**Jamaal Bowman & Bernie Sanders have demanded action for Palestinian rights.**

*4 april 2023*

An exciting update from our sister organization JVP Action: Last week, Congressman Jamaal Bowman and Senator Bernie Sanders released a letter speaking out against Israel’s decades-long oppression of Palestinians and calling on the Biden administration to ensure U.S. funds don’t support it.

This unprecedented, bicameral (from members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate) letter asks the administration to "undertake a shift in U.S. policy in recognition of the worsening violence, further annexation of land, and denial of Palestinian rights [by the Israeli government]" and "to ensure that all future foreign assistance to Israel, including weapons and equipment, is not used in support of gross violations of human rights."

Most importantly, the letter calls on the administration to finally enforce existing U.S. law and ensure that the U.S. stop funding Israel’s human rights violations against Palestinians.

“The letter is the most forceful response yet by Democratic members of Congress aimed at Israel’s new far-right government.”
— Jewish Currents

The public release of the letter indicates that Congressman Bowman and Senator Sanders are willing to face blowback from powerful Israel lobby groups.

It also means that the Biden administration is very publicly on the spot: Will they defend the illegal use of U.S. weapons and continue to express only vague platitudes of “concern,” or will they finally take action to hold apartheid Israel accountable?

Most members of Congress are completely disconnected from the brutal reality that Palestinians face daily. They are playing political games on an issue that directly impacts Palestinians’ lives.

But the truth is, we have the numbers. We have the power. So we need to show them that the only way forward is to speak out. Write to your members of Congress urging them to support the Bowman-Sanders letter now.

Take action

Palestinians will pay the price for Israeli "democracy."

"Benjamin Netanyahu temporarily halted reforms he sought to make to Israel's judicial system," reports Mondoweiss, "but critics say Palestinians will pay the ultimate price as the far-right continues to consolidate power."

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**What I Saw at Al-Aqsa Mosque This Week**

*6 april 2023*

It takes all my strength to keep my heart from breaking.

The images broadcast from Al-Aqsa Mosque in the last 48 hours are almost too much to bear:

Israeli police brutally beat Palestinian worshippers, during the sacred month of Ramadan, in the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, one of the holiest sites in our faith.

For U.S. Muslims, and all people of conscience in the United States, the immense pain of these images comes with a question: Why does our government fund this kind of violence against Palestinians?

Senator Bernie Sanders and Congressman Jamaal Bowman are taking unprecedented steps to investigate — and possibly legally force an end to — U.S. funds supporting the kind of atrocities we saw in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Tell your Senators and U.S. House Representative(s): Sign on to the letter calling on President Biden and Sec. of State Anthony Blinken to investigate U.S. funding of Israeli violence against Palestinians. We know that what we saw Tuesday night — Palestinian Muslims beaten while in prayer — was immensely evil.

We know that the atrocities visited upon Palestinians living in occupation and apartheid violate international law.

We also know it’s not new: Israeli forces committing violence against Palestinians in the Al-Aqsa Mosque has somehow become a regular, repeat occurrence every Ramadan.¹

But here is something very few people know:

There is good reason to believe what we have witnessed this week in the Al-Aqsa Mosque violates U.S. laws — in a way that could threaten U.S. funding of Israeli violence moving forward.  Linda and the MPower Action team

**What is Zionism?**

*12 april 2023*

JVP is a proudly anti-Zionist organization. But many misconceptions exist about Zionism. Here’s why we’re opposed to it:

Zionism as a movement emerged as a 19th century colonial political ideology that claimed Jewish safety required a Jewish-only nation-state — and that that state should be built in historic Palestine, on land Palestinians had lived on for thousands of years.

The Zionist movement advanced their ideology as a response to centuries of antisemitic persecution against Jews across Europe. Yet the persecution of Palestinians was baked in to Zionism from its very beginnings. Using the strategy of “maximum land, minimum Palestinians,” the Zionist movement embraced settler-colonialism as a key tactic to force Palestinians off their land.

In 1948 Zionist militias (in what later became the Israeli military) expelled over 780,000 Palestinians from their land and villages to create the modern nation-state of Israel, in what Palestinians call the Nakba, or catastrophe. Beginning with the Absentee Property Law of 1950, the Israeli government has used legislation to formalize and infinitely extend Palestinians’ refugee status, confiscating property and offering little hope of return.

