



"ANTI-PALESTINIAN RACISM" AND THE REWRITING OF MORAL STANDARDS

In recent years, the term "anti-Palestinian racism," often shortened to APR, has moved rapidly from activist circles into the language of public institutions across several Western democracies. What began as a fringe slogan now appears in parliamentary debates in the United Kingdom, government-funded programs in Canada, political resolutions in the United States, and reporting by Australia's public broadcaster. This [shift \(https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/421058\)](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/421058) deserves close scrutiny. While APR presents itself as part of serious anti-racist thinking, its structure and origins show something very different: a framework built to delegitimize Jewish self-definition, undermine protections against antisemitism, and rebrand aggressive anti-Israel activism as moral virtue.

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Key Takeaways

- APR originated in pro-Corbyn activist networks after the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
- The framework reframes Zionism and Jewish self-determination as forms of racism.
- APR has been promoted and codified through the global BDS movement.
- Governments and public institutions have begun adopting or funding APR-based materials.



The concept reshapes public discourse in ways that increase pressure on Jewish communities.

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From Fringe Slogan to Political Weapon

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The roots of APR trace back to the UK Labour Party crisis over antisemitism during the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn. In September 2018, the Labour Party's National Executive Committee adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

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definition of antisemitism, including all examples. This decision represented a setback for Corbyn's supporters, many of whom opposed the definition because it recognized certain forms of anti-Zionism as antisemitic.

Within a closed pro-Corbyn Facebook group known as Palestine Live, activists responded by asserting that Labour itself suffered from "anti-Palestinian racism." The implication was direct. Efforts to address antisemitism were recast as discrimination against Palestinians. Within weeks, an anonymous definition of APR appeared, soon refined and published by Jewish Voice for Labour, whose leadership overlapped heavily with Palestine Live.

Building the APR Framework

The definition gained wider exposure when it was published by Mondoweiss in October 2018. Expanded into a list of absolute claims, the framework asserted that supporting Israel's right to exist, disputing activist narratives, or even accusing someone of antisemitism could qualify as racism.

At its core, APR does not focus on protecting Palestinians from prejudice. Instead, it inverts moral categories. Jewish national identity becomes racial exclusion. Zionism becomes bigotry. Antisemitism safeguards become censorship. Once accepted, this framing treats disagreement with anti-Israel activism as a moral offense rather than a political position.

Integration Into the BDS Campaign

After its publication in the United States, APR became a central tool of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. The concept provided a way to pressure institutions by claiming that neutrality or balance amounted to racism.

Canada became a key testing ground. In 2019, the Canadian government introduced a new anti-racism strategy that allowed non-governmental organizations to propose new definitions of racism. Activist groups seized the opportunity. In 2022, the Arab Canadian Lawyers Association released a formal APR definition closely modeled on the earlier UK and U.S. versions. The Canadian government later awarded ACLA public funding to develop APR educational tools.

At that point, APR moved from activist rhetoric into state-supported policy space.



International Spread and Institutional Take

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With Canadian government backing, APR gained new legitimacy and began appearing elsewhere. In the United States, elected officials introduced resolutions labeling unrelated incidents as APR without evidence. In Australia, activist reports claiming widespread APR received favorable media treatment despite weak sourcing and poor methodology.

In the UK, Labour MP Nadia Whittome pressed the government to recognize APR and introduce related material into schools. In July 2025, Manchester City Council adopted a motion committing to challenge anti-Palestinian racism, effectively endorsing a framework that treats antisemitism protections as suspect.

Changing the Public Climate

APR does not directly cause violence. Its impact is more subtle and more dangerous. It alters the boundaries of acceptable speech and conduct. Jewish communal safety becomes framed as an obstacle. Aggressive anti-Israel activism gains moral cover. Institutions are pressured to tolerate rhetoric and behavior they would otherwise reject.

This matters in a period of rising antisemitism. When public bodies absorb a framework that casts Jewish self-definition as racism, Jewish communities face further marginalization. The climate changes. What can be said shifts. What must be accepted expands.

Conclusion

Anti-Palestinian racism is not a neutral addition to anti-racist language. It is a concept built for political use, shaped in response to efforts to confront antisemitism, and refined through activist networks hostile to Jewish self-determination. Its spread across Western institutions should concern anyone committed to honest anti-racism and social cohesion. Scrutiny, not silence, is the appropriate response. Allowing APR to harden into policy risks deepening division and placing already vulnerable Jewish communities under even greater pressure.

