



# CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF MUSLIM & ARAB WORLDS

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO

## CSUSB Center for the Study of Muslim & Arab Worlds' Statement for Palestine

The Center for the Study of Muslim & Arab Worlds at California State University, San Bernardino expresses its sadness about and condemnation of the Israeli racist and colonial violence against and oppression of the Palestinian communities under its control.

Palestinians in Israel live as second-class citizens under more than 65 laws that discriminate against them. In the West Bank, Israelis inflict the violence of a settler colonial state through brutal military occupation, home demolitions, policing and surveillance, as well as through the construction of a wall that runs deep through Palestinian territory, cutting Palestinians off from their land and their families. In East Jerusalem neighborhoods like Sheikh Jarrah, the Israeli government forces Palestinians out of their homes under the guise of a “real estate dispute” and has targeted mosques where Palestinians gather to pray.

In particular, we are shocked at the level of violent retaliation against Palestinians in Gaza, the most densely populated area in the world, which has resulted in the brutal killing of over 240 people, mainly civilian, including 66 children, 39 women and 17 seniors, according to the latest report from *Haaretz* newspaper. All of these lives were taken in a mere 11 days as Gazans continued to pull the dead from under the rubble. Additionally, close to 2000 people were injured as a result of ongoing Israeli air, land, and sea shelling. In a horrifying statistic, it is estimated that 20 families in Gaza have been completely eradicated by Israeli aggression. In addition to the loss of human life, *The New York Times* reported that the Israeli bombardment has damaged 17 hospitals and clinics in Gaza, including its only coronavirus test laboratory. Those bombardments sent fetid wastewater into the streets and broke water pipes serving at least 800,000 people. Sewage systems inside Gaza have been destroyed and a desalination plant that helped provide fresh water to a quarter of a million people in the territory is currently offline.

Israeli attacks, including air strikes and tank shells, resulted in the damage of at least 51 educational facilities, including 2 kindergartens, 46 schools, 1 university, 1 vocational training center, and 1 Ministry of Education facility among other vital infrastructure, according to the United Nations. In addition, Israeli military strikes internally displaced at least 66,000 Palestinians who have since had to seek refuge in schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), causing further disruptions to the Palestinian people's education and their lives.

Unfortunately, the current ceasefire will not end the brutal siege on Gaza that has been going on since 2007, effectively transforming Gaza into an open-air prison or concentration camp, controlled by Israel from land, sea and air. Since 2007, the people of Gaza have been put on a forced diet by the Israeli government's practice of calorie count based on their control of the population registry. More than half of the population of Gaza, some 56%, live below the poverty line. 70% of the population is receiving aid according to estimates by the United Nations, and food rations constitute most of that aid. Unemployment in Gaza is around 45%, while 48% of the population is under the age of 18 and 70% of the young people in Gaza are unemployed with no hope for the future. We share these statistics and data to illustrate the realities of institutional settler colonial violence that has resulted in these conditions under which Palestinians are forced to live. A year after the brutal murder of George Floyd, we condemn all state-sponsored violence and terrorism.

It is also important to note that this latest episode of Israeli state violence should not be discussed in isolation of its history of colonial practices against Palestinians, especially since the majority of Gazans are refugees who were ethnically expelled from their homes and lands by the Zionist militias that created the state of Israel. The recent 213-page report from Human Rights Watch detailing "crimes of apartheid and persecution" by Israeli authorities highlights myriad ways in which Israel continues to push Palestinians from their homes. Before HRW, the Israeli human rights organization, B'tselem, issued a similar report about Israel's war crimes.

As a center committed to the study of Muslim and Arab worlds, we cannot be silent. We issue this statement in support and solidarity with the colonized people of Palestine and their resistance to the military and apartheid state of Israel. We understand that this is not just a Palestine-Israel "conflict," but it is a one-sided humanitarian crisis fueled by US military aid to Israel as well as the circulation of biased mainstream propaganda that dehumanizes Palestinians on a daily basis. We also firmly believe this affects *all* of us and that our own liberation is tied to the liberation of all oppressed people around the world, including our Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Immigrant, Undocumented, and all other marginalized brothers and sisters. We salute the bravery and resilience of the Palestinian resistance in the face of colonial violence and call on our government to stop its complacency in yet another capitalist imperialist atrocity.

**Executive Board of the Center for the Study of Muslim & Arab Worlds**

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**Resources:**

- To donate to the victims in Gaza: [The United Nations Relief & Works Agency For Palestinian Refugees \(UNRWA\)](#), [Palestinian Children Relief Fund \(PCRF\)](#), [Gaza Mental Health Foundation](#) (Boston-based), or [Oxfam America](#).
- [A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#), Report by HRW.
- [A Regime of Jewish Supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is Apartheid](#), A Report by the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (B'tselem).

- [Is Israel Guilty Of Apartheid Against Palestinians?](#) An investigative report by AJ+.
- [Database of Discriminatory Laws in Israel](#), by Adalah (The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel).
- [ICC Launches War Crimes Probe into Israeli Practices](#), by the Associated Press.
- International Criminal Court's (ICC's) [Statement on Investigating Israeli War Crimes](#).