

Joint Letter from California Muslims to Governor Newsom, U.S. Senators Padilla and Butler, and all Other Congressional Elected Officials: Support a Ceasefire in Gaza

SUBJECT: Joint Letter Representing California's One Million Muslims

To Governor Gavin Newsom and Congressional Senators and Representatives,

We, the undersigned Muslim organizations and Islamic Centers representing California's one million Muslims, express our profound disappointment in your reluctance to call for a ceasefire to end the carnage of innocent Palestinian civilians as the death toll mounts above 10,000. We are also concerned with your initial statements and Governor Newsom's visit to Israel, which have contributed to a dehumanization campaign against the Palestinian people. This raises apprehension among California Muslim, AMEMSA, Palestinian American, and Muslim-perceived communities, as they contend with a surge in Islamophobia that is jeopardizing constitutional rights and subjecting students and professionals to intimidation, harassment, and discriminatory termination.¹ As concerned citizens who value justice and peace on a global scale, we are deeply concerned about the implications of the one-sided support many of our elected officials have expressed.

With that said, we demand the following from our elected representatives:

1. **Ceasefire:** *Call for an unconditional ceasefire from all sides of the conflict and support the Ceasefire Now Resolution.*
2. **Humanitarian Aid:** *Call for an overwhelming and immediate humanitarian aid response, with the Federal Government playing a central role in the effort.*
3. **Funding:** *Oppose any new military aid to Israel, as it would only be used to commit further war crimes against Palestinian civilians in Gaza.*
4. **Voice of Peace:** *Become leading and unequivocal voices in support of solving this conflict based on International Law. No more. No less.*
5. **Equality:** *Immediately commit to changing the false and insidious paradigm of viewing Israeli lives as more valuable than Palestinian lives.*

Almost all human rights organizations have detailed and documented the oppressive and violent 75+ year dispossession and oppression of the Palestinian people on their own land. The Israeli government has perpetrated numerous, well-documented crimes against humanity, collective punishment, and inhumane treatment, including what human rights organizations have labeled as an apartheid system, against an occupied civilian population that it is obligated to protect under international law. Currently, more than **four thousand children** have been mercilessly killed with Israel's so-called "precision" bombing campaign, leading UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to describe Gaza on November 6 as a "graveyard for children."²

Islamophobia has sharply increased nationally and within California:

- CAIR National reported 1,283 bias incidents nationally since October 7, marking a 216% increase compared to 2022—the largest increase since then-candidate Donald Trump first announced his desire to implement a Muslim Ban in 2017. This number is likely grossly low as anti-Muslim hate crimes are largely underreported nationally.
- CAIR California (CAIR-CA) reported 217 hate incidents between October 7 and November 8, with 85 in Greater Los Angeles, 89 in San Francisco Bay Area, 11 in Sacramento Valley/Central

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/09/us/cair-unprecedented-surge-anti-muslim-bias-reaaj/index.html>

² https://www.dci-palestine.org/4237_palestinian_children_killed_as_gaza_becomes_graveyard_for_children

California, and 32 in San Diego. These reports came from various sectors, including local businesses, places of employment, and within schools.

- CAIR-CA's 2023 Bullying Report, which collected data before October 7, found 46% of Muslim American students reported being bullied because of their identity. Additionally, 47% of students reported feeling unsafe, unwelcome, or uncomfortable at school due to their identity, and 32% of students who wear a hijab reported their hijab was unacceptably touched by another student. These percentages are staggering and do not include the increase in bullying that students are facing since October 7.

A national poll concluded 66% of all voters support a ceasefire. In that same poll, 80% of Democrats, 57% of Independents, and 56% of Republicans also support a ceasefire. A November 15 national poll from Reuters also found that 68% of Americans support a ceasefire, including 75% of Democrats and 50% of Republicans. The poll also found that only 31% of Americans are in favor of providing more weapons to Israel.

We urge you to take immediate action to ensure you are fulfilling your civic duty to represent all of your constituents—not a select few who are condoning this ongoing bloodbath of Palestinian children. We remain committed to the principles of equality and justice and hope that we can find a path forward, working with you and our national leadership to foster a more balanced and constructive approach based on international law to bring freedom, justice, human rights, and peace to the Israeli and Palestinian people.