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Dani Avdija: A Rising Star and Symbol of Israeli Sports Success

Published February 2026

What does it mean when an Israeli wing becomes a trusted, two-way presence in an NBA rotation? Dani (Deni) Avdija's breakout stretch in Portland isn't just a hot month or a convenient headline...it's a signal that *Israeli sports success in the United States* is moving from novelty to credibility.

If you follow the box score, you'll see production. But if you watch the possessions between the points...switching onto bigger forwards, making the extra pass, taking the toughest defensive matchup...you'll notice something harder to quantify: **trust**. That trust is earned through versatility, defensive discipline, and the kind of decision-making coaches lean on when games tighten.

Here's what you'll take away: how Avdija's current season stands out, what specifically has changed in his role and impact, and how his rise connects to the broader development pipeline of Israeli basketball. From there, the lens widens to the growing reputation of Israeli athletes across U.S. sports...and why sports can function as *cultural diplomacy*, strengthening the U.S.-Israel partnership through people-to-people admiration and shared values.

We'll close with practical ways to engage...initiatives, FAQs, and next steps for supporting bridge-building through sport.

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More than a box score

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While statistics like points and rebounds are important, Avdija's influence extends beyond the box score. The Jerusalem Post's profile (<https://jpost.com/j-spot/article-884980>) emphasizes his role as a catalyst for Israeli basketball development (<https://culturavia.org/student-and-youth-programs-building-the-advanced-of-u-s-israel-friendship/>), inspiring future generations while also reflecting the broader cultural connections that sports can foster between nations.

Why this matters for U.S.–Israel friendship

Sports serve as a powerful medium for **cultural diplomacy** (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>), fostering shared values and connections that transcend borders. Avdija's achievements exemplify how one athlete can positively shape perceptions and strengthen U.S.–Israel relations:

- Representation builds familiarity
- Consistency earns respect
- People-to-people moments create real connection

A Deep Dive into Avdija's Performance this Season

What changes in his role actually look like

Deni Avdija isn't just "having a good year"... he's emerging as a dependable two-way forward, enhancing team dynamics during a pivotal season. With injuries reshaping Portland's rotation, he's embraced heavier playmaking responsibilities, initiating offense after rebounds and creating for teammates, as described in a Times of Israel report

on his breakout season (<https://timesofisrael.com/nba-star-deni-avdija-laments-all-the-hate-for-being-israeli-amid-on-court-success/>). This aligns with broader efforts to strengthen cultural ties, highlighting how sports can serve as a bridge for dialogue and understanding between communities.

A common misconception is that the only way to succeed in a new environment is one of trust and versatility (<https://culturavia.org/the-start-up-nation-meets-silicon-valley-how-similar-entrepreneurial-cultures-fuel-innovation/>)... he's expected to guard multiple positions while seamlessly transitioning from defense to impactful decision-making with the ball.



Trust, defense, and versatility... the real contributions

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When coaches place their trust in a player, it reflects in the assignments they receive. Avdija's value manifests in the "glue" work that fosters team cohesion for both ends.

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Defensive discipline... switching across matchups without constant help. Ability to transition... securing the ball and lighting the next court.

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Through his partnership through sports, his season serves as a testament to cultural diplomacy... performance can open doors for respect, dialogue, and shared values.

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Building Trust: Versatility and Defense

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Why coaches trust versatile defenders

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Trust in basketball is built on defense, especially when a player like Deni Avdija can seamlessly switch roles while maintaining focus. Avdija cultivates that trust by taking on challenging defensive assignments, moving his feet with agility, and demonstrating defensive discipline when plays break down, showcasing his role as a dependable two-way forward. This adaptability mirrors the academic partnerships between Israel and the United States, which enhance innovation and shared values, ultimately fostering mutual respect and collaboration.

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Versatility extends beyond merely guarding multiple positions; it encompasses making quick reads, effectively communicating through screens, and recovering from mistakes rather than assigning blame. Avdija exemplifies this adaptability, enhancing team dynamics and earning the trust of his teammates. His ability to connect with others on the court reflects the broader cultural understanding fostered through educational exchanges that build lasting ties.

