



— A GUIDE TO AMPLIFYING —

PALESTINIAN

VOICES



INTRODUCTION

The events of 7th October have repositioned the Palestinian cause at the priority of human rights issues globally and given Palestinians and their allies a platform to refocus the conversation around the grave injustices perpetuated by the illegal occupation forces. “A Guide To Amplifying Palestinian Voices” stands as a beacon of empowerment for those seeking to champion the Palestinian cause. This handbook is a guide, offering a roadmap for advocates to reshape the conversation surrounding Israel’s military occupation of Palestine. It is designed to elevate the discussion so that it not only addresses the current situation but also fosters increased knowledge, a better understanding, and productive engagement with the Palestinian cause.

The handbook delves into the history of the occupation providing clarity that reveals the roots binding a people to their struggle for justice and self-determination. It aims at framing conversations that resonate globally, with a focus on emphasizing the principles of human rights, international law, and shared values. Additionally, it provides specific words and phrases to help communicate effectively in support of Palestine and contribute meaningfully to the shift in perspective that the Palestinian cause deserves.

“A Guide to Amplifying Palestinian Voices” embraces a culture of intellectual activism, drawing inspiration from successful historical movements that have shaped societies, to magnify the voices that call for justice, equality, and a peaceful future for all.

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CHAPTER 1: ANSWERING COMMON QUESTIONS; FACTS AND FALLACIES

ABOUT THE “CONFLICT”

1. Is the “Israeli-Palestinian conflict” an accurate way of framing the issue?

Why is it important?

The dominant narrative in the West and in the media addressing Israel’s military occupation of Palestine, has been to treat both sides equally and failing to address the reality of occupation and disproportionate forces at play. The choice of the word “conflict” suggests a balance of power in a dispute between two or more parties, underlying the idea that as in any conflict, both sides have the means to be equally as violent towards the other. But the fact of the matter is that there is an active oppressor and an oppressed, a coloniser and a colonised.

How to respond?

Israel and Palestine are not in the midst of “conflict” or “war”; rather, it is the implementation of its Zionist project via settler colonialism. Settler colonialism is a distinct form of colonialism where the indigenous peoples are dispossessed of their properties and culture, and are systematically replaced by an invasive settler colonizer. Features of settler colonialism include prolonged and permanent occupation and assertion of sovereignty over indigenous lands, elimination and eviction of indigenous peoples, demolition of their homes and social infrastructure repression of their cultures and exploitation of their land and resources.

Israel is one of the most militarized occupying nations in the world, backed with billions of dollars and weapons from the USA through its powerful Zionist lobby. The Palestinians are an occupied people lacking all the fundamentals of a functioning state with no formal military, freedom of movement for goods and people alike, and no control over water, electricity and fuel, all the while existing in an apartheid state. Israel repeatedly exploits its huge power advantage to inflict disproportionate death and destruction on Palestinians and their resources. Like all peoples faced with settler colonialism, Palestinians have resisted their displacement by all the means at their disposal.

Key components of this system of oppression and domination:

Source: Amnesty International “Israel’s apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity”, February 2022

- Territorial fragmentation
- Segregation and control through the denial of equal nationality and status
- Restrictions on movement
- Discriminatory family reunification laws
- The use of military rule and restrictions on the right to political participation and popular resistance
- Dispossession of land and property
- Suppression of Palestinians’ human development and denial of their economic and social rights
- The use of taxation and restriction on imports/exports to halt economic progress
- Limiting access to education and healthcare

2. This is a religious conflict between two people who have been fighting for centuries.

- **Why is it important?**

The narrative that it is a “complicated religious conflict that’s been going on forever” is a misconception surrounding the Israel-Palestine issue, from which various other misconceptions stem, including the belief that it is an exceedingly intricate situation, beyond human comprehension or resolution, therefore discouraging efforts to understand it.

While Judaism is an Abrahamic faith spanning thousands of years, the political movement of Zionism began approximately 125 years ago, indicating that the occupation has more modern origins and dynamics than some may believe. This distinction is crucial for a nuanced understanding of the situation.

How to respond?

First, although religion does play a role in shaping the identities of both parties and serves as a justification for some Jews regarding their claims to the land, the struggle is not essentially a religious one. Jews have coexisted with Christians and Muslims for centuries across the Arab World as Arab Jews, and in Palestine as Palestinian Jews. According to Muslim doctrine, Muslims, Christians and Jews are regarded as monotheistic faiths, who ultimately worship the same deity, God. Throughout history the Islamic caliphates did not subject Jews and Christians to the Muslim legal code; they were left to freely regulate their own communal and personal life in accordance with their own religious laws. Although they preserved much of their exclusiveness, they became Arabized in their language and culture. In the history of Jewish culture, the Arabic period is among the most prosperous era both socially and economically.

Second, this is not a longstanding conflict rooted in centuries past but rather a relatively recent development that intensified with European support for Jewish settlement in Palestine during the late 19th century and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948.

Essentially, the situation in Israel/Palestine is not a religious conflict, nor should it be understood as two competing national struggles. Instead, it has consistently been a case of anti-colonial resistance against violence, displacement, and racism.

3. There has been a lot of suffering on “both sides”

Why is it important?

It is a fallacy that there are two equal sides in this story. This biased coverage and the use of this rhetoric has influenced public perception, shaping a narrative that justifies Israeli actions and marginalizes Palestinian suffering. Repeated calls for “de-escalation” reinforce the lie that there are two equal sides in this conflict.

How to respond?