Zionism is predicated on the idea that Jews should have more rights than others in a Jewish ethno-state. Contemporary legislation like 2018’s Jewish Nation-State Basic Law, which constitutionally enshrines Jewish supremacy, is simply putting the official stamp of approval on Zionism’s implicit founding principles.

When we take the principled position as anti-Zionists, we are acting in solidarity with other anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements. We are acknowledging the Jewish people’s long history of oppression, and rejecting Zionism as the answer. We are insisting that our safety is — and always has been — in solidarity and a shared future.

*14 april 2023*

Beste lezer,

Donderdag 6 april debatteerde de Tweede Kamer over goedkeuring van een verdrag tussen Israël en Nederland dat de juridische ‘status van hun strijdkrachten’ op elkaars grondgebied regelt. Volgens het kabinet is dat een noodzakelijke stap voor nauwere samenwerking met het Israëlische defensie-apparaat.

Treurig was dat vrijwel geen Kamerleden bij het debat aanwezig waren. Alleen DENK, de initiator van het debat, de SP en PVV waren vertegenwoordigd. Regerings­partijen VVD en D66 hadden zich weliswaar aangemeld, maar trokken zich om onduidelijke redenen terug.

**Vaagheid alom**
Kenmerkend voor het debat was dat de antwoorden van de verantwoordelijke minister van Defensie Kajsa Ollongren (D66) uitblonken in vaagheid. Dat gold met name voor de reactie van Ollongren op vragen van SP-Kamerlid Frank Futselaar over de aanleiding voor het verdrag. De samenwerking zou volgens het kabinet bijdragen aan de versterking en innovatie van de Nederlandse krijgsmacht; Israël beschikt over waardevolle kennis en technologie, aldus Ollongren.

Volgens Futselaar is dat niet het punt; hij vroeg zich terecht af waarom je een militair verdrag zou sluiten met een land dat zich aanhoudend schuldig maakt aan schendingen van het internationaal recht. Het antwoord daarop werd begraven in vaagheden.

**Israëlische bezetting**
Ollongren benadrukte dat het verdrag op geen enkele manier kan worden gezien als goedkeuring van de Israëlische bezetting en dat alleen zal worden samengewerkt binnen Israëls internationaal erkende grenzen van voor 1967. Ook onderstreepte zij dat de samenwerking met Israël de bezetting van de Palestijnse gebieden niet mag faciliteren of versterken.

Hoe Ollongren die afspraak gaat waarborgen bleef volstrekt onduidelijk. Het Israëlische leger vormt immers de spil van de bezetting en is verantwoordelijk voor het geweld, de onderdrukking en de apartheid waarmee de Palestijnse bevolking al decennia dag in, dag uit wordt geconfronteerd. Daar kun je als Nederland niet omheen werken.

**Verdrag aangenomen**
Ondanks het onbevredigende debat werd het verdrag op dinsdag 11 april met een ruime meerderheid [**aangenomen**](https://rightsforum.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=259401a17cfcc2916fe8034ed&id=b81b608d5c&e=37d294b014). Alleen DENK, BIJ1, SP, PvdD en FvD stemden tegen. Opvallend is dat ook GroenLinks, de PvdA en D66 voor het verdrag stemden.

**Defensieverdrag moet wapendeal mogelijk maken**
In het [**Kamerdebat**](https://rightsforum.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=259401a17cfcc2916fe8034ed&id=21ee7df92c&e=37d294b014) herhaalde minister Ollongren het keer op keer: het verdrag regelt ‘slechts’ de juridische grondslag voor aanwezigheid van troepen op elkaars grondgebied, maar van concrete activiteiten is voorlopig geen sprake.

Maar, slechts vier dagen voor het debat [**informeerde**](https://rightsforum.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=259401a17cfcc2916fe8034ed&id=f667544890&e=37d294b014) Ollongrens staatssecretaris Christophe van der Maat (VVD) de Tweede Kamer over het voornemen van het kabinet om voor 515 miljoen euro een Israëlisch raketsysteem aan te schaffen. Daar wordt haast mee gemaakt. Het debat over toestemming van de Tweede Kamer vindt al op 19 april plaats.

