

# Crisis in Israel and Palestine

## **Partners for Progressive Israel on the Current Crisis in Israel and Palestine**

**Partners for Progressive Israel supports all efforts to end the current violence**, whether by Hamas rockets, by mobs within Israel, within the Haram al-Sharif compound, or in the West Bank. We call on President Biden to immediately elevate the US response to this crisis and appoint a high-level envoy to meet with the Israeli leadership and employ undoubted American influence to end the Israeli attacks on Gaza, while coordinating with Egypt to immediately end all Hamas rocket attacks on Israel.

However, as essential as an immediate cease-fire is, that does not even begin to address the problems that gave rise to this crisis and will continue to create more crises in the future. Given that it now appears that Prime Minister Netanyahu is likely remain in office, joined by Naphtali Bennett's Yamina (Rightwards) party, the US must prepare to exert pressure on Israel not only to halt the immediate violence, but to start to deal with some of the underlying issues.

- US policy and statements must recognize the reality that Hamas's rockets were a response to the violence within the Haram and to Palestinian consternation regarding the seeming imminent mass evictions in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem. **This by no means justifies Hamas's attacks but it recognizes reality.**
- The unnecessary harassment of Muslims at the Damascus Gate during Ramadan and the entrance of Israeli troops into the Haram on the holiest night of the Muslim calendar constituted provocations. They are not simply matters of domestic policing but, rather, have immediate and dangerous regional consequences. The US must work with Israel to create a mechanism that takes Muslim sensibilities into account.
- The US must also work with Israel to create a Committee of Inquiry to deal with the large-scale evictions of Palestinians from their homes by settler organizations intent on "Judaizing" Palestinian neighborhoods, and the longterm Israeli refusal to grant building permits to Palestinians as a general practice. This is not a simple "real estate dispute," as Israel has claimed but, rather, has the potential to destabilize the country, if not the region, with echoes of the Nakba of 1948
- The civil violence must be ended as quickly, even-handedly, and humanely as possible. We recommend a similar Commission of Inquiry, composed of Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, to examine how the imbalance of Jewish and Arab rights within the country can be dealt with within Israel's self-definition as a "Jewish and democratic" state.
- The US must also quickly rebuild its relationship with the Palestinian

Authority and the PLO and employ its good offices to urge President Abbas to reschedule the cancelled Palestinian elections as soon as feasible. The US must work with Israel as well to devise a method by which Arab inhabitants of East Jerusalem can cast ballots in these elections.

Even if all these measures were implemented in real time, they would not "solve" the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nor serve as a guarantee against another spasm of violence. However, only a multilateral and multi-faceted approach that includes the various stakeholders in this multiplicity of conflicts can give hope to the Arab populations under Israeli sovereignty, including Arab citizens of Israel, that their conditions of life can and will be remedied.



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