process? Is there any room for improvement in this respect?*

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?*

¹ *Jews, Israel and Peace in Palestinian School Textbooks 2000-2001 and 2001-2002*, November 2001, *Jews Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks and High School Final Examinations – A Complementary Report*, October 2002, *Jews, Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks – The New Textbooks for Grades 3 and 8*, May 2003 and *Jews, Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks – The New Textbooks for Grades 4 and 9*, October 2004. These reports are hereinafter referred to respectively as PA1, PA2 PA3 and PA4.

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 the enforcement of the law, emphasized?*

CMIP has now scrutinized five yearly issues of school books by the Palestinian Authority. Such continuous monitoring affords the opportunity to trace such changes as there have been in the Palestinian curriculum since 2001. This present report, therefore, affords ample opportunity to make comparisons between the latest issue of textbooks and those published by the PA earlier.

This report, in addition to having a chapter on attitudes toward the modern West, a matter hardly addressed in the textbooks reviewed in the first three reports, also contains a separate chapter on the attitude to other religions and their followers.