Versatility that shows up in the small plays

When you observe closely, the most impactful moments are often subtle: a hard closeout, a box-out that frees a teammate for a rebound, a smart help rotation, or an extra pass that stabilizes the offense. These actions reflect Avdija's critical decision-making and impactful presence on the court.

- **On-ball defense:** maintaining balance and forcing tougher shots
- **Help defense:** rotating early and trusting teammates to cover for you
- **Decision-making:** converting defense into a controlled transition push

How this connects to cultural diplomacy

Sports serve as a powerful form of **cultural diplomacy**, showcasing shared values such as **effort**, accountability, and respect for the collective. In the narrative of U.S.-Israel relations, Avdija's achievements resonate with the principles of *Faith • Freedom • Friendship*, fostering people-to-people connections one possession at a time. For further insights on how these partnerships drive advancements in various fields, check out our overview of academic partnerships (<https://culturavia.org/academic-partnerships-benefitting-both-peoples/>).

Basketball has emerged as one of Israel's leading sports, with its development pipeline (<https://culturavia.org/the-start-up-nation-meets-silicon-valley-how-similar-entrepreneurial-cultures-fuel-innovation/>) consistently strengthening. The path to cultivating high-level talent lies in Israel's strengths in coaching, robust youth competitions, and clear routes to professional teams, forming a bridge of partnership and friendship with the U.S.

Youth Programs and Coaching Culture

Clubs and schools prioritize fundamental skills as a universal language...emphasizing footwork, spacing, and decision-making beyond mere highlights. There's a growing focus on strength training and injury prevention, equipping players to endure extended seasons and rapid gameplay. Additionally, initiatives that connect young Americans and Israelis through shared education and cultural exchange play a crucial role in fostering leadership and community, enhancing the basketball experience and building enduring ties.

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Contrary to popular belief, success in basketball isn't reliant on a singular "star system." Instead, it hinges on **consistent practice** and *effective coaching* that transcends individual gyms or trainers, embodying the spirit of mutual respect.

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From Local Leagues to Global Stages

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Israel's domestic leagues offer valuable playing time for younger athletes, while international competitions introduce them to diverse playing styles. This combination aids in their acclimatization to the physical demands and rhythm of overseas basketball, bridging cultural divides through sport.

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When discussing Israelis in the NBA, it's vital to focus on **seasons and opportunities** rather than certainties. For those monitoring development, (<https://culturavia.org/arts-and-cultural-exchange/>) (<https://culturavia.org/education-and-exchange/>)

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- Players gaining minutes against seasoned competitors
- Improvements in shooting accuracy and defensive efforts
- Professional habits such as film analysis, nutrition, and team-centric attitudes

Additionally, the exchange of sports can foster deeper personal connections, enhancing friendships between the U.S. and Israel, showcasing the value of collaboration in sports and community.

The Rising Reputation of Israeli Athletes in the U.S.

Deni Avdija's remarkable ascent in the NBA is not just a personal achievement; it serves as a beacon of cultural diplomacy (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>), challenging the notion that Israeli athletes are merely "rare exceptions." His ability to compete against elite players underscores the narrative that Israel is cultivating a new generation of talent (<https://culturavia.org/the-start-up-nation-meets-silicon-valley-how-similar-entrepreneurial-cultures-fuel-innovation/>), ready to shine on America's grandest stages. This cultural exchange mirrors the impact of Israeli musicians who blend diverse influences, resonating with American audiences and fostering deeper connections.

More than one headline

Avdija stands alongside other notable figures, such as Ian Kinsler, who represented Team Israel in the World Baseball Classic, forging vital connections between American fans and Israeli sports. Similarly, Lior Basi and other Israeli-connected players in the WNBA have enriched the landscape through their professional journeys, enhancing the visibility and credibility of Israeli athletes in U.S. leagues. This growing presence reflects a broader trend of Israeli artists, like Idan Raichel, who have successfully engaged with American culture.

What "representation" really changes

This visibility transcends mere representation; it reshapes perceptions and inspires young athletes to envision themselves in these roles. It fosters a **people-to-people connection** rooted in *shared values* and mutual respect, reinforcing trust in the capabilities of Israeli athletes. For insights on how cultural exchanges influence perceptions, explore our overview of Israeli arts in America (<https://culturavia.org/israeli-arts-in-america/>).

