



**The Mossawa Center:  
The Advocacy Center for the Arab  
Citizens of Israel**

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Mossawa charts continued discrimination of Arab Citizens in 2009-2010 state budget**

July 21<sup>st</sup> 2009 - Mossawa's analysis of the annual 2009-2010 State Budget proposals has revealed that although Arab citizens in Israel comprise 19% of the total population they will receive less than 5% of the total governmental development funds and less than 6% of the salary budget allotted to government employees. Currently, an official document that lists a breakdown of the percentage of funds in the budget that are allocated to the Arab minority does not exist, however a breakdown of the budgets of most ministries shows that the percentages of funds allotted to Arabs are consistently and proportionately much lower than the actual percentage of Arab citizens in Israel.

The current budget proposal will bring about a 25% cut to the grants allocated for local councils. This cut translates into a reduction of 250 million shekels which would go to support the various services of Arab local councils. In light of this reduction, 30 Arab local councils are predicted to enter a financial crisis that would undermine their ability to provide wages for their staffs. These cuts will most likely lead to the corrosion of local leadership, dilute local level democracy and provoke general strikes that may paralyze the market as had happened in 2003 due to a similar set of cuts.

Specifically:

- Less than 2% of the Ministry of Transport's 2008 budget was allotted to solve the transportation crisis in the Arab localities.
- The budget that is meant for urban planning and development in Arab localities makes up less than 1% of the planning and development budget. In 2007, the ILA allotted about

117 million shekels, but out of these only 60 million were put in use and the execution level stood as low 50% when compared to what had been planned.

- The ministry does not clearly outline what the allowances for the Arab localities are in the budget. However, it is clear that the ministry did not choose to include Arab cities that are centers for tourism, such as Nazareth.
- No special funds have been allocated in the 2009-2010 budget for science culture and sport. Looking back at the 2008 budget, it shows that under the culture section of the budget, the ministry allocated the Arab community different clauses that add up to 29.2 million shekels, and make up 6.1% of the culture section of the budget.
- The budget for the development of Arab localities which is connected to the PM's office has been reduced from 130 million shekels to 69 million shekels for the coming year.

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*The Mossawa Center, the Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel, is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that works to promote equality for the Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel. Established in 1997, the Mossawa Center strives to improve the social, economic and political status of the Arab citizens of Israel, while preserving their national and cultural rights as Palestinians.*