

## **Educators for Palestine:**

### **TAP Solidarity Statement**

<https://www.thealternativesproject.org/>

The Alternatives Project (TAP) condemns the unfolding genocide and war crimes in Gaza, including the blockade of water, food, fuel, and medicine. Over two million Palestinians have been forced to flee with nowhere to go, while hospitals, schools, universities, bakeries, refugee camps, homes, and entire neighborhoods have been obliterated. Human Rights Watch has accused Israel of using starvation as a weapon of war and presently 100% of the people of Gaza are suffering from extreme hunger. As of the ninth month of the bombardment, nearly 40,000 Palestinians (excluding several thousands buried under the rubble) have been killed, with approximately 90,000 maimed and injured. Seventy-five percent of those killed and injured are women, children, and the elderly. According to UNICEF, more than 14,000 children have been killed, with an additional 4,000 missing, and thousands more injured. 17,000 children are unaccompanied. The average age of Palestinians killed in Gaza is five, and UNICEF estimates that a child is killed every 10 minutes. Craig Mokhiber, the former Director of the New York office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights who resigned in protest called this a “textbook case of genocide”.

We condemn the unprecedented scale of civilian slaughter, as well as the deliberate killing and targeted attacks on protected groups including medics and journalists. Israel has dropped thrice the force of explosives on Gaza (a narrow strip of land half the size of New York City, and one of the most densely populated places in the world), as the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Nearly 150 journalists, 500 medical personnel and 150 UN aid workers have been killed, and 26 hospitals and 56 healthcare centers have been destroyed. No war in modern history has extracted such a high toll on civilians, journalists, medics and UN personnel as Israel’s assault on Gaza that continues into its tenth month. We laud the government of South Africa for taking Israel to the International Court of Justice to halt its genocidal war against Palestinians but clearly this has not deterred Israel from continuing its genocidal assault on Palestinians in Gaza and increasingly the West Bank.

Israel’s genocidal assault extends to Palestinian education institutions, as well. All 11 universities in Gaza have been destroyed and 90% of state-run schools have been either damaged or destroyed. The airstrikes have killed 94 university professors including targeted killings of world-leading scientist Professor Sufyan Tayeh and Refaat Alareer, Professor of English literature, writer and poet. Thousands of students, staff, and educators have also been killed and the vast majority of students have been deprived of their right to education. Crucially, these actions have been supported and facilitated by the US and other leading Western powers. We hold that war is not a solution and strongly condemn the role of the US in providing billions of taxpayers’ dollars in military aid to Israel, thus enabling the genocide.

We hold that anti-Arab bigotry, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia must be equally challenged as should the ideology of white supremacy that underlies all three systems. No matter one’s place in these systems of oppression, these harm us all. We assert that criticism of Israel’s actions is not anti-Semitic. We assert the right to teach against anti-Arab bigotry, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and against the occupation of Palestine as a duty of educators who oppose the heart wrenching history and violence of racism, settler colonialism and racial capitalism. As academics and advocates of education, we must

engage with the 75-year history of injustice and the current humanitarian crisis faced by the Palestinian people, through public statements, organized dialogue and solidarity actions.

We call on educational institutions to protect educators who stand with Palestine, we call for their right to speak out openly. We are deeply concerned that educators, administrators and students, both locally and globally, are facing mounting intimidation, harassment and criminalization for speaking out about the atrocities in Gaza in both their personal and professional capacities. We write to offer our support for, and solidarity with, students and educators who stand in solidarity with Palestine.

Education has increasingly become the site of a political backlash in which a series of conservative projects seeks to sever the relationship between formal education and the historically-informed work of liberation. Neglecting this relationship would be a betrayal of our scholarly and ethical obligations.

We bear witness to the routine and extraordinary denials of Palestinians' right to their homeland and the rejection of their humanity in order to affirm the humanity of others. We challenge the false idea that speaking up for one oppressed group implies the dismissal of others' oppression and refuse the stance of 'progressive except Palestine'. We join with the voices of Palestinians and people around the world that are calling for an end to apartheid, settler-colonial rule, and the dehumanization of Palestinians.

**We urgently call for:**

- Immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire;
- Respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, including protection for civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools;
- Recognition of and adherence to the ICC's and the ICJ's landmark cases concerning alleged violations by Israel of its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the "Genocide Convention") in relation to Israel's assault upon Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank;
- Ending the siege of Gaza; including the immediate restoration of food, fuel, water, electricity, medical supplies and humanitarian aid;
- Releasing hostages and political prisoners;
- Ending the military occupation of all Palestinian lands;
- Dismantling the apartheid system; including cessation of all settlement activity and disarmament of the illegal settlers;
- Defending the Palestinian right to education;
- Addressing the grievous intergenerational trauma caused by the occupation and its relentless violence;
- Implementing the inalienable right of Palestinians to self-determination, including the right of return to the homes and property from which they have been displaced.

The Alternatives Project (TAP) believes all life is sacred, and all human relations, economic activities and ways of life should be based on this essential human value. TAP is committed to the transformation of society away from nihilistic thinking and values toward a world of social solidarity and coexistence, a shared prosperity nurtured by humanistic education that interrupts intergenerational trauma and fosters the core value of the sacredness of all life. We therefore stand with others around the world in recognition and support of the Palestinian struggle for life, equality, dignity and freedom.

Some resources to educate ourselves on the struggle for a Free Palestine:

- [Jewish Voice for Peace](#)
- [Mondoweiss](#)
- <https://scholarsagainstawar.org/about/>
- [UN Office of Coordinated Humanitarian Affairs](#)
- [UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#)
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-un-experts-call-international-community-prevent-genocide-against>
- Francesca Albanese [UN Rapporteur on Occupied Palestine](#) Twitter account
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine>
- [BDSmovement.net](#)
- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/>
- <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>
- <https://www.btselem.org/topic/apartheid>
- <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/18174.html>

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