Die haast is nodig omdat Nederland het systeem snel operationeel wil hebben. Dat houdt in dat Israëlische militairen en ander personeel langdurig op Nederlands grondgebied zullen verblijven voor installatie en instructie. Daarvoor ontbrak tot dusver echter de juridische grondslag. Voor Van der Maat komt Ollongrens verdrag dan ook precies op tijd.

Sterker, uit Van der Maats bovengenoemde Kamerbrief blijkt dat door het kabinet al in december of januari tot aanschaf van het Israëlische raketsysteem is besloten. Vanuit dat perspectief lijkt het verdrag primair bedoeld om de wapendeal te faciliteren.

**Militaire samenwerking met Israël moet direct stoppen**

Kun je als Nederland samenwerken met een leger dat zich schuldig maakt aan bezetting, oorlogsmisdaden en mensenrechtenschendingen? Natuurlijk niet. Toch wil het kabinet de militaire banden met Israël aanhalen. The Rights Forum is daartegen een petitie gestart.

De petitie is keihard nodig omdat de Haagse politiek op het punt staat een besluit te nemen over de samenwerking met het Israëlische defensie-apparaat. Hier­onder lichten we dat kort toe. Ons standpunt is dat *elke vorm van samen­werking*met het Israëlische defensie-apparaat onacceptabel is.

Waarom? Het Israëlische ministerie van Defensie, met het leger als uitvoerende tak, vormt de spil van de illegale bezetting en kolonisering van Palestijns gebied, en is verantwoordelijk voor het geweld, de onderdrukking en de apartheid waarmee de Palestijnse bevolking al decennia dag in, dag uit wordt geconfronteerd. Het leger faciliteert de bezetting en beschermt de kolonisten die pogroms aanrichten in bezet gebied. Datzelfde leger was verantwoordelijk voor de – onbestraft gebleven – moord op de Palestijns-Amerikaanse journaliste Shireen Abu Akleh en op talloze andere Palestijnen. Onze website documenteert talloze voorbeelden van die praktijk.

Nederland is gebonden aan internationale verdragen als de Conventies van Genève en het eigen mensenrechtenbeleid. Op grond daarvan is militaire samenwerking met Israël volstrekt uitgesloten. Het pijnlijke is dat alle Kamerleden dat weten, maar zij ten aanzien van Israël de mensenrechten onder­geschikt maken aan andere belangen of ideologie. Onze petitie is bedoeld om dat fenomeen aan de kaak te stellen. Palestijnse mensenrechten wegen even zwaar als die van Oekraïners, Israëli’s en Nederlanders.

We zijn er zeker van dat dit standpunt in de samenleving breed wordt gedeeld en creëren met onze petitie een platform om dat gewicht te geven. De petitie wordt door steeds meer maatschappelijke organisaties gesteund. Dat volume is nodig om af te rekenen met de hypocriete Haagse politiek om Israël uit te zonderen van sancties en daarmee de Palestijnen uit te zonderen van rechten.

**Haagse politiek**

Deze donderdag debatteert de Tweede Kamer met het kabinet over verdieping van de militaire samenwerking met Israël. Aan de orde is goedkeuring van het verdrag tussen beide landen dat de juridische ‘status van hun strijdkrachten’ op elkaars grondgebied regelt. Dat is een noodzakelijke stap voor de nauwere samenwerking met het Israëlische defensie-apparaat die het kabinet nastreeft.

Die nauwere samenwerking zal inhoudelijk op ambtelijk niveau worden uitgewerkt nadat de Tweede Kamer het juridische kader heeft goedgekeurd – de Kamer zelf komt daar niet meer aan te pas. Terecht zijn hierover door de SP, BIJ1, CDA en met name DENK eerder scherpe Kamervragen gesteld, waarvan de beantwoording door het kabinet serieuze vervolg­vragen oproept. Zo kan het kabinet niet garanderen dat de Israëlische *counter­parts* schoon zijn van deelname aan (oorlogs)misdaden.

En zo liggen er nog tal van vragen, zoals over de ‘uitwisseling van informatie’ die volgens het kabinet de voornaamste pijler onder de defensiesamenwerking wordt. Het Israëlische ministerie van Defensie is de vergunningverlener voor de export van onder meer de spyware Pegasus. Met deze spionagesoftware wordt door allerlei partijen informatie gestolen, ook in Nederland, en het lijkt voor de hand te liggen daar eerst paal en perk aan te stellen alvorens met het Israëlische ministerie tot uitwisseling van informatie over te gaan.