There is a false equivalence that dominates in the Western media’s narrative: a two-sided story that hides the massive asymmetry of power between the state of Israel and the ethnically cleansed indigenous population that make up the Palestinian people. They’re not equal. One dominates while the other is dominated. One colonizes, while the other is colonized.

ABOUT PALESTINE AND PALESTINIANS

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4. Palestine was an empty land / “A land without a people”

Why is it important?

“A land without a people” was a widely cited phrase associated with the movement to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The narrative that Palestine was an empty land before the arrival of Zionism has been propagated through the Israeli educational curriculum, as well as in the media and continues to be an important aspect of Israeli propaganda. It is a dangerous claim as it is an attempt by Zionists to deny the existence of a Palestinian nation, and therefore a denial of the Zionists' ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian Arab population.

The term “terra nullius”, which means ‘nobody’s land’ or ‘land belonging to nobody’, was used during the colonial era, providing Europeans with a legal umbrella to colonialize lands and peoples for hundreds of years. In legal jargon, “terra nullius” means ‘land over which no previous sovereignty has been exercised.’

How to respond?

Scholars generally agree that it was the Romans who gave the land the name “Palestina”. It served as an imperial province during both Roman and subsequent Byzantine rule. Given its importance as the second holiest site in Islam, along with its fertility and strategic location, various Muslim empires aspired to control it. The Ottoman period commenced in 1517 and extended for 400 years. Upon their arrival, the Ottomans found a predominantly Sunni Muslim and rural society, with small urban elites who spoke Arabic. The Jewish population constituted less than 5 percent, while Christians made up approximately 10 to 15 percent of the population.

Contrary to being isolated, Palestinians were actively engaged with various cultures within the expansive Ottoman empire. Additionally, Palestine, open to modernization, underwent significant development before the Zionist movement, led by local rulers like Daher al-Umar (1690–1775). Haifa, Shefamr, Tiberias, and Acre experienced revitalization, fostering a flourishing coastal network connecting with Europe, while inland trade thrived. Far from barren, Palestine, part of Bilad al-Sham, was a prosperous region with a rich agricultural industry and historic cities, supporting a population of half a million before the Zionist arrival.

5. Dehumanization of Palestinians

Why is it important?

Over the years, Palestinians have not only been subjected to physical aggression but also endured the gradual and pervasive erosion of their identity and humanity in popular discourse and media. Palestinian casualties and suffering have been downplayed compared to Israeli casualties, with a narrative suggesting Palestinian lives are less worthy. Dehumanization has historically been associated with reduced empathy for the pain of dehumanized individuals and groups and the denial of their human rights. In genocide studies, dehumanization is commonly understood as a preparatory step on the path to mass killing.

How to respond?

On the 9th October 2023, Israel's Defense Minister's declaration: "We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly" is a clear example of the dehumanization strategy adopted by Israel. Drawing parallels between perceived enemies and pests or insects is a recurring historical trope.

During Nazi Germany, a dehumanization campaign targeted Jews, employing animal comparisons and derogatory language, such as rats, cockroaches, and parasites. Propaganda played a significant role, as illustrated in a linguistic analysis of Nazi speeches, articles, pamphlets, and posters. This dehumanization process, initiated before the Nazis seized power, served to justify atrocities during the Holocaust, resulting in the genocide of 6 million Jews.

ABOUT PALESTINE AND PALESTINIANS

6. Israel's "right to exist"

Discussions about a "state's right to exist" are mainly about Israel and rarely mentioned in other contexts. This is because the concept of a 'right to exist' is essentially non-existent. While peoples have the right to self-determination, it does not automatically confer an inherent right for a state to exist. Considering the multitude of ethnic groups in the world, with less than 200 countries, this distinction becomes particularly understandable.

How to respond?

Doesn't this rationale also extend to acknowledging the right of Palestine to exist? It raises the question of why discussions about the right of Palestinians to exist are notably absent, especially considering that a significant majority of them were subjected to ethnic cleansing, forcibly displaced from their homes, and dispersed across the world. The ethnic cleansing, massacres and brutal colonialism needed to establish Israel can never be justified.

7. Israel's right to defend itself

Why is it important?

Israel uses the "self-defense" narrative to legitimize actions that are internationally recognized as war crimes under the law. These include practices such as collective punishment against Palestinians, including starvation and siege, the use of weapons like white phosphorus bombs, and the deliberate targeting of civilians.

What is the right to self defense?

According to Article 51 of the UN Charter, until the UN Security Council takes measures to maintain international peace and security, "nothing in the charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations."

Does it apply to Israel against Gaza?

The right to self-defense can be invoked when a state is threatened by another state. Israel cannot invoke the right to self-defense under the UN charter since the threat comes not from a state, but a military group, in a territory that Israel occupies militarily. There is jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice that says that self-defense cannot apply in a context of military occupation when, in this case, Israel is occupying another state and another people.

How to respond?

What does it even mean for a settler colony to defend itself against the natives it is colonizing? What does it mean for an entity that can only exist through the negation of Palestinians to defend itself from the oppressed Palestinians? Is self-defense the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity at scale?

Is self-defense killing thousands of children, killing UN staff, targeting hospitals and refugee camps?

Is self-defense imposing a complete siege of Gaza's power, water and food supplies and starving civilians?

It is not self-defense, it is **genocide**.

Under international law, **an occupying power does not have the right to self-defense against the territory it occupies.** (*Source: Paragraph 139 of Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*).

WHAT ABOUT PALESTINE'S RIGHT TO RESIST?

8. Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East

Why is it important?

Israel has been trying to portray itself as the only democracy in the Middle East to conceal its status as an occupying force, and an apartheid state.

Excerpt from the Israel Project's "Global Language Dictionary [PDF]: "The language of Israel is the language of America: "democracy," "freedom," "security," and "peace." These four words are at the core of the American political, economic, social, and cultural systems, and they should be repeated as often as possible because they resonate with virtually every American."

This statement aims at conferring a moral superiority to Israel, the lone country which respects human rights and the rule of law and distinguishing it from its regressive and “backwards” neighbors, therefore legitimizing its actions.

More recently, Israel has been using the “pink-washing” stratagem, by exploiting LGBTQ+ rights to amplify a progressive and liberal veneer and conceal Israeli crimes.

A democracy only for Jews

“Israel is not a state of all its citizens... [but rather] the nation-state of the Jewish people and only them”, is a message posted online in March 2019 by Israel’s then prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

One of the core aspects of democracy is equality. We cannot speak of a democratic system unless all of those participating in it are on equal legal and moral footing.

In a report published in February 2022, Amnesty International demonstrates that Israel has established and maintained an institutionalized regime of oppression and domination of the Palestinian population for the benefit of Jewish Israelis – a system of apartheid – wherever it has exercised control over Palestinians’ lives since 1948. Amnesty International concludes that the State of Israel considers and treats Palestinians, both Christians and Muslims, as an inferior non-Jewish racial group.

The segregation is conducted in a systematic and highly institutionalized manner through laws, policies and practices, all of which are intended to prevent Palestinians from claiming and enjoying equal rights to Jewish Israelis within the territory of Israel and within the OPT (Occupied Palestinian Territories), and thus are intended to oppress and dominate the Palestinian people. (*Source: Amnesty International, Report: Israel’s apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity, February 2022*).

Some Israeli scholars define Israel as an ethnocracy rather than a democracy. According to Oren Yiftachel, an Israeli professor, ethnocratic regimes “promote the expansion of the dominant group in contested territory and its domination of power structures while maintaining a democratic facade.”

Discriminatory laws

Israel built a system around the institutionalized and prolonged racist oppression of millions of people, by enforcing discriminatory laws in Israel that disfavor non-Jewish Israelis.

The 7 most racist Israeli laws:

- The Jewish Nation-State law
- The law of "Return"
- The Admissions Committee Law
- Absentee Property Law and Land Acquisition Law
- Israel Lands Law
- The Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law
- The Nakba Law

9.Criticism of Israel is anti-semitic

Why is it important?

Conflating Judaism and Israel is a rhetorical tactic that is used to shield Israel from accountability and obscure the reality of occupation. The stratagem which equates anti-Zionism with anti semitism aims at muzzling all criticisms of Israel.

How to respond?

Antisemitism is discrimination, targeting, violence, and dehumanizing stereotypes directed at Jews because they are Jewish. It is a grave and serious hate crime that must be condemned.

However, criticism of the Israeli government isn't antisemitic. Israel is a state, not a religious or ethnic group. The State of Israel must be distinguished from the Jewish people, and Israel must be held to the same standards as any other state.

Antisemitism must be condemned and must be addressed. As antisemitism and Islamophobia rise around the world in response to Israel's military occupation of Palestinians, branding fair criticism of Israel's human rights record as antisemitic undermines the fight against genuine antisemitism.

Exploring the Intersectionality of Jewish and Arab Identities: Beyond the Simplistic Narrative of Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism

The concept of being Jewish and Arab is not mutually exclusive; these identities have coexisted in the Middle East for thousands of years. The colonial settler project of Israel has complicated this historical intersectionality. A Semite is defined as a member of any people who speak a Semitic language, including the Jews and Arab Christians and Muslims. Meaning the conflation of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism is counterproductive as it creates a false dichotomy between Arabs and Jews, ignoring the reality of their shared, intersecting identities.

By equating criticism of Israel or anti-Zionist views with anti-Semitism, it not only misrepresents the diverse perspectives within the Jewish community but also perpetuates a narrative of 'Jews vs Arabs'. This overlooks the fact that many Jews have historically been part of Arab societies.

10. The slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” is antisemitic hate speech and a veiled call for the destruction of Israel

This slogan emerged in the 1960s and has been used by many different groups. For most people, it simply calls for equal rights and freedom from apartheid for the Palestinian people, who have been oppressed and fragmented for 75 years.

Interpretations might vary, but there's nothing in the words themselves that suggests antisemitism or calls for racial or political dominance over Jews.

According to Amnesty International, the assumption that calling for freedom for Palestinians necessitates the destruction of Israel is a manipulation of this phrase.

11. Is Hamas a terrorist organization? Do you condemn Hamas?

Why is it important?

The perpetual question about the condemnation of Hamas is a smear tactic used by Israelis and their allies, designed to deflect criticism of Israel and shift the conversation. Not condemning Hamas results in being labeled as 'pro-Hamas' and is often equated with supporting terrorism. This association is employed as a means to discredit any criticism of Israel's military aggression on Gaza. Furthermore, conflating Palestinians with Hamas perpetuates the narrative adopted by Israel that considers all civilians in Gaza as legitimate targets.

How to respond?

It is essential to condemn the targeting and killing of all civilians.

I condemn all violence, all violence is wrong, and often, violence perpetuates more violence. Hamas is the product of Israeli state-sponsored terrorism and oppression.

But is this war really about Hamas?

