

## Letter to Elected Officials re Palestine

To the Office of the Senator/Assemblymember,

I am writing to express my deep disappointment regarding statements made by some California elected officials concerning the recent violence in Israel and Palestine. These statements have presented a one-sided perspective that shows solidarity and concern only for Israel. I urge you and your fellow lawmakers to adopt a balanced view that considers all constituents in your district, be they Muslim, Palestinian, Arab, Israeli, or Jewish. See the [joint condemnation issued by the Greater Los Angeles Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations \(CAIR-LA\) and JVP-LA](#), highlighting the biased nature of these statements.

The conflict in Palestine is not new; it has its roots in the occupation of Palestinian land over seventy years ago. Before making public statements about the current crisis, it is essential to understand the heart-breaking reality of life in Gaza.

- Palestinians have endured decades of illegal land seizures and dehumanizing, abusive checkpoints that limit their free movement.
- Israel and Egypt have maintained a 15-year-long land, sea, and air blockade of Gaza, restricting their access to food, clean water, electricity, and medicine--creating what Human Rights Watch has described as "the largest open-air prison."
- According to the UN, between 2008 and 2021, the death toll from the Israel/Palestine conflict is disproportionately borne by Palestinians, more than 23:1.
- The United Nations has repeatedly deemed Israel's aggressions in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank as "illegal under international law" and a "substantial obstacle to peace," with Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, B'Tselem, and others unequivocally declaring Israel an apartheid state.

The role of elected officials in addressing this issue cannot be overstated. Billions in military aid directly fund the current aggressions in the region, and the United States is responsible for half of this funding. I ask you to consider the suffering of all individuals affected by the violence and to meet with Palestinian human rights advocates to gain a more balanced and informed perspective of their decades-long struggle for basic human rights, dignity, and self-determination.

As an elected official, your constituents are looking to you to uplift and advance human rights and justice rather than exacerbate a volatile and violent conflict.

Sincerely,