If you're tracking this trend, watch for:

- More Israeli prospects emerging in U.S. college and development programs
- Israeli athletes becoming recognized names rather than "novelties"

- Community events that promote sports as a medium for **faith • freedom • friendship**

Cultural Diplomacy (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>) in Sports and Arts (<https://culturavia.org>)

Sports embody simplicity; you show up, play hard, and earn respect from opponents. In the U.S.–Israel partnership, this spirit serves as a unique form of **cultural diplomacy**, fostering trust and understanding that reaches people who might not engage in formal dialogues. In times of political tension, the authentic connections formed through sports can provide a human perspective that complements artistic exchanges, showcasing Israel's democratic diversity and shared values with the United States.

When Israeli player **Dani Avdija** excels in the NBA, his achievements go beyond talent. Avdija's journey sparks curiosity about his background, inviting exploration into elements like *faith and heritage*, language, and the rich narratives woven in diverse societies. His role as a role model forward not only enhances team dynamics but also builds significant connections, illustrating how sports can bridge cultural gaps and promote dialogue.

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What Sports Diplomacy Looks Like in Real Life

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These impactful connections arise from simple, repeated interactions that build friendships: (<https://culturavia.org/get-involved/>)

- **Shared rituals** such as national anthems, team traditions, and community service events.

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- **Youth exchange** through camps, clinics, and school teams hosting visiting players.
- **Media storytelling** on social media and YouTube channels illustrating their critical decision-making and defensive strategies.

A Practical Way to Participate

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To engage locally, attend games featuring international players, support athlete-led initiatives, or invite educators to discuss sportsmanship and mutual values. This approach nurtures **Faith • Freedom • Friendship** through people-to-people connections, including the growth of Israeli basketball. (<https://culturavia.org/get-involved/>)

The Future of Israeli Athletes in the NBA

What Avdija's path signals

Deni Avdija's visibility matters because it makes a big goal feel reachable... not just for one player, but for a whole pipeline. When young athletes in Israel see someone navigate the NBA's pace, travel, and pressure, it helps replace a common misconception that the league is "only for Americans." This visibility also reflects the broader American cultural influence in Israel, where sports serve as a bridge fostering connections and mutual understanding.

It adds a people-to-people layer to the **U.S.–Israel partnership**. Sports can be a form of **cultural diplomacy** (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>)... a shared language that builds friendship without requiring everyone to agree on everything.

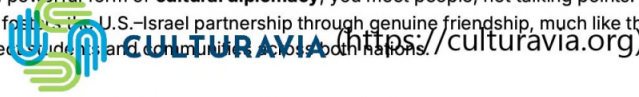
Practical steps for the next generation

If you're a player, parent, or coach thinking ahead, focus on habits that translate across countries and styles:

- **Skill versatility:** handle, pass, and defend multiple positions.
- **English and communication:** learn basketball vocabulary and ask clear questions.
- **Resilience:** expect setbacks... then return to fundamentals.
- **Healthy support:** build a team around nutrition, recovery, and academics.

As more programs connect Israeli youth with American coaching and competition, the NBA becomes less of a distant dream and more of a structured journey grounded in faith, freedom, and friendship. For insights on how cultural exchanges enhance these experiences, check out our overview of American cultural influence in Israel (<https://culturavia.org/american-cultural-influence-in-israel/>).

Sports can serve as a powerful form of **cultural diplomacy**; you meet people, not talking points. Engaging with curiosity and respect for the U.S.-Israel partnership through genuine friendship, much like the educational exchanges that connect students and faculty from both nations.



Ways to Get Involved Locally

You don't need to be an elite athlete to get involved. Many communities host friendly matches, clinics, or discussions featuring Israeli coaches, teams, or sports nonprofits, embodying the rising success of Israeli athletes. These initiatives mirror the enriching experiences found in education and cultural diplomacy (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>), where participants gain firsthand insights and forge lasting connections.

- Faith & Heritage** (/faith-heritage) • Attend a screening of community water park and center of sports and stories, rather than politics, reflecting on Avdija's inspiring journey.
- Arts & Culture** (/arts-and-cultural-exchange)
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- Philanthropy** (/philanthropy-and-community) • Volunteer at youth tournaments that welcome diverse participants, concentrating on fair play and inclusivity for all participants.
- Blog** (https://culturavia.org/blog/)
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- Get Involved** (https://culturavia.org/get-involved/) • Invite an Israeli athlete or coach (virtually or in-person) to a school or community center Q&A to motivate local youth.