The genocidal intent of Israel has been expressed clearly several times by members of the Israeli government. A former Israeli minister and Likud Party Member of the Knesset, Galit Distel Atbaryan, explicitly called on Israel's army to be "vengeful and cruel" and to "erase Gaza from the face of the earth".

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a national address "You must remember what Amalek has done to you, says our Holy Bible – we do remember," referring to the ancient enemy of the Israelites, in scripture interpreted by scholars as a call to exterminate their "men and women, children and infants."

It is crucial to condemn the apartheid regime, the violence, brutality, and systemic injustices that Palestinians have endured for 75 years.

12. Gazans elected Hamas as their government, which means they are ruled by a terrorist organization whom they support and represent.

The ongoing tragedy in Gaza is a humanitarian crisis, not a matter of political allegiance. It's important to consider the demographics: the average age in Gaza is 18, and about 40% of the population is under 14.

The last election was in 2006, meaning most Gazans, including those who were only 1 year old at the time, did not vote for Hamas. Recent polls, like the one by the Washington Institute in July 2023, show that Gazans are more inclined towards the Palestinian Authority. The critical issue here is the humanitarian impact, especially on the younger population who have no political affiliations. It's also worth noting that aggressive military actions, such as widespread bombing, can lead to unintended consequences, including an increase in support for groups like Hamas among the affected population.

CHAPTER 2: TERMINOLOGY GUIDE

Palestinians under Israel’s military occupation have come accustomed to technical terminology that describes illegal and unethical violations by the occupation. However, these terms are not necessarily understood by a wider public unfamiliar with the situation.

Instead of	Say this
Annexation	“Stealing Palestinian land”
Detainees	“Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, most commonly without charge or trial”
Administrative detention	“Palestinians taken hostage or imprisoned by Israel without a fair trial, often for no reason at all.”
Eviction	“Israelis violently pushing Palestinians out of their own homes”
Displacement	“Israel is violently dispossessing and forcing Palestinians out of their homes.”
Demolition	“Israel is destroying the homes of Palestinian families”
Siege/Blockade (Of Gaza)	“Israel’s military has caged more than 2 million Palestinians, half of them children, in a tiny strip of land, controlling whether they are allowed to return home, or travel, and whether Palestinians can access basic supplies like food, water, electricity and medicine.”

Israeli military aggression on Palestinians.

War/Conflict

“Israel, which has one of the most powerful militaries in the world, is attacking Palestinian civilians in Gaza, dropping bombs on hospitals, schools, and apartment buildings where families live.”

US Military Aid

“The U.S. sends billions of dollars to the Israeli military every year, which is used to buy warplanes that kill Palestinians with U.S. made bombs.”

**Gazans/Jerusalemite/
West Banker/‘48ers**

“Palestinians in / from Gaza, West Bank, Palestinians with Israeli citizenship”

Always use Palestinian-first language when talking about Palestinians from different parts of Palestine, since it unites Palestinians as one people. Palestinian is more familiar than geographic specific terms.

West Bank

The Palestinian West Bank or simply, Palestinian land.

Israel / “48”

Apartheid Israel

**Nablus (or any other
Palestinian city name)**

“Palestinian city of Nablus” Use the word Palestinian before any city name. Let people know it's a Palestinian city.

Disputed Land

“Colonized, occupied land”

Apartheid

A powerful term with historical weight and potential as a tool for accountability. However, it should be paired with explanation and context since many people are still unfamiliar with “apartheid” in this context.

- E.g. “Israel discriminates against Palestinians and denies Palestinians’ rights, just because they’re Palestinian. This brutal apartheid system makes it easier for Israel to keep stealing more Palestinian land, while pushing Palestinians out altogether.”
- E.g. “Israel enforces a brutal system of discrimination to oppress Palestinians, simply because they’re Palestinian. When Israel denies Palestinians basic rights and freedoms because of who they are, that’s called apartheid.”
- E.g. (Shorter digital option): “Israel enforces racist laws that deny Palestinians’ rights. That’s called apartheid.”

According to the definition, apartheid isn't just about separate and unequal laws; it's a tool of colonialism.

- E.g. “With both South Africa and Israel, apartheid has been a strategy of colonialism used to divide people from one another to steal their land.”

BDS/ Boycotts and Anti-BDS Legislation

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement works to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians and pressure Israel to comply with international law.

The goal of BDS IS Palestinian freedom using economic pressure to achieve Palestinian rights.

- E.g. “We should use our power as consumers/students/constituents to put pressure on companies/governments to join the right side of history and support Palestinian freedom.”

Surveys show that even when people support boycotts, they are skeptical of whether they will work. Make clear that boycotts have worked throughout history.

- E.g.: “Throughout history, ordinary people have used economic pressure to compel companies to do the right thing. When we speak out against injustices and choose where we spend our money, we can ensure the companies we buy from reflect our values.”

A phrase like “divestment victory” isn’t clear and doesn’t include the goal. When talking about a successful campaign, it’s most effective to describe the win as a “victory for Palestinian rights/ freedom” so that people understand the impact it will have.

“I oppose anti-BDS legislation” requires a double negative, and most people don’t know the acronym BDS, so it won’t mean much. Alternatives;

- E.g. “The state of Texas is considering legislation that, if passed, would prevent people from speaking out in support of Palestinian rights.”
- E.g. “Anti-free speech legislation,” “anti-Palestinian legislation,” “repressive legislation [that attacks Palestinians]”

Ethnic Cleansing

Many understand ethnic cleansing to only mean mass killing (Holocaust, Rwanda), which means it can be confusing if we apply it to every situation in Palestine. Here's a way to use the term for a general audience:

- E.g. “Israel is wiping out whole families in an instant, destroying entire cities, and starving millions. Israel’s mass killings of Palestinians in Gaza through indiscriminate bombing has been described by experts as war crimes and ‘ethnic cleansing.’”

