

October 8th, 2023

We, Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and [Claremont Jewish Voice for Peace \(JVP\)](#), stand in unwavering solidarity with Palestinians during this critical moment in the ongoing struggle for liberation, freedom, and self determination. We mourn the loss of Palestinian and Israeli people who have been killed, and understand their deaths as a result of the ongoing [Nakba](#) and continued dispossession of Indigenous land. The loss of any and all life is a tragedy. Until the occupation ends its legacy of 75 years of continued violence, the reality is that more lives will be lost. As stated by JVP-National, “We grieve the lives of those already lost and remain committed to a future where every life is precious, and all people live in freedom and safety.”¹

This moment in Gaza is not an isolated incident. The history of Gaza is one of brutal Zionist colonialism. During the 1948 Nakba, Zionist militias conquered the Gaza district and ethnically cleansed the majority of its residents. Many were forcibly relocated to refugee camps, still carrying the keys to their houses. Over the next few years, Gaza became a warehouse for 200,000 Palestinians who were forcibly removed from other parts of Palestine.² This was a Zionist effort to sever Palestinians from their land and to quell resistance. In 1950, Israel began violently depopulating the area around Gaza and creating a border of settlements, enclosing Palestinians from all over historic Palestine into Gaza. As Paulo Freire states, “With the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun. Never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed. How could they be the initiators, if they themselves are the result of violence?”³

This is not an “unprovoked attack.” The two million Palestinians now trapped in the Gaza Strip cannot freely move across its borders. 97% of their water is unfit for drinking. Israel controls their access to electricity. 56% live in poverty. Multiple Israeli bombing campaigns, including in 2008, 2014, 2018, and 2021, have killed hundreds and maimed thousands.⁴ The Fourth 1949 Geneva Convention guarantees the right to armed resistance to occupation. U.N General Assembly Resolution 37/43 reaffirms the legitimacy of struggles for “independence, territorial integrity, national unity, and liberation from colonial and foreign domination by all available means.”⁵ Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization is material, and it is happening right now.

¹ "The Root of Violence Is Oppression." Jewish Voice For Peace. October 7, 2023. <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/2023/10/statement23-10-07/>.

² Cheal, Beryl. “Refugees in the Gaza Strip, December 1948-May 1950.” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 1 (1988): 138–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2537600>.

³ Freire, Paulo. 2017. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Penguin Modern Classics. London, England: Penguin Classics.

⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Data on Casualties" OCHA Opt, <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

⁵ Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons In Time of War. August 12, 1949. https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.33_GC-IV-EN.pdf

The history of Gaza is also one of resilience and unbreakable will. This Uprising is part of a continued decolonial struggle and an affirmation of Palestinians' unwavering fight for liberation. Palestinian resistance is alive, unified, and powerful. This revolutionary political resistance guides us in political struggle everywhere, from Palestine to Turtle Island and beyond. Gaza has always been a cradle of resistance and its lessons emanate outward to struggles against occupation everywhere. We are forever learning from this courageous revolutionary struggle as we maintain our commitment to standing against colonial violence everywhere in all its forms.

Today, Palestinians are rising up to fight against violent colonialism and the illegal Israeli settlements built on top of depopulated Palestinian villages. Ashkelon was the Palestinian village Majdal; Sderot was the Palestinian village Huj. Today, Palestinians break out of the world's largest open air prison. The revolutionary Palestinian struggle begs us to think, rethink, imagine, and reimagine. Palestinians refuse to let the conditions of colonialism and apartheid define a future of global liberation. They teach us that no settler colony can hold out forever. And to this we must respond with deep, unwavering solidarity.

As Palestinians fight for liberation, the United States has pledged to provide the state of Israel with whatever support it needs in addition to the annual \$3.8 billion given to the Israeli Offensive Forces. As students in the settler colony United States, on the unceded and occupied territory of the Tongva people, it is our duty to take a stand against the apartheid, ethnic cleansing, and structural violence that our government funds. We call on students and faculty to condemn settler colonialism in all of its forms, end their complacency in the occupation, and take up [Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions](#) to stand in solidarity with Palestine's struggle for liberation.

From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free. Long live the Intifada.

In all solidarity, struggle, and love,
Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine and Claremont Jewish Voice for Peace

Resources:

- [The Root of Violence Is Oppression - Jewish Voice for Peace](#)
- [BNC Statement- Western Complicity in Apartheid Israel's Brutal Violence Heightens Palestinian Resistance & International Solidarity](#)
- [Amnesty International Statement](#)

Signatures:

1. Claremont Student Workers Alliance
2. Divest Claremont Colleges
3. 5C Prison Abolition Collective
4. Claremont Undercurrents
5. Nobody Fails at Scripps
6. Pitzer Queer Trans Alliance
7. Pacifika Asian Student Union at Pitzer
8. Asian American Sponsor Program at Scripps
9. Racial Justice Coalition
10. Vietnamese Student Association
11. Pomona College Latinx Alliance
12. Claremont Colleges Kasama