

## **Allegation: Israel is guilty of “pinkwashing” (and other washing) to cover up actions against Palestinians**

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Israel is often unfairly accused of various forms of “washing” - including pinkwashing, greenwashing, and veganwashing, terms used to dismiss or deny characteristics of Israeli society that reflect its democratic and liberal values in an effort to delegitimize the State and its policies.

“Pinkwashing,” a combination of the words “pink” and “whitewashing,” was originally coined by critics of corporations that marketed products and services featuring the color pink or the pink ribbon associated with breast cancer. Criticized as mainly a marketing ploy, these corporations were charged with making expanded profits with very limited amount of the proceeds actually supporting breast cancer research and services, and in some cases, were charged with using materials in their products linked with heightened risk of breast cancer.

In the anti-Israel space, the term “washing” is used by anti-Israel activists to characterize positive aspects or characteristics of Israeli society – like the promotion of LGBTQ+ rights (referred to as “pinkwashing), environment activism (“greenwashing”), or even veganism (“veganwashing”) – as a premeditated Israeli strategy to deflect attention from what they argue is Israel’s persecution of the Palestinians.

Anti-Israel activists who accuse Israel of “washing” refuse to recognize any positive Israeli attributes and willfully ignore the realities of the country’s vibrant

democracy in order to justify and promote their rhetorical attacks against Israel. Such charges further imply that these seemingly admirable characteristics of Israeli society are somehow shallow or manufactured by the Israeli government in a deliberate attempt to cover up its policies towards Palestinians - accusations that can be seen to leverage age-old stereotypes of Jews as duplicitous, deceitful, and having nefarious ulterior motives behind seemingly beneficent behavior. At base, they suggest that there is nothing about the Jewish state that deserves celebration or recognition on its own merits and instead ascribed some ill intent to otherwise laudable efforts or trends within Israel.

Israel has an undeniably strong record of freedoms and protections for LGBTQ+ people, promotion of environmental-friendly initiatives, prominent veganism movement, and many other socially conscious policies. Indeed, one can recognize these Israeli attributes and contributions without diminishing, ignoring or “washing” concerns or criticisms related to Israel-Palestinian conflict and Israeli policies towards Palestinians.