

# Palestine

## Peace and Justice Position Paper of the San Diego Coalition for Peace and Justice

Passed on November 8th, 2010

The San Diego Coalition for Peace and Justice (SDCPJ), is a broad-based coalition, founded shortly after September 11, 2001 in opposition to the looming US invasion of Afghanistan, and later Iraq. From the outset, we have linked our opposition to these wars and occupations to our opposition to anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia within the US, and more recently, to support for the right of self-determination for the people of Palestine.

We believe that peace in the Middle East will be attained in parallel with the advancement of social justice for all people in the region. It is an elementary principle of social justice that all people have equal rights, independent of nationality or religion. This principle applies universally, including to the people of Israel/Palestine.

We have always recognized that these wars and occupations are not isolated aberrations of US foreign policy. Instead they form part of a global US political and military strategy which, in the Middle East, is based on the control of oil and other resources. With almost 1000 military bases throughout the world, and a military budget exceeding that of all other nations combined, the US seeks to be the world's dominant hyper-power for the profit of a small elite.

The causes of the wars and occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq are necessarily and intimately related. They are also intimately related to the causes of the occupation of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza, and the Syrian Golan Heights. Each is responsible for immeasurable suffering and destruction. Opposition to one occupation should imply opposition to all.

Living as we do in the US, our main responsibility is to work for peace and justice within the US, opposing the role of the US government and its military in their denial of elementary rights to people throughout the world. Therefore, we call for and work to support:

1. An end to all United States military aid to Israel, which is in itself one of the biggest obstacle to a peaceful solution between the two peoples, along with an end to all US military aid to other nations in the region;
2. Opposition to the illegal occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories, and the dismantling of the wall;
3. Recognition of the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality;
4. Respect, protection and promotion of the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties, as stipulated in UN resolution 194; and
5. An end to the blockade of Gaza and recognition of the democratically-elected government in Gaza.

Based on these points of agreement, the SDCPJ commits to the following actions:

1. Linking our opposition to the US occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan to opposition to the US-supported Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories;
2. Actively supporting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Campaign (see <http://bdsmovement.net/>);
3. Using our internet presence to make clear our support for the right of self-determination for the people of Palestine, including an end to all US military support for Israel;
4. Sponsoring public meetings on the subject of Palestine; and
5. Working collaboratively with other groups including American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), the San Diego Coalition for Justice in Palestine (SDCJP), Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), Al-Awda, the Middle Eastern Cultural Information Center (MECIC), Jewish Voice for Peace, and other organizations that defend the rights of the Palestinian people and seek a peaceful resolution for all peoples of the region.

All honest supporters of social justice must stand in opposition to antisemitism, an irrational hatred of Jews as a people. However, criticism of Israel and Zionism, opposition to the expulsion of the Palestinians from their historic homeland, and rejection of the occupation of Palestine are not antisemitic. An honest accounting of Israel's role in the world would be a major step forward in overcoming antisemitism. Progress towards peace and justice can only be based on honesty and solidarity, overcoming national and religious divisions.