For shorter communications (tweets, quick radio interviews) opt for an emotive description instead.

- E.g. “Israel is forcing Palestinians out of their homes just because they’re Palestinian.”

- E.g. “Israelis kicking Palestinians out of their homes so that Israelis can live in them.”
- E.g. “Israel plans to wipe out an entire Palestinian town.”

For longer communications, if using the term, it's important to describe and define it first.

- E.g. “For decades the Israeli military has attacked Palestinians in Masafer Yatta, violently forcing out hundreds of people in an attempt to wipe out the entire community. Experts have described Israel’s actions as ethnic cleansing, or when one group of people is violently pushed out of their homeland or killed because of their identity.”

Genocide

This term is most effective when used for very clear examples that are universally recognized, like mass killings, cutting off basic needs to millions, etc. Variations can include: “Israeli spokespeople are using dehumanizing and even genocidal language about Palestinians in Gaza, calling them “human animals” or “Israel has completely cut off millions of Palestinians in Gaza from medical supplies and electricity – hospitals are turning into morgues as a result of this genocidal policy threatening millions.” When using the term, pair it with clear and simple descriptors.

- E.g. "Israel is indiscriminately bombing apartment buildings, schools, and hospitals in Gaza while cutting off access to food, drinking water, and electricity for over 2 million Palestinians. Israel has already killed thousands of Palestinian civilians, many of them children. We must act urgently to stop Israel's genocide of Palestinians."

Jewish-Only/ Judaize

Since this issue isn't about religion, invoking religion confuses this for a mainstream audience.

“Jewish-only settlements” as a phrase doesn't have the same resonance as “whites-only water fountains” does for a wide audience. Alternatives;

- “The Israeli government prohibits Palestinians from driving on the same roads as Israelis.”
- “Israel stole land from Palestinians, and now won't let them live there.”
- “Segregated cities on land Israel stole from Palestinians.”

The “Nakba”

“Nearly 75% of the Palestinian population was forced out of their homes and off their land when Israel was established – Israeli militias massacred Palestinians and wiped-out entire communities.”

“Ongoing Nakba” is confusing to a general audience, especially since they might just be hearing the word Nakba for the first time.

Try: “Israel violently forced approximately 750,000 Palestinians off their land in 1948 and has been doing so every day since. Palestinian families still live in fear that Israel may take away their homes and land at any moment.”

You can talk about how the Nakba created Israel's system of apartheid, which has oppressed Palestinians for decades to steal their land.

- Ex: “Israel's apartheid system began with the Nakba 75 years ago-- It's the root cause of injustices Palestinians face today.”

Occupation

Most people in the US don't know what occupation means, even in the context of Palestine. Describe what military occupation means.

- E.g. “Israel rules over Palestinian lives and land using brutal military force.”
- E.g. “Israel controls nearly every aspect of Palestinian life, including where Palestinians can live and travel, whether Palestinians can export products, and regularly stops Palestinians from using their own water and land to grow food.”

When using the word “occupation,” always add “military” first.

Avoid using “the occupation” to personify Israel’s military occupation; it's confusing. For example, instead of saying “the occupation killed a Palestinian journalist,” be specific: “the Israeli military killed a Palestinian journalist.”

Settlements

Many people in the U.S. don't have negative associations with or understand the term so prioritize descriptions.

- E.g. “Israel is stealing Palestinian land to build segregated cities that Palestinians can’t live in or even visit.”

Sometimes a message can be more powerful without the word “settler,” which isn’t widely understood. For example:

- Instead of “Settlers are attacking Palestinian farmers,” use “[Armed] Israelis are violently attacking Palestinian farmers on Palestinian land.”
- Instead of “What’s happening in Jerusalem is part of Israel’s goal to replace Palestinians with Israeli settlers,” use “Israelis forcing Palestinian families out of their homes in order to steal Palestinian land for Israelis.”

Zionism

Most people have never heard of Zionism, associate it with religion, or have an incorrect idea of what it means. The U.S. congress passed a resolution in 2023 to equate anti-Zionism with anti semitism, which has in fact offended many Jewish groups. To avoid confusing your audience, consider whether there is another term or phrase that can more clearly communicate the idea to more people.

Instead of “Zionists on campus are attacking our divestment bill,” use “Apartheid apologists are attacking our bill in support of Palestinian freedom.”

Instead of “Zionist settlers are attacking Huwara,” use “Armed Israelis are violently invading and attacking Palestinians in their neighborhoods.”

If using the word, talk about what Zionism has meant for Palestinians.

- E.g. “Zionism is a racist ideology that led to the violent establishment of Israel on top of the lives and land of over a million Palestinians. Still motivated by this ideology, Israel brutally oppresses Palestinians.”