Sincerely,

Council on American-Islamic Relations, California (representing 4 offices in California)
Islamic Shura Council of Southern California (representing 75 organizations in Southern CA)
Northern California Islamic Council (representing 35 organizations in Northern California)
Shia Muslim Council of Southern California (representing 18 organizations in Southern CA)
Activist San Diego (Escondido)
Afghan American Muslim Outreach (Orange)
Al-Misbaah (Sacramento)
American Muslims for Palestine (Bay Area)
American Muslim Voice Foundation (Palo Alto)
Ansaar Academy of Inland Empire (Rancho Cucamonga)
Ar-Rahman Islamic Center (Fontana)
Averroes High School (Fremont)
Brentwood Muslim Community Center (Brentwood)
Chino Valley Islamic Center (Chino)
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (Oakland)
Council of Pakistan American Affairs (Yorba Linda)
Evergreen Islamic Center (San Jose)
Fatemiyeh Educational Center of Orange County (Laguna Woods)
Folsom Educational Academy (Folsom)
Hejrat Educational Center (Los Angeles)
Helping Hand for Relief and Development (Corona)
Hollywood Masjid (Los Angeles)
Imamia Medics International, Southern California Chapter (Los Angeles)
Indian American Muslim Council (San Jose)
Institute of Knowledge (Diamond Bar)
Islamic Center of Conejo Valley (Newbury Park)
Islamic Center of Corona Norco (Corona)
Islamic Center of Cypress (Cypress)
Islamic Center of Fremont (Fremont)

Islamic Center of Glendale (Glendale)
Islamic Center of Hawthorne (Hawthorne)
Islamic Center of Inland Empire (Rancho Cucamonga)
Islamic Center of Irvine (Irvine)
Islamic Center of Manteca (Manteca)
Islamic Center of Modesto (Modesto)
Islamic Center of Reseda (Reseda)
Islamic Center of Riverside (Riverside)
Islamic Center of San Diego (San Diego)
Islamic Center of San Francisco (San Francisco)
Islamic Center of San Gabriel Valley (Rowland Heights)
Islamic Center of Santa Clarita Valley (Santa Clarita)
Islamic Center of Santa Cruz (Santa Cruz)
Islamic Center of Temecula Valley (Temecula)
Islamic Center of Yorba Linda (Yorba Linda)
Islamic Center of Zahra (Pleasanton)
Islamic Circle of North America (Sacramento)
Islamic Community Center of Redlands (Loma Linda)
Islamic Community Center of San Diego (San Diego)
Islamic Institute of Orange County (Anaheim)
Islamic Scholarship Fund (Berkeley)
Islamic Society of Downey (Downey)
Islamic Society of East Bay (Fremont)
Islamic Society of Simi Valley (Simi Valley)
Islamic Society of West Valley (Canoga Park)
Islamic Educational Center of Orange County (Costa Mesa)
Islamophobia Studies Center (Berkeley)
Justice America (Irvine)
Khalil Center, Bay Area (Santa Clara)
Kind Hearts (San Diego)
Kurdish Community Islamic Center (El Cajon)
Maristan (Fremont)
Maryam Masjid (Corona)
Masjid Al-Salam (Oakland)
Masjid Al-Tawheed (Elk Grove)
Masjid Annur Islamic Center (Sacramento)
Masjidul Taqwa of San Diego (San Diego)
Masjidul Waritheen (Oakland)
Mosque of San Gabriel (San Gabriel)
Mountain View Palo Alto Musalla (Mountain View)
Muslim American Society (San Diego)
Muslim Community Association (Santa Clara)
Muslim Community Center of East Bay (Pleasanton)
Muslim Community of Folsom (Folsom)
Muslim Community Services of San Diego (San Diego)
Muslim Public Affairs Council (Los Angeles)
Muslim Student Association at California State University, Fullerton (Fullerton)
Muslim Student Association at Santiago Canyon College (Orange)
Muslim Ummah of North America (North Hollywood)
Muslim Visionaries (Rancho Cucamonga)
Orange County Islamic Foundation (Lake Forest)
Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (San Diego)
Rahma Health (Sacramento)

Saba Islamic Center (San Jose)
Sacramento Area League of Associated Muslims (Sacramento)
Sahaba Initiative (San Bernardino)
Sajjadia Islamic Society (Corona)
San Ramon Valley Islamic Center (San Ramon)
Shia Ithnaasheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles (Pico Rivera)
South Bay Islamic Association (San Jose)
Support Life Foundation (Oakland)
Tawhid Community Center (Beaumont)
Tayba Foundation (Union City)
Townhall Alliance (Santa Clara)
Tri-City Islamic Center (Vista)
Turlock Islamic Center (Turlock)
United Women of East Africa Support Team (San Diego)
We Love Our Neighbors (San Diego)
West Coast Islamic Society (Anaheim)
West Valley Muslim Association (Saratoga)
Yaseen Foundation (Belmont)
Yemeni-American Community Leadership (Oakland)