

# **Jewish Community Relations Council**

## ***...you do not speak for us!***

### **Jews condemn 60 plus years of the ethnic cleansing & settlement of Palestine**

The Jewish Community Relations Council consistently claims to be “the Jewish voice”. It claims that its unconditional support for Israel’s policies and practices is the consensus within the “organized Jewish community.” It claims that any Jew who disagrees with the Israel/US agenda for Palestine and the Middle East cannot claim a voice within Jewish communities. Against this claim, we stand here in opposition to this celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Israel that displaced over 725,000 indigenous Palestinians from their homeland.

We are outraged but not surprised by Israeli Deputy Defense Minister’s threat of a “shoah”, a holocaust, against the 1.5 million people of Gaza. Israel, with the support of the US government and its allies, has effectively cut off food, water, electricity, humanitarian aid, and medical supplies. Such brutality is the logical continuation of Israel’s long history of ethnic cleansing and colonization. We condemn the brutality of your celebration of this history and continued unconditional economic and political support for its continuation.

Our opposition to Israel and Zionism is first and foremost rooted in its impact on the people of Palestine and the broader region. We struggle against Zionism and its manifestation in the State of Israel’s historic and ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people and the confiscation of their land. This project dishonors the displacement and genocide of European Jews by using their memory to justify and perpetuate the historic and continued brutality against the Palestinian people.

It is responsible for the extensive displacement and alienation of Jews of Arab, Persian and African descent from indigenous identities, languages, histories, cultures and homelands. Mizrahim have a history in this region of over 2,000 years. Zionism wants to destroy this history. As such, it implicates us in the oppression of the Palestinian people and in the debasement of our own heritages, and struggles for justice.

Alongside so many people around the world, we take action today in solidarity with the struggle for Palestinian liberation and self-determination. As Jews in this position, we reject the claim that anti-Zionism is anti-Jewish. We reject the assertions that Israel, the Jewish Community Relations Council and other Zionist organizations speak for all Jews. Instead, we stand in solidarity with Palestinians whose 60 plus years of resistance marked by the anniversary of the *Nakba* of 1948 is an inspiration to liberation movements across the world.

We say, “Never again!” Never again means never again for all people. Never again for the people of Palestine, never again for the people of Iraq, never again for the people of Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Iran, never again for Islamic, Arab and South Asian communities facing islamophobia and persecution in the United States and Europe.

Israel, the US government, the Jewish Community Relations Council, the Jewish Federation, the Jewish National Fund, **you are the minority**. You do not speak for us. Your support for war and occupation are a threat to the lives of all those living in Palestine, the broader region and the rest of the world. **But, you are the minority, we are the majority**. We are here today standing with the majority of people in the world who support human rights, freedom, justice, equity and peace.

**We demand that the Jewish Community Relations Council release a public statement with the following commitments and points:**

- ⇒ To put a stop to the targeting of non-Jewish organizations, particularly of organizations serving communities of color in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, that criticize Israel and/or express solidarity with Palestine
- ⇒ To put a stop to the claim that anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel are anti-Semitic
- ⇒ To acknowledge that they do not speak for the full organized Jewish community—that Jewish voices that criticize Israel and Zionism are legitimate voices of dissent within Jewish communities

On the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel approaches, we are honored to participate in 60 plus years of struggle for a just peace in Palestine, the broader region, and the communities under attack in the United States as a result of anti-immigrant sentiment, gentrification, incarceration and islamophobia.