CHAPTER 3: GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSING PALESTINE IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE

1. **Simplicity is Key:** Avoid overwhelming your audience with excessive details. Stick to the core message.
2. **Relatable Storytelling:** Use everyday scenarios to illustrate your points. Personal narratives are more impactful than abstract data.
 - E.g. “Imagine if an armed soldier broke into your house in the middle of the night and took your child away without any way for you to charge them”
“Imagine being that child stripped from your home, thrown into prison for no reason other than being a Palestinian.”
 - E.g. “Imagine not having access to clean water or food for months ...”
3. **Focused Messaging:** Do not inadvertently amplify opposing views by restating them, even in disagreement. Keep steering the conversation back to your primary message.
4. **Vision for the Future:** Articulate a hopeful future that people can aspire to achieve. This future vision encourages active participation and support.
5. **Encourage Involvement:** Offer ways for people to engage and contribute, empowering them to be part of the solution.
6. **Repetition for Retention:** People often need to hear a message multiple times to remember it. Repeat your key points frequently and ensure they are straightforward enough for easy recall.

7. Examples for Clarity: Use clear examples to illustrate your points. For instance, highlight the universal desire for peace and safety at home, contrasting it with the challenges Palestinians face due to Israeli policies.

- E.g. “No matter who you are or where you’re from, most of us want to live peacefully in our homes. But Israel’s apartheid government has been stealing Palestinian land for decades to take it as their own. Palestinians just want their freedom and to live in their homeland, and we can join together to ensure that U.S. policy doesn’t get in the way.”
- E.g. “Like all people, Palestinians deserve to live in freedom and safety on their own land.”

8. Speak Digital: Tailor your message for digital platforms, emphasizing concise, powerful statements about Palestinian rights and aspirations.

9. Reference credible sources: For a well-rounded perspective, it's beneficial to consult documents from credible organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch ([link](#)), Israeli information Center for Human Rights in the occupied territories ([link](#)). Referencing such documents helps in reducing the political bias leanings and ensures a more balanced understanding based on established facts and thorough research.

Addressing Smear Tactics

1. Deflect Baseless Claims: When confronted with unfounded accusations, avoid giving them further attention. Label them as what they are - smears or attacks.

2. Asserting Rights: Emphasize the right of Palestinians to speak about their experiences without facing defamation.

3. Combating Antisemitism: Acknowledge the seriousness of antisemitism, and stress the importance of distinguishing genuine concerns from attempts to discredit Palestinian advocacy.

- E.g. “Palestinians and allies should be able to stand up for Palestinian freedom without being smeared or attacked.”
- E.g. “Israeli government policies are harming Palestinians every day, and Palestinians have the right to talk about their lives and experiences of oppression.”
- E.g. “Anti Semitism is a real problem, and we should all be uniting to oppose anti semitism and any form of discrimination. So when people use disingenuous attacks to try and smear advocates for Palestinian freedom, it cheapens the serious problems of oppression we need to address together.”

CHAPTER 4: KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF PALESTINE

1882 Edmond de Rothchild provides financial backing for Jewish colonization in Palestine. First waves of Zionist mass emigration to Palestine begins.

1896 Publication of Der Judenstaat, The Jewish State by Theodor Herzl.
FEB Sultan Abdel Hamid II, of the Ottoman Empire, rejects Herzl's proposals for a Jewish State in Palestine. The Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) operation in Palestine begins.

1897 The first World Zionist Congress conference is held at Basel, Switzerland, despite the opposition of the chief rabbis of the West. The World Zionist Organization (WZO) is established.
AUG

1910 The first kibbutz, based on exclusively Jewish labour, is established.

1917 **The Balfour Declaration**, a statement of British policy on Zionism is issued. The declaration was originally put forward in a letter from Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, who had rejected the idea of the migration of Jews to Britain, to the head of the British Zionist Federation, Lord Rothchild. **It endorsed the establishment of "a national home" for the Jewish people in Palestine**, stipulating that this should not compromise the rights of the majority non-Jewish communities in Palestine.
NOV

1919 Under the Feisal-Weizmann Agreement, Zionists propagandize public opinion into believing that the Arabs are not against a Jewish national home in Palestine. They repeatedly quoted that an agreement had been reached between Chaim Weizmann, then head of the newly formed Zionist Organization and Prince Feisal bin Al Hussein, on behalf of the Arabs, to the effect that the latter had acquiesced in the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. **As in the Balfour Declaration, nowhere in the Feisal-Weizmann Agreement of January 1919 is there any mention of a Jewish state in Palestine.** The agreement provided, among other things, for "cordial goodwill and understanding" between Arabs and Jews. But the English text of the agreement also included an all-important reservation written in Arabic in Prince Feisal's own handwriting which has been either ignored or grossly misinterpreted.
JAN

1929 The Jewish Agency is formed to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine.
AUG

1930 Palestinian demands for the establishment of a democratic representative government and for the cessation of Zionist mass immigration and land acquisition are rejected. Sir John Hope-Simpson, commissioned by the UK to investigate the issues of immigration and land acquisition, publishes a report stating that 29% of Arab families in villages have lost their land and recommends putting a stop to further Jewish immigration.
OCT

1936 Leaders of Palestinian political parties constitute an Arab Higher Committee under the chairmanship of Hajj Amin Al-Husseini.
APR

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1937
APR

The Zionist terrorist gang Irgun re-organizes for attacks on Palestinians.

1937
JULY

The Peel Commission's report is published, recommending partition of Palestine into a Jewish state, a Palestinian state (to be incorporated into Transjordan) and British Mandatory enclaves, as well as forcible transfer, if necessary, of the Palestinian population out of the Jewish State.

The Arab Higher Committee rejects partition, calling for an independent Palestinian state with protection of all legitimate Jewish and other minority rights and the safeguarding of reasonable British interests.

