

Rashida Tlaib Delivers Powerful Speech About Palestine

[Video](#) of Rashida Tlaib's speech

[Rep Rashida Tlaib censored over](#) her speech to Congress

Directions: *Read the speech.*

1. *Highlight anything that stands out to you. Make a connection. Why is this important? (3 minimum)*
2. *Ask questions in the margin. What do you wonder about? (3 minimum)*
3. *React to the article. What do you agree with? What do you disagree with? Why? (3 minimum)*
4. *Define 3 **unfamiliar** words in the margin.*
5. *What is the main point of this speech? What evidence does the writer include to support their main claims? What examples did you find most convincing?*

The main point of this speech

The evidence the writer includes is

The most convincing example is

1. How many Palestinians have to die for their lives to matter? **I am** the only Palestinian-American member of Congress now and my mere existence has disrupted the status quo. **I am**— So personal for me. **I am** a reminder to colleagues that Palestinians do indeed exist, that **we are** human, that **we are** allowed to dream.

2. **We are** mothers, daughters, and granddaughters. **We are** justice seekers and are unapologetically about our fight against oppressions of all forms. And colleagues, Palestinians aren't going anywhere no matter how much money you send to Israel's apartheid government.

3. If **we are** to make good on our promises to support equal human rights for all, it is our duty to end the apartheid system that for decades has subjected Palestinians to inhumane treatment and racism reducing Palestinians to live in utter

fear and terror of losing a child, being indefinitely detained or killed because of who they are and the unequal rights and protections they have under Israeli law. It must end.

4. One of Israel's most prominent human rights organizations.

B'Tselem has declared Israel an apartheid state. Human rights watch recently recognized it too.

5. This is what Palestinians living under Israel's oppression have been telling us for decades. I have been told by some of my colleagues who dispute the truth about segregation, racism and violence in Israel towards Palestinians that I need to know the history.

6. What they mean unintentionally or not is that Palestinians do not have the right to tell the truth about what happened to them during the founding of Israel. They are in effect, in fact, they erase the truth about ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in Israel, that some refer to as the Nakba, our catastrophe as Palestinians talk about our history, I know that many of my black neighbors, indigenous communities may not know what we mean by Nakba.

7. But they do understand what it means to be killed, expelled from your home land, made homeless and stripped of your human rights. My ancestors and current family in Palestine deserve the world to hear their history without obstruction. They have a right to be able to explain to the world that they are still suffering, still being dispossessed, still being killed, as the world watches and does nothing.

8. As Peter Beinart, an American of Jewish faith writes, "When you tell a people to forget its past, you are not proposing peace, you're proposing extinction." The Palestinian story is that of being made a refugee on the lands you called home. We cannot have an honest conversation about US military support for the Israeli government today without acknowledging that for Palestinians the catastrophe of displacement and dehumanization in their homeland has been ongoing since 1948.

9. To read the statements from President Biden, Secretary Blinken, General Austin and leaders of both parties, you'd hardly know Palestinians existed at all. There has been no recognition of the attack on Palestinian families being ripped from their homes in east Jerusalem right now or home demolitions. No mention of children being detained or murdered. No recognition of a sustained campaign of harassment and terror by Israeli police against worshipers kneeling down and praying and celebrating their holiest days in one of their holiest places. No mention of Al-Aqsa, being surrounded by violence tear gas smoke while people pray.

10. Can my colleagues imagine if it was their place of worship filled with tear gas? Could you pray as stunned grenades or were tossed into your holiest place. Above all there has been absolutely no recognition of Palestinian humanity. If our own state department can't even bring itself to acknowledge the killing of Palestinian

children is wrong, well I will say it for the millions of Americans who stand with me against the killing of innocent children no matter their ethnicity or faith.

11. I weep for all the lives lost under the unbearable status quo, every single one, no matter their faith, their background. We all deserve freedom, liberty, peace and justice and it should never be denied because of our faith or ethnic background.

12. No child, Palestinian or Israeli, whoever they are, should ever have to worry that death will reign from the sky. How many of my colleagues are willing to say the same, to stand for Palestinian human rights as they do for Israelis?

13. Palestinians rights to non-violent resistance have been curtailed and even criminalized. Our party leaders have spoken forcefully against bds calling its proponents anti-semitic despite the same tactics being critically critical to ending the south african apartheid mere decades ago.

14. What we are telling Palestinians fighting apartheid is the same thing being told to my black neighbors and Americans throughout that are fighting against police brutality here. There is no form of acceptable resistance to state violence. As long as the message from Washington is that our military support for Israel is unconditional, Netanyahu's extremist right-wing government will continue to expand, settlements continue to demolish homes and continue to make the prospects for peace impossible.

15. Three hundred and thirty of my own colleagues, democrats and republicans here, 75 percent of the body here, signed a letter pledging that Israel shall never be made to comply with basic human rights laws that other countries that receive our military aid must observe.

16. You know, when I see the images and videos of destruction and death in Philistine, all I hear are the children screaming from pure fear and terror. I want to read something a mother named Imanin Rasa wrote two days ago. She said, "Tonight I put the kids to sleep in our bedroom so that when we die we die together and no one would live to mourn the loss of another one."

17. The statement broke me a little more because of my country's policies and funding will deny this mother's right to see her own children live without fear and to grow old without painful trauma and violence.

18. We must condition aid to Israel on compliance with international human rights and end the apartheid. We must with no hesitation demand that our country recognize the unconditional support of Israel has enabled the erasure of Palestinian life and the denial of the rights of millions of refugees and emboldens the apartheid policies that human rights watch has detailed thoroughly in their recent report.

19. I stand before you not only as a congresswoman for the beautiful 13th district strong but also as a proud daughter of Palestinian immigrants and the granddaughter of a loving Palestinian grandmother living in the occupied Philistine.

20. You take that and you combine it with the fact that i was raised in one of the most beautiful blackest cities in America, a city where movements for civil rights and social justice are birthed, the city of Detroit. So i can't stand here, I can't stand silent when injustice exists where the truth is obscured.

21. If there's one thing detroit instilled in this Palestinian girl from southwest, it's you always **speak truth to power** even if your voice shakes. The freedom of Palestinians is connected to the fight against oppression all over the world.

Lastly to my city and philistine, 'aqif huna bisababik

(speaks Arabic)

I stand here because of you.

Thank you.

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