



We, the National Lawyers Guild at Rutgers Law-Newark, stand in uncompromising solidarity with the Palestinian people in their national liberation struggle as they continue to resist Zionist colonization, illegal military occupation, and Israeli apartheid.

It is impossible to comprehend the current moment outside of Israel's 75 year colonization of Palestinian land. Israel's official policy of maximum land with minimum Palestinians¹ has besieged the Palestinians of Gaza, controlling their food, air, land, sea, and trade.² For the Palestinians in the West Bank, this political project has expanded illegal Israeli settlements, systematically dispossessed Palestinians of their land, segregated them as second-class non-citizens in a racist apartheid system, and terrorized them with settler violence.³

Colonial violence invariably begets resistance,⁴ something Israeli citizens⁵ and lawmakers have long recognized.⁶ Earlier this month, in response to this 75 year crime, Palestinian resistance factions launched an attack.⁷ ***There is no equivalence – moral or otherwise – between Israel's 75 years of colonial violence and the resistance that it has engendered.*** The only just response to loss of life is to confront its root cause.

We unequivocally condemn any statement which equates the response of the oppressed to the violence of the oppressor. When Palestinians demanded their civil rights from the Israeli government, over 65 laws that discriminate against Palestinians were upheld by the Israeli Supreme Court.⁸ When Palestinians took Israel to the International Criminal Court for the crime of apartheid, the US sanctioned the ICC officials who took their case.⁹ When Palestinians in diaspora sought to enact their civic rights to boycott Israel through the BDS movement, they were criminalized and maligned as anti-Jewish.¹⁰ When Palestinians engaged in non-violent civil disobedience during the

¹ [Israeli Constitutional Committee Faces Double Bind](#), *Middle East Report*, 2004. See also [Maximum Land with Minimum Palestinian](#), *Badil Resource Center*, 2019.

² [Gaza Blockade Fact Sheet](#), *UNICEF*, 2022; [Israel's control of the airspace and the territorial waters of the Gaza Strip](#), *B'tselem*, Jan. 1, 2011.

³ [A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#), *Human Rights Watch*, April 27, 2021; [Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians" Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity](#), *Amnesty International*, 2022; [A regime of Jewish Supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is Apartheid](#), *B'tselem*, Jan. 12, 2021; [Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism](#), *Al-Haq*, Nov. 29, 2022.

⁴ [Netanyahu Bears Responsibility for this Israel-Gaza War](#), Board Editorial, *Haaretz*. Oct. 8, 2023; See also Paulo Freire, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," p.55 ("Never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed. How could they be the initiators, if they themselves are the result of violence? How could they be the sponsors of something whose objective inauguration called forth their existence as oppressed?")

⁵ [Israelis blame gov't for Hamas massacre. say Netanyahu must resign - poll](#), *Jerusalem Post*, Oct. 12, 2023.

⁶ [Israeli lawmaker blames pogroms against Palestinians for 'terrible' attacks](#), *Al Jazeera*, Oct. 8, 2023.

⁷ [Yes, this is Israel's 9/11](#), *The Intercept*, Oct. 9, 2023.

⁸ [The Discriminatory Laws Database](#), *Adalah*, Sept. 25, 2017.

⁹ [Fact Sheet: U.S. Sanctions on the International Criminal Court](#), *Center for Constitutional Rights*, Apr. 2, 2021.

¹⁰ [Legislation targeting advocacy for Palestinian rights](#), *Palestine Legal*; [Wielding Antidiscrimination Law to Suppress the Movement for Palestinian Rights](#), *Harvard Law Review*, Feb. 2020.

2018 Great March of Return in Gaza, they were shot and killed en masse.¹¹ And finally, when Palestinians took up arms in resistance against one of the greatest military powers in the world,¹² they became terrorists.

The Palestinian people have exercised every strategy in their pursuit of liberation and have had every strategy condemned. It is as though no form of resistance is acceptable for Palestinians, and what is requested of them is that they die silently, allowing themselves to be erased. Palestinians, as a dispossessed and colonized people, have every right¹³ to stand up against a nuclear power¹⁴ which has erased them from their land and subjugated them under Zionist colonization. **The right to resist is a moral and legal right of all oppressed people.**

We condemn the one-sided and racist emails from administrators and classmates alike which reinvigorate the War on Terror narrative, inflaming anti-Muslim racism, further exposing our Arab and Muslim neighbors to harm, and dehumanizing Palestinians to normalize their genocide.¹⁵ Depictions of Palestinians as savage, barbaric, “human animals,”¹⁶ or sickening comparisons to Nazis work to remove Palestinians from their humanity. **If Palestinians are no longer human, are they still civilians?**

In recent days, Israel has disproportionately targeted¹⁷ civilian infrastructure¹⁸ - homes,¹⁹ colleges,²⁰ mosques, evacuation caravans, and hospitals, in clear contravention of international law.²¹ Dehumanizing, racist, anti-Muslim rhetoric and inflammatory, unsubstantiated stories have

¹¹ [Israel/OPT: Israeli forces must end the use of excessive force in response to the “Great March of Return” Protests](#), *Amnesty International*, Apr. 13, 2018.

¹² Israel ranks 18/145 amongst the world’s military forces. See [Where does the IDF rank amongst the world’s strongest militaries?](#), *Jerusalem Post*, Jan. 8, 2023.