1938
JULY

The Zionist terrorist gang Irgun kills 119 Palestinians in a series of bombing campaigns in Jerusalem and Haifa.

1939
MAY

The British House of Commons votes in favour of a white paper calling for conditional independence for a Palestinian state after an interval of 10 years, limiting Jewish immigration to 15,000 per annum for five years with immigration after that subject to Palestinian permission, while protecting Palestinian land rights against Zionist acquisition.

The white paper position change by the British, was largely a function of the country's preparation for WWII and its need of the Arab/Palestinian fighters to support it.

1940
DEC

The SS Patria, carrying illegal Jewish immigrants to be transferred by the British to alternative accommodation outside Palestine is blown up by Zionist terrorists, killing 252 Jews and British police.

1944
NOV

Two members of the Stern Gang murder Lord Moyne, British Secretary of State in Cairo.

1946
MAY

Anglo-American Committee report recommends admission of 100,000 Jews into Palestine and abolition of Land Transfers regulations. Both the US and Britain refuse to accept Jews.

1946
JULY

The bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem by Zionist Irgun terrorists, killing 92 British, Palestinian and Jewish civil servants.

1947
NOV

The UN Security Council resolution 191 calls for new partition plan. The Palestinians, who account for 70% of the population and own 93% of the land, are allocated 47% of their country. The Jews, who comprise only 30% of the population and own 7% of the land, are accorded 53% of the country.

1948
APR

250 Palestinians, including women and children and the aged, are massacred in Deir Yassin by Zionist Irgun and Stern terrorist gangs under the command of Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir. The massacre was part of the Plan Dalet which was aimed at the conquest and depopulation of Palestinian cities starting with Yaffa and Haifa.

1948
MAY

Zionists proclaim independent state in Palestine, as 472,000 Palestinians are made homeless in what is known as the Nakba.

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- 1952
NOV** The Israeli Parliament enacts the Status Law, which defines the tasks assigned to Zionism throughout the world and inside Israel, as a quasi-governmental agent of the state of Israel. These tasks were set forth in 1954 in a 'Covenant signed by the Israeli Government and the World Zionist Organization. The tasks include exertion of political pressure on governments, the financing and recruiting of mass immigration to Israel, and conducting/ directing propaganda on behalf of Israel in times of crisis.
-
- 1956
OCT** Israel initiates a war against Egypt supported by France and Britain.
-
- 1956
NOV** Israeli forces executed more than 450 male civilians in the refugee camps of Rafah and Khan Yunis (as documented by an UNRWA special report).
-
- 1964
MAY** The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) is established by the Arab League.
-
- 1967
JUNE** Israel occupies the rest of Palestine and parts of Egypt, Jordan and Syria after initiating a war against Arab countries. 670,000 Palestinians are made homeless. According to US intelligence documents, Israel was militarily stronger than all the surrounding Arab armies combined.
-
- 1967
JUNE** Israeli planes are ordered to repeatedly attack the American intelligence ship USS Liberty, killing 34 US Navy Crewmen and wounding 171, so that Israeli aggression against Arabs cannot be monitored.
-
- 1967
SEPT** The Etzion Bloc in the Palestinian city of Al Khalil is built as the first settlement in the occupied West Bank. The settlement now hosts 40,000 people.
-
- 1967
NOV** **The UN Security Council passes resolution 242** calling on Israel to withdraw from territories occupied during the Six Day War.
-
- 1973
OCT** Egypt and Syria launch a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur.
-
- 1978
MAR** Israel invades southern Lebanon with 30,000 troops backed by massive airpower.
-
- 1979
MAR** A peace treaty is signed between Israel and Egypt.
-
- 1980
AUG** Israel's bid to make Jerusalem its "eternal capital" is rejected by the international community.
-
- 1982
JUNE** **Israel invades Lebanon** and begins bombardment and destruction of Beirut. More than **30,000 civilians are massacred** as bombs (cluster and phosphorus) were dropped on schools, orphanages, and hospitals. Israel cut off water, electricity, and food besieging West Beirut. Intensive bombing on civilian infrastructure was conducted to force the PLO out of Lebanon.
-
- 1982
SEPT** Israeli forces enable the Sabra and Shatila massacre in which up to 3,500 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians are killed.
-
- 1985
OCT** Israeli jets bomb the PLO Headquarters in Tunis in a bid to assassinate the PLO leadership, killing 75 people and injuring 120 mostly civilians.
-

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1987 DEC	The Intifada begins in Gaza and quickly spreads throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
1987 DEC	Hamas is established as a resistance movement against the Israeli occupation.
1988 NOV	The Palestinian National Council accepts UN resolution 242, announces the establishment of the state of Palestine and endorses the appointment of Yasir Arafat as President.
1991 OCT	Palestinians sit with Israelis to initiate peace talks in Madrid.
1993 SEPT	The Oslo peace accords between Israel and the PLO are signed at the White House.
1994 FEB	A Jewish settler opens fire on worshipers at Al Ibrahimi Mosque in Al Khalil killing 30 Palestinians and injuring hundreds.
1994 OCT	Israel and Jordan sign a peace treaty.
1995 SEPT	Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat sign the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in Washington, DC. The PLO and Palestinians recognize Israel's "right to exist" and promise to abstain from use of armed resistance. This was to lead to the final settlement agreement to be reached in 1998.
1995 NOV	Prime Minister Rabin is assassinated by a right-wing Jewish radical.
1996 MAY	Benjamin Netanyahu is elected as Prime Minister – questioning the Oslo accords and the concessions given to Palestinians.
1997 JAN	The Hebron Protocol was signed by which much of Al Khalil (Hebron) was to be turned over to the Palestinian Authority.
1997 SEP	An attempted assassination of Hamas leader Khaled Mishaal by the Israeli Mossad is thwarted by Jordanian authorities. This was executed on the back of two attacks by Hamas in Israel.
1998 OCT	The U.S. brokered Wye River Memorandum is signed between Palestinian and Israeli leaders, detailing further steps to be taken to implement the interim agreement of 1995, to reach the final settlement agreement.
2000 JUL	A U.S. brokered Palestinian-Israeli summit at Camp David fails to reach a final settlement agreement.
2000 SEPT	The second Intifada erupts after Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon makes a provocative visit to the Al Aqsa compound. The uprising lasts till 2005 resulting in the killing of more than 4000 Palestinians by Israel.

