

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to support the continuation of collaborations between GILEE and the Israel National Police. I have now worked over a decade closely with the Israeli National Police on a number of research efforts. Over the last three years, I have chaired a National Science Advisory Board for the INP. My research and experience with the police suggests that they are a police force that cares about human rights and minority communities. They are also a police force that cares about effectiveness and science in the development of innovation.

Recent claims that American police should not learn from Israeli Police because of fundamental divergences between democratic policing values in the US and Israel are just simply wrong. While there are significant human rights problems with police agencies in other parts of the Middle East, the INP has worked in ways similar to US police agencies in its efforts to increase minority representation (Arabs in this case), decrease human rights violations (through programs employing procedural justice), and in developing innovation based on science. Indeed, over the next three years, the top commanders of the Israeli Police will work on graduate degrees at the Hebrew University Institute of Criminology. In this context, they will be exposed to cutting edge ideas about justice, police legitimacy, and effectiveness.

For these reasons, I find it simply irrational for groups to argue that American Police should not collaborate and learn from the Israeli National Police. Israel is known in particular for its successes in responding to terrorist threats and terrorist bombings. For example, the INP has advanced protocols for protecting civilians in the case of bombings or shootings, and in preventing secondary casualties. As important, the INP, has developed strategies to strengthen communities that have been the targets of terrorism. But I want to emphasize that terrorism is not the only area where the INP has excelled. In recent years they have pioneered new approaches to problem oriented policing, and they have spent much effort on how to justly treat minorities (including Arabs, Ultra Orthodox Jews, and Ethiopian Jews). As is the case in the US there are times when the INP does not live up to its own expectations. But this is true of democratic police agencies throughout the world, and the INP should not be singled out.

As my comments suggest, I very much support the efforts of GILEE to work with the INP. I hope that this program is able to continue to develop collaborations in the future.

Sincerely Yours,

David Weisburd

David Weisburd, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor
Department of Criminology, Law and Society
Executive Director, Center for Evidence Based Crime Policy
George Mason University
4400 University Drive, MS 6D12
Fairfax, VA 22030

Walter E Meyer Professor of Law and Criminal Justice
Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 91905 Israel