Joint Statement Calling on Biden Administration to Condemn Israeli government plans to Forcibly Displace Palestinians in Occupied East Jerusalem

The undersigned grassroots and advocacy organizations stand in solidarity with the Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem currently at risk of losing their homes and call on the Biden administration to immediately and publicly condemn the Israeli government’s plans to forcibly displace 1,550 Palestinians from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah and Al-Bustan neighborhoods of occupied East Jerusalem and to exert the utmost diplomatic pressure to prevent these potential war crimes from taking place.

The situation is particularly urgent in Sheikh Jarrah, where the Israeli government plans to forcibly displace hundreds of Palestinians from homes they have lived in for generations, in order to allow Israeli settlers to move in, an act which is illegal under international humanitarian law. On May 7, the United Nations urged the Israeli government to halt these plans, stating that the forced displacement could amount to war crimes. This takes place in the broader context of Israel's ongoing policy to forcibly remove Palestinians from their homes through eviction, home demolition, and displacement, with the express intent of pushing Palestinians out of Jerusalem in order to create and maintain a Jewish majority and supremacy in the city.

Furthermore, we are deeply disturbed by the violence and use of force that Israeli police in East Jerusalem are employing against Palestinian residents, protestors, and worshippers during the last ten days of Ramadan. Over the past week, residents and activists leading sit-ins, vigils, and protests against the forced displacement in Sheikh Jarrah have been met with overwhelming violence and force from Israeli police and settlers, including a police officer kneeling on a protestor's neck while he shouts that he is being suffocated, and attacking worshippers at Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam’s third holiest site. Protestors have also faced harassment from Israeli officials, including an incident in which the Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem told a Palestinian activist it was "a pity" that he wasn't shot in the head.

Israeli state violence is, of course, not limited to Jerusalem. We are horrified by Israel’s use of disproportionate and deadly force against Palestinians in Gaza which have already resulted in the killings of dozens of Palestinians, including children. This comes within the context of Israel’s 14 year illegal blockade on Gaza which has created an open air prison with severe shortages of life-saving medicines, food, electricity, and clean water, making life unsafe and unbearable. We call on the Biden administration to condemn this violence and address its root causes: Israeli blockade and occupation.

The Biden administration has repeatedly stated that it intends to center its foreign policy around respect for human rights and international law. We therefore call on the administration to uphold international law and act in accordance with the urgency of the moment to prevent the Israeli government’s forced displacement of thousands of Palestinians.

We support the asks articulated in a letter led by Congresswoman Marie Newman (IL-03) and signed by 24 members of Congress calling on the Biden administration to:
1. Immediately send the strongest possible diplomatic message to Israel to desist from its plans to demolish Palestinian homes in Al-Bustan and evict Palestinians from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah;

2. Publicly reiterate that U.S. policy opposes Israel's demolition of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem and that East Jerusalem is Occupied Territory under international law;

3. Undertake an expeditious review of previous Congressional requests that the State Department investigate whether Israel’s demolition of Palestinian homes with U.S. weapons violates the Arms Export Control Act (AECA);

4. If Israel proceeds with its plans to demolish Palestinian homes in Al-Bustan and evict Palestinian residents from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, then the U.S. Embassy to Israel should send observers to document Israel’s forced displacement of Palestinians, including details on the military units involved in these operations and the usage of any U.S. weapons for purposes of oversight and accountability regarding Leahy Law and AECA violations.

Sincerely,

350.org
About Face: Veterans Against the War
Action Center on Race & the Economy (ACRE)
Adalah Justice Project
African Public Affairs Committee
Alianza Americas
Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
American Friends Service Committee
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
American Muslims for Palestine
Arab American Association of NY
Arab American Caucus
Arab American Civic Council
Arab American Institute
Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)
Armenian-American Action Network
As the Spirit Moves Us
Ayada Leads
Borderlands for Equity
Center for International Policy
CHANGE (Center for Health and Gender Equity)
Chicago Faith Coalition on Middle East Policy
Christian Peacemaker Teams
Churches for Middle East Peace
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
CODEPINK
Common Defense
Community Renewal Society
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Washington Chapter
Cross Border Network for Justice & Solidarity
Delawareans for Palestinian Human Rights (DelPHR)
Demand Progress
Democracy for America
Democratic Socialists of America
Detention Watch Network
Disciples Palestine Israel Network (DPIN)
Dissenters
Dream Defenders
Engage Action
Empower Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Episcopal Peace Fellowship-Palestine Israel Network
Eyewitness Palestine
Fellowship of Reconciliation
The Feminist Front
For All
Freedom Forward
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
Friends of Sabeel North America
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
Grassroots International
Historians for Peace and Democracy
Hometown Action
ICNA Council for Social Justice
IfNotNow
Indiana Center for Middle East Peace
Indivisible
Indivisible Illinois
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno
Islamophobia Studies Center
Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church, USA
Jetpac Resource Center
Jewish Voice for Peace Action
Jews for Racial And Economic Justice (JFREJ)
Just Foreign Policy
Justice Democrats
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
RootsAction.org
School of the Americas Watch (SOA Watch)
Security Policy Reform Institute (SPRI)
Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
Solidaire Action Fund
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southern Anti-Racism Network
Sunrise Movement
TakeAction Minnesota
Tree of Life Educational Fund
Tunisian United Network
UltraViolet Action
Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East
United Church of Christ Palestine-Israel Network
United for Peace and Justice
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
United Vision for Idaho
United We Dream
US Campaign for Palestinian Rights
U.S. Labor Against Racism and War
Veterans For Peace
Virginia Coalition on Human Rights
Voice for Refuge Action Fund
Voices for Justice in Palestine
War Resisters League
Washington Advocates for Palestinian Rights
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
Whatcom Peace & Justice Center
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
Win Without War
Working Families Party
World BEYOND War