Supporting Programs with Purpose

- Faith & Heritage** (/faith-heritage) • A common misconception is that sports support must be flashy or costly. Sponsoring equipment, travel stipends, or facility time can enable participation of kids and adults who need it, showcasing **Faith • Freedom • Friendship**.
- Arts & Culture** (/arts-and-cultural-exchange)
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- Philanthropy** (/philanthropy-and-community) • If considering sponsorship, ask clear questions regarding inclusion, safety, and the integration of cross-cultural exchange into the program. This reinforces the connections between sports initiatives and community growth, extending Avdija's influence. For further insights on the role of sports in cultural exchange, read our interview of education and exchange programs (<https://culturavia.org/education-and-exchange/>).
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What achievements has Dani Avdija accomplished this NBA season?

Deni Avdija is experiencing a remarkable season, marked by a significant achievement: he has become **Israel's all-time leading NBA scorer**, surpassing Omri Casspi's career total, as reported by The Times of Israel's report on Avdija's scoring record (<https://timesofisrael.com/deni-avdija-now-israels-all-time-leading-nba-scorer-as-he-becomes-true-hoops-star/>). This milestone not only elevates his status but also enhances the credibility of Israeli athletes in the U.S., paralleling how contemporary Israeli musicians have successfully introduced their culture through diverse genres, fostering cultural diplomacy. His season highlights include:

- Multiple **30+ point games**, showcasing his reliable two-way forward capabilities and skills
- **Two triple-doubles**, reflecting his critical decision-making and comprehensive impact on the game
- Improved shooting efficiency, with *notable* growth from three-point range, enhancing his overall contribution

These achievements signify his growing influence and the maturation of Israeli basketball, reinforcing shared values of **friendship** and trust through impactful performances.

Next Steps: Supporting Cultural Diplomacy Through Sports

Cultural diplomacy finds a practical entry point through sports, where connections form effortlessly. The aim is clear: facilitate interactions between American and Israeli communities, fostering competition and mutual understanding through respect. Engaging in local initiatives can significantly enhance this effort, as many organizations offer opportunities to participate in various programs that promote cultural exchange and strengthen *faith, freedom, and friendship*.

Ways you can get involved locally

Engage with local sports initiatives. Numerous schools, JCCs, churches, synagogues, and community centers regularly organize games, speaker events, or youth leagues that welcome visiting athletes and coaches.

- **Attend** exhibition matches, film viewings, or sports discussions showcasing Israeli athletes and teams.

- **Volunteer** at community tournaments...assist with organization, translation, or hosting duties.
- **Sponsor** a youth team's travel costs, equipment, or participation fees to increase accessibility for more children.



CULTURAVIA (<https://culturavia.org>)

How to be a better cultural host and fan

A common misconception is that sports exchange is merely entertainment. In truth, shared meals, locker-room dialogues, and respectful cheering can cultivate civic virtues such as pluralism and fair play. Encourage guests to share meaningful traditions, accommodate dietary restrictions when possible, and allow for a curious dialogue, steering clear of contentious topics. This embodies *Faith • Freedom • Friendship* in action. For additional ways to engage with cultural diplomacy initiatives, check out our [Get Involved](https://culturavia.org/get-involved/) page (<https://culturavia.org/get-involved/>) for specific opportunities.

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About the Author

Culturavia

Our mission is to deepen the connection between the people of the United States and Israel by celebrating shared heritage, strengthening cultural and faith-based ties, and expanding opportunities for meaningful engagement. We empower students, communities, and leaders to experience Israel firsthand, explore the stories that shaped both nations, and build lasting relationships rooted in respect, learning, and a shared commitment to freedom.

Related Articles

Dani Avdija: A Rising Star and Symbol of Israeli Sports Success

Dani Avdija's breakout season with the Portland Trail Blazers highlights his growth as an NBA contributor and Israel's rising presence in elite American professional sports.

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Why Evangelical Christians Remain Among Israel's Most Reliable Allies



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Evangelical Christians remain Israel's most reliable allies, driven by biblical faith over politics. Senior leaders recently met with Netanyahu to reaffirm their commitment.

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