



## American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Psychological Association

### AMENA-Psy Stands in Solidarity with the People of Palestine

The American Arab Middle Eastern North African Psychological Association (AMENA-Psy) unequivocally condemns the violence and aggression of Israel against Palestinians.

The recent horrific events have garnered global attention, especially as Zionists have attacked worshippers in [holy sites](#)<sup>1</sup> during the sacred month of Ramadan. Unfortunately, these events mark yet another escalation in a longstanding and complex colonial occupation that has raged on in different forms since the founding of the State of Israel. The founding of Israel was predicated upon the erasure and forced removal of Palestinians -- who hail from a variety of religious backgrounds -- from their homeland.

International organizations have categorized Israel's systematic oppression of Palestinians as [apartheid](#)<sup>2</sup> and the ongoing history of Israel's crimes against humanity have been [noted](#)<sup>3</sup>. This history has been well-documented, though also actively suppressed for geopolitical [reasons](#)<sup>4</sup>. Suppression of Palestinians' plight continues today and is evinced in journalistic headlines that downplay the disproportional impact of the violence on Palestinians, who already bear the intolerable brunt of decades of Israeli occupation with no comprehensive resolution in sight. Domestically, the repression of Palestinians has been further bolstered through efforts to expunge Arab Studies from ethnic studies curricula, as seen in [California](#)<sup>5</sup>.

Aggressors regularly use tactics such as the invalidation of suffering, denial of cumulative trauma, and crimes against humanity to further dehumanize oppressed communities, who are in this case Palestinians. Whether these methods are employed interpersonally, or through state-sanctioned violence, the results are similar. Yet, the devastating impact of such aggression is exponentially multiplied when both occur together and when states in particular are not held accountable. Further, invalidation and erasure are often employed to control the narrative and silence the marginalized. Oppressors' efforts to control the narrative, do not negate human suffering and should not degrade our capacity as psychologists, global citizens, and thinking, feeling human beings to recognize and respond to truth behind misinformation and falsehood.

As MENA psychologists, we recognize the traumatizing effects Israel's colonization, apartheid, and continued oppression has had on our Palestinian siblings, who form one of the largest and most extensive refugee communities in the [world](#)<sup>6</sup>. While the MENA region is expansive and diverse, the colonial occupation of Palestine psychologically impacts nearly all people of the region in direct and indirect ways. A just, comprehensive, and sustaining peaceful resolution to the conflict is the only path forward. The razing and seizing of homes, displacement of families, persistent restriction of essential items, and threats and acts of violence increase the traumatic experience of Palestinians on a daily basis.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-aqsa-attacks-how-violence-unfolded>

<sup>2</sup> [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared Documents/ISR/INT CERD NGO ISR 39700 E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/ISR/INT_CERD_NGO_ISR_39700_E.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/world/middleeast/icc-israel-palestinians-war-crimes.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/40791>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236806525\\_The\\_Humanitarian\\_Condition\\_Palestinian\\_Refugees\\_and\\_the\\_Politics\\_of\\_Living](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236806525_The_Humanitarian_Condition_Palestinian_Refugees_and_the_Politics_of_Living)

History and research have demonstrated the significant impact intergenerational trauma has on individuals, especially on children. Thus, structural issues must be addressed for healing to begin. As MENA psychologists, we observe the multi-layered impact of this violence in the various health settings where we serve. As the ongoing global COVID pandemic and pandemic of racism have painfully demonstrated, we cannot separate our humanity from that of our siblings; our suffering is tied to the suffering of others across the world.

Peace and justice are a mental health issue.

#FreePalestine  
#EndTheOccupation  
#EndTheApartheid  
#SaveSheikhJarrah

We call upon our allies to join us in taking the following actions:

1. Call and [write](#) to your representatives in Congress expressing your support for H.R. 2590, a bill seeking to condition the billions of US taxpayer dollars given annually to Israel and prohibit the use of US funds to terrorize Palestinians and further seize Palestinian land.
2. [Sign](#) a petition calling on the US State Department and US Department of Defense to demand an end to Israel's forced displacement of Palestinians from East Jerusalem.
3. If you are affiliated with an academic institution, [sign](#) a petition affirming your scholarly commitment to decolonization and Palestinian liberation. Center the voices of Palestinians in research and in the classroom.
4. [Educate yourself](#) about Israeli violation of the human rights of Palestinians. Learn about the [demands of Palestinian activists](#) and how you can [support them](#).
5. Support the [Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions \(BDS\)](#) movement, which seeks to promote the human rights of Palestinians and hold Israel accountable for crimes of apartheid and persecution. Call upon your elected representatives at the local and federal level to denounce legislation that violates our constitutional right to boycott for human rights.
6. Share this and other statements in support of Palestinian liberation within your networks. Speak up on social media platforms and challenge narratives that justify or obscure the persecution of Palestinians by Israel. Amplify the voices of Palestinians in your activism.