

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

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LA Jews for Peace Supports UTLA Proposed Palestinian Solidarity Resolutions

LA Jews for Peace urges the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) House of Representatives to adopt a Palestinian Solidarity resolution similar to one of the resolutions passed by five UTLA Regional Councils on May 19, 2021.

Resolutions Support Human Rights

In adopting one of the proposed resolutions, UTLA will be standing up for human rights on Israel-Palestine and equality for Palestinians in their struggle for liberation. The extent that Palestinians are oppressed and dispossessed by Israeli government policies is characterized as apartheid, which is a crime against humanity according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. That Israeli government's policies towards Palestinians are apartheid is established and thoroughly documented in 2021 reports by B'Tselem and Human Rights Watch (HRW). B'Tselem is an Israeli human rights NGO with unassailable credentials. HRW is the world's leading defender of human rights.

Human Rights Are Part of the UTLA Mission

Standing for human rights is entirely appropriate for the UTLA and its 33,000 members, the second largest teacher's union local in the U.S. To instill a sense of civic responsibility in the coming generation is a core mission for UTLA.

UTLA Proposed Resolutions are not anti-Semitic

The resolutions being considered by the UTLA are not anti-Semitic. The resolutions support Palestinians in their quest for liberation from Israeli government-imposed apartheid. They criticize the Israeli government and its policies; they do not attack or malign Jewish people or the Jewish religion.

The Israel-Palestine situation is not overly complex

Like most real-life situations, the 100-year ongoing Israel-Palestinian situation is complex, but not overly so. It is no more complex than dozens of issues UTLA teachers regularly deal with. Good teachers simplify complex situations while preserving their essential characteristics without distortion. That was done by UTLA members who proposed and voted for the two Israel-Palestine resolutions under consideration.

The Israel-Palestinian situation is straight-forward. Israel is a state with all the powers and prerogatives of a state, whereas Palestinians do not have a state to represent them and defend their interests. Israel is a rich state with a per capita GDP similar to Spain, Japan, and Italy. It also has the tenth strongest military in the world, and it is shielded from criticism in international forums by the U.S. and many other states. In contrast, the Occupied Palestinian Territories are relatively poor (per capita GDP similar to Ghana, Nicaragua, and Honduras). They have no military and few international defenders.

Israel uses its overwhelming advantages to systematically oppress (imprison and torture) Palestinians (including children) and dispossess them of their land and even their citizenship. These actions are the basic facts that drove B'Tselem and HRW to declare Israel apartheid and motivate the UTLA to consider and adopt a Palestinian Solidarity resolution.