Verder is het niet meer dan redelijk om eerst de schade te vereffenen die het Israëlische leger in de loop der jaren heeft aangericht aan Nederlandse en Europese hulpprojecten. Gemeten vanaf 2016 bedraagt die 2,5 miljoen euro. En kunnen we voorafgaand aan het tekenen van verdragen de garantie krijgen dat Nederlandse hulp aan de Palestijnen niet langer door Israëlische militairen wordt verwoest?

De voorbeelden tonen afdoende aan dat de voorgenomen militaire samenwerking op geen enkele manier door het kabinet valt te verantwoorden en door de Tweede Kamer radicaal dient te worden afgewezen. De ogen zijn daarbij vooral gericht op partijen als CDA, VVD en in het bijzonder D66. Het is D66-minister van Defensie Kajsa Ollongren die het verdrag namens het kabinet door de Kamer moet loodsen. Van haar fractie wordt verwacht daar tegenin te gaan, maar zoals hierboven al geconstateerd is hypocrisie de politiek eigen als het om Palestijnse rechten gaat.

**Jewish Currents**

*18 april 2023*

Newsletter

**Amira Hass Is Still Angry**

As Israel’s new government emboldens its settler right, Haaretz's longtime occupied territories correspondent discusses the state's old and new forms of domination over Palestinians.

Alex Kane

April 18, 2023

*Israeli journalist Amira Hass.*

*(This article previously appeared in the Jewish Currents email newsletter;*

*When I want to understand the bureaucracy of Israeli occupation, or learn how an Israeli raid in the West Bank impacted Palestinians, I turn to the latest from Amira Hass, Haaretz's correspondent for the occupied Palestinian territories. An Israeli Jew who resided in Gaza from 1993 to 1997 and has lived in the West Bank city of Ramallah ever since, Hass is the author of the book Drinking the Sea at Gaza: Days and Nights in a Land Under Siege and has written countless exposes on Israel's military rule and its settlement project. In recent months, Hass has unpacked why Al-Aqsa Mosque is so important to Palestinians, reported on the Israeli army's killing of a 61-year-old Palestinian woman in Jenin, and examined the Palestinian Authority's unwillingness to protect Palestinians from settler attacks.*

*As the far-right Israeli government expands settlements, escalates military violence against Palestinians, and attempts to curb the power of the judicial system, I wanted to hear from Hass about how she views these developments in Israeli and Palestinian politics. On Friday, we discussed the potential of the Israeli protest movement, Palestinian armed resistance, and how she manages to maintain her sense of outrage. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.*

**ALEX KANE:** What do you make of the Israeli protests against the judicial overhaul? Do you think there's a possibility that these protests could impact public consciousness about Israel's military occupation?

**AMIRA HASS:** The overhaul is indeed alarming and frightening. It is going to negatively affect many segments of Israeli society: workers, women, the LGBTQ community, old people. And it will curtail liberties such as freedom of speech and freedom of organization. The tens of thousands of Israeli Jews who protest have all the reasons to stand up against it, as they know for certain that their comfortable life in an economically thriving liberal democracy for Jews is in danger.

I emphasize the phrase "democracy for Jews": It is stupefying to see how the great majority of the protesters do not see the obvious linkage and continuity between Israel’s military dictatorship over the Palestinians in the occupied territories that has

existed for almost six decades and the basic components of the judicial overhaul. For half the population living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—the Palestinians—the state has never been democratic. Moreover, prominent protesters have been molding and maintaining this military dictatorship, and now fear that the weakening of the present judicial system will expose them to lawsuits abroad [that they have previously avoided] because the world thought that everything was being supervised and monitored by independent Israeli courts. So I perfectly understand those who refrain from participating, especially Palestinians.

