

JEWS DEMAND ACTION

OPEN LETTER

His Excellency, Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Presidents, Prime Ministers, Heads of State, Permanent Representatives to the United Nations,

It is with great relief that we welcome the ceasefire, the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian captives, and the hope for an end to the daily killing, destruction, displacement, and starvation in Gaza. And yet there should be no doubt that this ceasefire is fragile: Israeli forces remain in Gaza, the agreement makes no reference to the West Bank, the underlying conditions of occupation, apartheid, and the denial of Palestinian rights remain unaddressed.

It was international pressure that helped to secure this ceasefire, and it must be sustained to guarantee that it endures. The ceasefire must be the beginning, not the end. The risk of reverting to a political reality of indifference to occupation and permanent conflict is too great. This same pressure must be continued to deliver a new era of peace and justice for all—Palestinians and Israelis alike.

The need for redress long predates October 7th, 2023. The crimes committed by Hamas and other armed factions on that day horrified us. The Israeli actions that followed were unconscionable. We bow our heads in immeasurable sorrow as the evidence accumulates that Israel's actions will be judged to have met the legal definition of genocide. Attempts are already underway to deny accountability and reassert the same broken playbook of impunity. That cannot pass.

We therefore issue this appeal as Jews from all walks of life and across the world. We affirm our belief in the universality of justice and the fair and equal application of international law. We have not forgotten that so many of the laws, charters, and conventions established to safeguard and protect all human life were created in response to the Holocaust. Those safeguards have been relentlessly violated by Israel. Accountability for the Israeli leadership's grievous violations of international law is necessary. It is time to do everything possible to definitively end the Israeli government's collective punishment of the Palestinians and to pursue peace for the sake of both peoples.

As Jews and as human beings, we declare: Not in our name. Not in the name of our heritage, our faith, or our moral tradition. The monumental scale of the killing and destruction, the forced displacement, the deliberate withholding of life-sustaining necessities, and the ongoing criminal actions in the West Bank must end and never be repeated.

We deplore the fact that Israeli leaders have repeatedly taken to the world stage to declare that these actions are committed in the name of the Jewish people, as a manifestation of Jewish destiny. The Israeli government may claim to speak on behalf of the Jewish collective, but it does not speak for us.

This affront to our collective conscience cannot stand. It must be challenged. These are not Jewish values nor are they guided by the lessons we draw from our peoples' history. Instead we

see in many of those standing up for Palestinian rights a reflection of the people who stood with Jews in our times of need. Our solidarity with Palestinians is not a betrayal of Judaism, then, but a fulfillment of it. When our sages taught that to destroy one life is to destroy an entire world, they did not carve exceptions for Palestinians.

We shall not rest until this ceasefire carries forward into an end of occupation and apartheid. We write in the hope that this initiative further emboldens a moment of renewed Jewish commitment to act with conscience and compassion. We vow to work urgently to achieve equality, justice, and freedom for Palestinians and Israelis.

To that end, we issue this call to businesses, labor unions, civil society, and especially the leadership and member states of the United Nations:

1. To respect and abide by the decisions of the International Court of Justice, noting their application also in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; to apply arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court; and to resist efforts to unduly pressure and influence and prevent the workings of both courts.
2. To refuse any complicity in continued crimes and violations of international law against Palestinians by Israel, including by ending the provision of arms and other relevant goods and services; to use relevant leverage, including targeted sanctions on governmental bodies and individuals responsible for violations of international law, and suspension of relations with commercial entities contributing to these violations.
3. To ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all Palestinians in Gaza at the scale that is commensurate to their vital need, that the blockade is lifted and materials for reconstruction enter, and that there is a full Israeli military withdrawal.
4. To refute false accusations of antisemitism that abusively deploy our collective history to tarnish those with whom we stand together in the pursuit of peace and justice.

With deep respect and in the spirit of our shared Jewish tradition,

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