¹³ [UN General Assembly Resolution 3236](#) (reaffirming the inalienable rights of Palestinians to self-determination, independence, sovereignty, and the right of return to their homes and land); [UN General Assembly Resolution 45/130](#) (Reaffirms the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle [and] reaffirms the inalienable right of [] the Palestinian people and all peoples under foreign occupation and colonial domination to self-determination, national independence, territorial integrity, national unity and sovereignty without foreign interference.)

¹⁴ Although Israel has possessed nuclear weapons since the 1960’s, it maintains a policy of nuclear opacity, never officially confirming the existence of its nuclear program. See [Israel, Nuclear Threat Initiative](#). There have been calls by Israeli lawmakers to use these weapons against Palestinians. See [An Israeli lawmaker is urging her government to use ‘everything in its arsenal.’ including ‘doomsday’ weapons, against Hamas](#), *Business Insider*, Oct. 11, 2023.

¹⁵ [Article 2 of the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) (the crime of genocide is the “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”).

¹⁶ [Israeli Defense Minister Announces Siege On Gaza To Fight ‘Human Animals,’](#) *Huffington Post*, Oct. 9, 2023.

¹⁷ [Targeting civilian infrastructure as unacceptable in Gaza as in Ukraine, says Varadkar](#), *Irish Times*, Oct. 11, 2023.

¹⁸ [Israel/ OPT: Pattern of Israeli attacks on residential homes in Gaza must be investigated as war crimes](#), *Amnesty International*, May 17, 2021.

¹⁹ [Israeli Forces Pummel Neighborhood After Neighborhood in Sealed-Off Gaza](#), *Time*, Oct. 11, 2023.

²⁰ [Watch: Israel Strikes the Islamic University of Gaza](#), *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 11, 2023.

²¹ [The Siege of Gaza and the Starvation War Crime](#), *Just Security*, Oct. 11, 2023.

prepared the world audience to not only stay silent in the face of a calculated, precise mass atrocity, but to applaud and support it.²²

As Americans whose government supports the genocide in military funding, diplomatic support, and arms, it is our responsibility to speak out.²³ We call on all law students of conscience²⁴ to echo the calls of Palestinian civil society for an [urgent cease fire](#) and to call on Israel to end its occupation and colonization of all lands, recognize the fundamental rights of the Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality, and uphold the Palestinian right of return²⁵ to their homes.

If this is a new perspective to you and you'd like to learn more: join us for a Teach in on Gaza tomorrow, October 18 at 12:15-2:00pm at Rutgers Law School Newark, Room 070. [Register here](#).

Solidarity, always,
National Lawyers Guild - Rutgers Law-Newark

TAKE ACTION

1. **[CALL Your Representatives to Demand a Ceasefire NOW!](#)**
 - a. [Tell Congress: Stop fueling the Gaza genocide](#)
 - b. [Tell Congress: Open humanitarian access to Gaza now!](#)
2. [Sign the Rutgers Petition for Accountability and Solidarity with Gaza](#)
3. [Join a Protest](#)
4. Learn more:
 - a. Primer: [Merip](#)
 - b. Short Documentary: [Gaza in Context](#)
 - c. Podcast: [RU Prof. & HR Lawyer Noura Erakat: Intl Law in Israel/Palestine](#)
 - d. Podcast: [Throughline: Palestine](#)
 - e. Website: [Decolonize Palestine](#)
5. Join NLG. Email nlg.rutgers.newark@gmail.com to get involved

²² [Biden and Congress Craft \\$2 Billion Aid Package as Israel Vows to 'Crush' Hamas](#), *Times*, Oct. 11, 2023; "Thus, the Middle East's only 'democracy' has been unhindered as it violates human rights, steals land and water, oppresses people and yet remains the object of unwavering American support." Khalid Al Maeena, "The Likelihood of New Bloodshed in the Occupied Lands," *Arab News*, 17 December 1996, 4.

²³ [U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel: History & Overview](#), *Jewish Virtual Library*. ("Israel has received more direct aid from the United States since World War II than any other country...Since 1973, Israel has received more than \$120 billion in assistance, including three special aid packages.") For further reading, see, [Angela Davis Sep. 17, 2017 interview with LitHub](#). ("In my own political history, Palestine has always occupied a pivotal place, precisely because of the similarities between Israel and the United States—their foundational settler colonialism and their ethnic cleansing processes with respect to indigenous people, their systems of segregation, their use of legal systems to enact systematic repression, and so forth. I often point out that my consciousness of the predicament of Palestine dates back to my undergraduate years at Brandeis University, which was founded in the same year as the State of Israel. Moreover, during my own incarceration, I received support from Palestinian political prisoners as well as from Israeli attorneys defending Palestinians.")

²⁴ Legal scholars across the country have already been organizing together to call for a ceasefire: ["Legal Scholars Demand to Withdraw US Support for Attacks on Gaza"](#)

²⁵ [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (Article 13, "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country"); [UN General Assembly Resolution 3236](#) ("Reaffirms the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted"); [UN Security Council Resolution 242](#) ("Affirms further the necessity for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem", 2-b); [The Right to Return of Palestinians in International Law](#), *International Journal of Refugee Law*.