But as a leftist I believe in the educating and radicalizing potential of civil protests and I believe our social and political role as leftists is to contribute to this process with our critical and distinct participation. Radicalization can happen both in discourse and

activism. For example, during the Balfour demonstrations against Netanyahu in 2020 and 2021, some leftist activists succeeded in drawing some of the mainstream demonstrators into anti-occupation activism, for example regular accompaniment of

Palestinian farmers who are exposed to settler violence. In the current protests, leftist Mizrahi activists calling themselves the Mizrahi Civic Collective have published a platform which decries the proposed neoliberal, authoritarian [judicial] overhaul and

at the same time exposes the inherent flaws of the "old regime.” In all cities, the left forms a bloc of its own, carrying the Palestinian flag and chanting slogans like "there is no democracy with occupation.” They have a chance to be heard by others, to be taken into account by emerging leaders. In addition, the nature of the right-wing think tank Kohelet Policy Forum, financed by Jewish American billionaires and heavily-supported by the settler lobby, has been exposed, damned, and ridiculed during the

protests, which have accentuated and revived old basic concepts of Israel as a welfare society.

Even if the majority of protesters do not see the contradiction between a Jewish state and democracy, and probably won't see it for many years, their determination to stop the new legislation indirectly serves a larger cause than the preservation of their

comfortable life. Palestinians on either side of the Green Line will not be spared by the judicial overhaul. On the contrary, they are the first and immediate targets of this proposed legislation. It is a bold attempt to guarantee the rule of the extreme right

wing for many years, a right wing that has been openly advocating for a repetition of 1948 and the mass expulsion of Palestinians as a "solution." Their success in passing this legislation will embolden them in carrying out their anti-Palestinian schemes.

**AK:** Is this new Israeli government a radical break from past governments?

**AH:** The answer is yes and no at the same time. Obviously, for the reasons I mentioned, the majority of protesters see it as a radical break, while we on the left, and certainly the Palestinians, see how the logic of Jewish nationalism, superiority, and militarism is being stretched even further along pre-existing lines. But we can say this about so many regimes: Didn't fascism embrace to the extreme some basic components of capitalism? Didn't Soviet Russia continue some traits of Tsarist Russia?

There is a difference between a flawed system—even a very, very flawed system—that still has mechanisms to protect people who are "others” (I refrain from using the term “minority,” especially when it comes to Palestinians) and a system that doesn't even recognize that they have any rights.

**AK:** In the West Bank, there's been an increase in violent attacks against Israelis compared to previous years. What explains this?

**AH:** I have a reservation about this question. When our starting point is talking about Palestinian violence, it's as though we accept that the norm is occupation, and the annoying Palestinians have come and interfered with it. The responsibility for

violence is thus put on the Palestinians. But on a permanent basis, Israel continues to confiscate land, to demolish Palestinian houses, break into homes, meddle with economic activity, prohibit construction and development, isolate Gaza and disconnect it from the rest of the world, and prevent Palestinian freedom of movement —all of which are very violent, systemic actions of the state. You didn't start by asking me if there is a spike in Israeli bureaucratic violence against the Palestinians. So let's say firstly that Israel continues with this abnormal situation of dominating every aspect of Palestinian life. Some Palestinians then express their despair by taking up arms in different forms. Some take up arms only within their cities when the Israeli army invades. Some carry out lone wolf attacks against Israelis. Yes, there is an increase, but it reflects an increase in the despair of the people.

At the same time, it's important to note that in comparison to the scope of Israeli violence against Palestinians, very few Palestinians resort to the use of arms and to the killing of Israeli civilians. However, there is great support for the armed groups

because people feel that they reflect their sentiments of anger and the desire to take revenge. Those who claim that this will liberate Palestine are deceiving themselves and others, but all other ways of struggle have totally failed: popular unarmed

struggle, diplomacy, and lawsuits.

**AK:** Last month, the Knesset passed a law repealing parts of the 2005 law that barred Israelis from living in four northern West Bank settlements. This caused a diplomatic dispute with the United States, because former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

promised the Bush administration that Israel would abandon these settlements, and now the government is going back on that commitment. What's the significance of this development?

**AH:** The change may indeed reflect disrespect of an understanding with the US, but it does not reflect a dramatic change on the ground. Since 2005, the land that was evacuated has not been returned to the Palestinians. And throughout, there have been

delegations of settlers carrying out provocations in these areas, which forces the army to guard them and causes harm to the Palestinians there. The ex-settlement of Homesh sits on private agricultural land of Palestinians from the nearby two villages.

They were not allowed to return to work their lands, in spite of a High Court ruling that they should be allowed to. Palestinians were also not allowed to use the land in the other three evacuated settlements. They were categorized as “Area C," which is

under full Israeli administrative control, and does not allow Palestinians to develop the land. That was a signal that the evacuation of the four settlements was only temporary, that it was reversible. If Israel really intended to finalize the evacuation of the settlements, they would not have prevented Palestinian villagers and the Palestinian Authority from developing the areas. That's why I was not very surprised.