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**2001
DEC**

Israel bombs Gaza International airport, shutting it down.

**2002
MAR**

Meeting at the Beirut Summit, the Arab League proposes a plan by which Israel would withdraw from occupied lands including the Golan Heights, Gaza and the Palestinian West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and would allow the return of Palestinian refugees, in return for full normalization with all Arab countries. The proposal was rejected by Israel.

**2002
JUN**

The Israeli government approves the construction of a barrier wall around the Palestinian West Bank, despite opposition from the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

**2005
AUG**

Israel withdraws its settlers and troops from Gaza while retaining control over its borders, seashore and airspace. The withdrawal is a superficial one with only the withdrawal of troops on the ground but Israel maintains full control over key essentials including water, electricity, the flow of food and medicine, border access and telecommunications.

**2006
JAN**

Hamis wins the Palestinian Authority's parliamentary elections deposing long-time majority party Fatah, giving it control of Gaza. The result of this election was rejected by the West.

**2007
JUNE**

Israel imposes a blockade on Gaza, limiting the mobility of goods and people in and out of the territory, deepening Gaza's humanitarian crisis.

**2008
DEC**

Israel begins three weeks of intensive bombardment of Gaza, killing more than 1,110 Palestinians, targeting civilian infrastructure including mosques, medical facilities, schools, and homes.

The attack followed lack of progress of a U.S. brokered agreement in Annapolis to discuss a two-state solution.

**2011
SEP**

UNESCO admits Palestine as a member state.

**2012
NOV**

Palestine is granted the status of non-member observer state in the United Nations General Assembly.

**2012
NOV**

Israel assassinates Hamas military chief, Ahmed Jabar, and launches airstrikes against Gaza, killing more than 150 Palestinians.

**2014
JULY**

The Israeli military launches a deadly air offensive against Palestinians in Gaza killing more than 2,250 Palestinians in one of the bloodiest escalations since the 1967 war.

**2017
MAY**

Hamis revises its charter accepting a Palestine on the basis of the 1967 borders, indirectly recognizing Israel as part of the 2-state solution. Hamis affirms its conflict is with the Zionist project and that **it is not seeking war with the Jewish people**. The new charter is rejected by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

**2017
DEC**

US declares Jerusalem as the capital of Israel under the presidency of Donald Trump.

**2018
MAR**

Israeli troops kill 214 Palestinians, including 46 children, and wound 36,000 others during the peaceful Palestinian "March of Return". Thousands of protestors had gathered at the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel for months in a demonstration against the 11-year blockade.

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Israeli settlers and troops attempt to evict Palestinians from their homes in the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah in occupied East Jerusalem.,

**2021
MAY**

Israeli police also raid Al-Aqsa Mosque attacking worshippers and preventing others from praying. Over 400 worshippers are arrested triggering a wave of rocket attacks by Hamas in retaliation to the Israeli provocations.

Israel escalates by launching airstrikes against Gaza killing more than 200 Palestinians.

**2022
FEB**

Amnesty International declares Israel an apartheid state in a report that analyzed “Israel’s intent to create and maintain a system of oppression and domination over Palestinians,” including through “territorial fragmentation; segregation and control; dispossession of land and property; and denial of economic and social rights.”

**2023
JAN**

Israeli forces raid the Palestinian city of Jenin killing 9 people, and assassinating well-known TV journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian Christian reporter for al Jazeera, sparking global outrage.

**2023
MAY**

Israel launches surprise airstrikes on Gaza killing 33 Palestinians, including three resistance leaders.

**2023
JUN**

Israel raids Jenin deploying helicopter gunships killing 9 Palestinians.

The military occupation forces later expand the incursion staging an air and ground attack with 1,000 soldiers backed by drone strikes against a refugee camp inside Jenin, killing 12 Palestinians.

**2023
JUN**

Hundreds of Israeli settlers go on a rampage through Palestinian villages, torching homes, cars, and shooting at residents.

Armed Palestinian factions in Gaza led by Hamas’s military wing launch an attack on Israeli military installations, temporarily taking over various Israeli settlements near the Gaza Strip. More than 1000 Israeli military personnel and civilians are killed in the attack.

Evidence is later revealed that Israeli forces firing on Hamas militants with helicopter gunships and tanks, were responsible for numerous Israeli deaths and casualties on October 7th.

**2023
OCT**

The Israeli military launches an **air, sea and land offensive on Gaza killing tens of thousands of Palestinians, 70% of whom are women and children.**

The aerial bombardment on the tiny strip of land equaled three nuclear bombs, destroying 70% of homes, hospitals, and schools.

As a result, **Israel stands trial at the International Court of Justice for genocide against the Palestinian people.**
