

JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE STATEMENT: SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Issued May 13, 2021

<https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/there-is-no-sideline/>

We are witnessing a watershed moment of Palestinian resistance in the face of unspeakable Israeli violence. The rampant brutality against Palestinians by the Israeli military, police and mobs—aided, orchestrated and encouraged by the Israeli government, and funded, supported and defended by the U.S. government—is horrifying in its inhumanity. In response, Palestinians across all of Palestine/Israel are rising up. Our grief and rage build with every new atrocity—and from the depths of horror, we honor the steadfastness of Palestinian resistance.

Jewish tradition says that to kill a single person is to extinguish a whole world. We say the names of those killed and brutalized. The Israeli government denies the humanity of Palestinians at every turn, even in death. But we will not. We honor each and every extinguished future with our prayers and our action.

What we are witnessing is not a “conflict,” a “clash,” or a “war” between two equal parties. There is no mistaking the massive disparity of power between the Israeli government and the Palestinians it targets. Backed by \$3.8 billion in annual military funding from the U.S. government, the Israeli government controls, dominates and dispossesses Palestinian lives and lands—from Sheikh Jarrah to Lydd/Lod to Gaza City.

This systematic oppression is by design. The Nakba—“catastrophe” in Arabic, referring to the forced displacement of more than 750,000 Palestinians—began in 1948 with the establishment of Israel, and never ceased. For 73 years, the Israeli government has systematically stolen and demolished Palestinians’ homes, illegally seized their land, and separated them from each other. In this totalizing system of violence against Palestinians, no one is safe. We deplore the catastrophic loss of

Palestinian life, and we grieve for the loss of all lives—Palestinian and Israeli.

We are on the side of unconditional commitment to justice, equality, freedom and dignity for *all* people, no exceptions. To achieve a future where all are safe and free, we must end the Israeli government’s settler-colonial apartheid regime.

Palestinian protester Mariam Afifi asked, “Do you want your kids to grow up defending the side of the oppressors?” Jews around the world must contemplate this question. We know our answer: We want our children to grow up defending oppressed people and fighting for a vision of collective liberation.

Jewish communities must make a choice. Do we accede to a future rooted in denial and continue to allow apartheid, ethnic cleansing and massacre in our names? Or do we engage with hard truths and bring our whole selves to the struggle of *teshuva*, of repair for these harms?

We choose the struggle for justice over silence and complicity. We choose to join with Palestinians and the growing global movement in support of the right of return for Palestinians, as part of a shared future of justice, equality and freedom for all people.

Join us: Support the Palestinian-led call for BDS [Boycott, Divest Sanctions] demand an end to U.S. military funding to Israel, and help us build a Judaism and Jewish community beyond Zionism.

distributed by New Haven Sunday Vigil 05/16/2021

Let us not forget that billions of our tax dollars are being used annually to fuel the siege, enrich weapons contractors, and sabotage the efforts of Jews and Palestinians to achieve peace and justice in Israel.

RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR! Join the conversation, Sundays, here at Broadway, Park and Elm Streets in New Haven, 12 to 1 p.m. <https://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com>