The revocation says that international agreements are not sacred for the Israelis. Again, this is not new; Israel cherry picks whatever suits it from the Oslo Accords, and throws everything else away. The danger is it gives more power to the settlers, and to people like [far-right ministers] Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir.

**AK:** Since you live in Ramallah, you have a really close view of what's going on in the West Bank. What is the state of the Palestinian Authority right now?

**AH:** It's pathetic and tragic. It's important to say that even the cleanest, most creative and democratic leadership wouldn't have been able to stand up to Israel's very sophisticated war of attrition against the Palestinians. It’s not because of the nature of

the PA that Israel succeeds in doing what it does. But a struggle needs the people's trust in the leadership and its intentions, which does not exist. The Palestinian political body is dismembered. The PA doesn't allow the development of any new

thinking or new strategies to confront Israel. Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the PA, has managed to create a very authoritarian regime in which he and a group around him decide everything. There is no parliament. People are more and more afraid to speak out. The judiciary is under the control of Fatah and Abbas's men. The PA continues security coordination with Israel and arrests political opponents, but does not try to protect its own people from settler violence and does not respect agreements

with one of the most important sectors in Palestinian society—the teachers who have been on strike for almost two and a half months. Polls show that the PA is not respected—and is, rather, hated—by the people. And then Israel keeps stealing money

from the PA’s revenues, so the PA can't even materialize some of their plans and pay salaries, which is the minimum that people expect them to do. It's a very desperate situation.

**AK:** You spend what seems like all of your time writing about the occupation. How do you sustain your outrage against the routine violence of the occupation? Does your anger ever dull?

**AH:** On the contrary, I'm always angrier. It continues to blow my mind. I just wrote about a Palestinian family in East Jerusalem that will be evicted because of one of the racist laws that makes it obligatory for the Israeli government to take over buildings

that were owned by Jews before 1948 and pass it on to Jewish hands now. At the same time, it does not allow Palestinians who are Jerusalemites to get back their pre-1948 property in West Jerusalem. With every sentence that I wrote, I felt my rage

growing. I live among the people who are the daily targets of Israeli violence, so how could my anger get dull? I see how my life is comfortable and safe in comparison to every Palestinian's. Every friend of mine is a target of bureaucratic and military

violence. I have freedom of movement, and I can go to Jerusalem whenever I want, but most of my friends here in the West Bank cannot go to Jerusalem. It's about 15 kilometers away. Not to mention my friends who are jailed in Gaza, among the two

million Gazans there. It makes me angry to just talk about it.

Alex Kane is a senior reporter for Jewish Currents.

*24 april 2023.*

To all AXA´s responsible people in charge,

AXA´s website reads under Ukraine-update-on-actions: “AXA has condemned the invasion of Ukraine. Since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, AXA has fully enforced all international sanctions. AXA has also stopped underwriting new insurance business (and stopped renewals) with respect tot Russian owned assets located in Russia. AXA has stopped underwriting new reinsurance (and stopped all reinsurance renewals) of Russian insurers. AXA has stopped all new investments in Russian assets.”

Yet, where is AXA´s responsibility towards Palestinians living under Israëli apartheid and occupation, for 74 years? AXA continues to invest in Israëli banks that are on the UN list of corporations involved in Israel’s illegal settlement enterprise in occupied Palestinian territory. Israeli apartheid forces have murdered over 90 Palestinians so far this year. And we are only in April. Land theft, annexation, ethnic cleansing, home demolitions and settlement expansion are increasing at an alarming rate. Israel is only able to maintain its oppressive regime over the Indigenous Palestinian people because of **international complicity of states, corporations and institutions**. AXA is one of these complicit international companies. On its website, AXA claims to respect human rights but continues to finance Israeli banks that make AXA responsible – and possibly legally liable – for aiding/abetting or profiting from war crimes and the crime against humanity of apartheid.

I am contacting you because those AXA groups investments are not respecting the spirit of AXA´s compliance and ethic code. The fact that AXA continues to finance and profit from Israel’s colonial settlements and apartheid by investing in Israeli banks that are the backbone of Israel´s illegal settlement enterprise, is an act of complicity.  These banks are listed in the UN database of business enterprises involved in Israel´s illegal settlements – a war crime.

