

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

Los Angeles, December 14, 2020

LA Jews for Peace Condemns the Normalization Agreement between Morocco and Israel

LA Jews for Peace opposes the Normalization Agreement between Morocco and Israel. We support open normalized relations between all countries, including Israel and Morocco that have had under-the-table relations for many years. But the price for the Israel-Morocco normalization deal is too high:

- The worst aspect of the deal is that the United States president signed a proclamation recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara. There have been decades of dispute over the Western Sahara, formally known as the Spanish Sahara based on Spain's 19th century colonization. Morocco annexed the territory in 1975, and the Polisario Front declared independence for the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) in 1976; SADR controls only about 25% of its territory.

Outgoing President Donald Trump again opted for a one-sided initiative that upends years of U.S. policy toward Western Sahara by recognizing Moroccan sovereignty. Just days after the deal was announced, Morocco broke the UN-monitored 1991 ceasefire with Polisario by military action at the Guerguerat crossing between Morocco and the Western Sahara. Polisario says Morocco has "begun the battle and ignited the war."

- Another price paid is the continued militarization of the Middle East and North Africa, an area already awash with weapons. President Donald Trump's administration asked Congress to approve a \$1 billion weapons sale to Morocco just a few days after announcing the Israel-Morocco normalization. These weapons, drones and precision-guided missiles, will surely be used to enforce Moroccan control over the Sahrawi people.

Normalization between Israel and Morocco is not a peace agreement. Rather it is cynical and despicable deal worthy of condemnation. Adam Keller of Gush Shalom in Israel wrote: "It is an alliance between Israeli oppression in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Moroccan oppression in the Western Sahara, a criminal handshake between two oppressors."

The normalization deal between Israel and Morocco should be rejected by the U.S. Congress.