To conclude: AXA´s hypocritical policies on ethical investments and human rights, as far as Israel´s war crimes and crimes against humanity are concerned, should be stopped. Right now.

Committee NAKBA 75

P. Brandligt

*26 april 2023*

**Bipartisan Agreement — on Israeli Apartheid**

It’s no secret that U.S. support for Israel crosses party lines. But the coming weeks promise a veritable cross-aisle parade of high-power politicians traveling from D.C. to celebrate the "ironclad" relationship with Israel. Right now, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries is leading a delegation. Next week, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy will lead another delegation. And Florida governor and Republican presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis will be heading over later this week as well.

The timing of these trips is no coincidence. This week marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel, and its heavily nationalistic Independence Day and Memorial Day celebrations. It is also, of course, the 75th anniversary of the Nakba — but a discussion of Palestinians’ ongoing state of catastrophe and ethnic cleansing at the hands of the Israeli government is not expected to be on any of the delegates’ agendas.

**So what is the purpose of these visits?**

Jeffries’ office said, “While in Israel, we will meet with a number of stakeholders about Israel’s unique challenges within the region and discuss our efforts to maintain and strengthen the special relationship between our nations.”

McCarthy has brag-Tweeted that he will be the second Speaker of the House in history to address the Knesset, in commemoration of Israel’s 75th year of statehood. (The first: Newt Gingrich.)

DeSantis will meet with Trump-buddy Netanyahu to deliver a keynote at a trade conference co-sponsored, deeply ironically, by the Museum of Tolerance in Jerusalem. He’ll speak about “the importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship – especially in difficult times.”

“Difficult times” may allude to the recent massive protests in Israel over Netanyahu’s proposed judicial overhaul. But, despite the mildest of rebukes from the Biden administration, these visits make clear that Washington is as committed as ever to its uncharacteristic display of bipartisan solidarity — over unconditional support for Israel’s apartheid regime.

*27 april 2023*

For Tax Day last week, 31 teams across the country led actions to protest U.S. military funding to Israel, while nearly 6,000 people this month checked out where their tax dollars are going with USCPR’s newly redesigned **U.S. Military Funding to Israel Map**.

All of this was part of the launch for our new flagship campaign: **Palestine Will Be Free: #StopArmingIsrael & Fund Our Communities**.

*Tax Day flyers wheatpasted in DC*

**Palestine Will Be Free is a long-term campaign focused on building political power to win USCPR’s ultimate goal: end U.S. military funding to Israel, once and for all.**

*27 april 2023*

Just days ago, **Israelis demolished several Palestinian shops** in the old Hebron vegetable market. These are shops that were forced closed by military order for security reasons — reasons that have now proven themselves as a mere pretext for settlement expansion. We fear more destruction to come – we need action now!

Now as April is coming to an end, we also have good news and a number of updates to share with you. First up, we have **launched on social media** and encourage you to follow us on:

Last week, our Executive Director Issa Amro **received the Global Advocacy Award** presented by **Harvard** Law School Advocates and Harvard Human Rights Journal. “Mr. Amro is an exemplar of courage, risking his freedom and his life for justice,” they stated.

Watch now

**Issa recently testified to the United Nations** about the harassment that he has been facing in recent times and the oppression his community lives under in Hebron, and all of Palestine. "My brother lives in Ukraine. He is afraid about me for living in Hebron!"

We are now seeing an eerie attempt to undermine the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation in Palestine. **Academic Francesca Albanese is under attack**. For a long time, Israel has refused to even let Special Rapporteurs enter and carry out their duty. We need to protect independent voices!

**Freedom Seder / Iftar**

We had a succesfull joint Freedom Iftar and Seder in our Hebron House—inspired by the 1969 Freedom Seder of the civil rights movement. People gathered for an evening against apartheid in our activist center, located directly next to a fanatic illegal settlement & Israeli army base.

Furthermore, our advocacy team was represented at the **Amnesty International USA** Annual General Meeting.

We spoke at the event entitled *Witness to Apartheid in Palestine and Israel: Observations from the Field*.

**Last of all, we wish you all a happy Eid from Palestine! May we soon celebrate the holidays in freedom an equality!**

With peace,

**Friends of Hebron**

*Working for Peace and Justice*