

Motion

# Youth Advocacy for Peace: A Human Rights Lens on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

signed by: Spanish Youth Council (CJE),  
Organising Bureau of European School Student  
Unions (OBESSU)

co-signed by: Youth and environment Europe  
(YEE), Flemish Youth Council (VJR), Consell  
Nacional de la Joventut de Catalunya (CNJC),  
Croatian Youth Network (MMH), Latvijas  
Jaunatnes padome (LJP)

The European Youth Forum, the democratic platform of over 100 youth organisations, representing over 40 million young people across Europe, is strongly rooted in the values of human rights, intercultural understanding, peace and solidarity. As advocates for human rights and peace, we underscore the vital role of young people and youth organisations in conflict transformation, aligning our stance with the principles of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) on Youth, Peace and Security.

The conflict between Israel and Palestine has reached unprecedented levels since the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023.

In light of these events, the European Youth Forum is in need of expressing its profound concern with the situation, especially regarding the human rights crisis experienced by so many young people.

In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 181, split Palestine into two independent states, one Arabic and one Israeli Jewish. A year later, the Jewish state declared its independence, thus constituting the state of Israel.

In May 1948, forces from Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon invaded the territory, declaring the first Arab-Israeli war, with Jordan taking over Cisjordan and East Jerusalem and Egypt taking over the Gaza Strip, while Israel occupied 77% of the former Palestinian territory.

In 1967, the Six-Day War was held against Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, resulting in the definitive occupation of the Arab territories by Israel. Israel obtained the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, East Jerusalem, Cisjordan, and the Golan Heights.

From that moment on, Israel controls all the Palestinian borders, making Gaza the largest open-air prison in the world and subjecting the Palestinian population to daily human rights violations that persist to the present day.

As youth representatives, we claim our rightful place in all peacebuilding and peacekeeping processes, as stated in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security. This resolution, adopted unanimously in 2015, clearly emphasizes the duty for youth to be actively

"engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation," as well as our value in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, serving as role models for the upcoming generations and as key agents in building long-lasting peace.

We firmly condemn all forms of violence, terrorism and attacks on the civilian population committed by Hamas.

We strongly condemn all forms of violence, killings, and denial of basic rights to civilians, noting the international concerns about the of Gazans raised by Israel's disproportionate military response in contravention with international human rights and humanitarian law.

As the European Youth Forum, we recognize our responsibility to actively oppose all manifestations of antisemitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism. Embracing the distinctive diversity within the European Union and Council of Europe, as fundamental to European identity, we are committed to preserving the lessons of history and collaborating to build a future devoid of intolerance.

As peace advocates, we are guided by these three principles:

- A ceasefire and de-escalation of the conflict.
- The restart of the peace process between the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority supported by the international community.
- The fundamental belief that civil society, including youth organisations and young people themselves, must be key actors of the peace process.

The European Youth Forum, firm in its commitment to human rights, intercultural understanding, peace, and solidarity, hereby expresses its absolute condemnation of all forms of violence, aggression, and reprisals against the civilian population, irrespective of their Israeli or Palestinian identity.

- Demand the immediate ceasefire by both parties, as well as compliance with other requests issued by the International Court of Justice in January 2024, following the summary order of the International Court of Justice of January 26, 2024.

- In line with UN Security Council Resolution 1860 (2009), we demand a peaceful dialogue to achieve a comprehensive peace based on the vision of a region where two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace with secure and recognized borders.
- We urgently appeal to the European Union to manifest its unwavering commitment to the principles of safe hostage liberation, military de-escalation, and an immediate ceasefire. Additionally, we implore the EU to reinforce European solidarity with both Israeli and Palestinian victims, ensuring the continuity of humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of affected communities. The EU should not encourage retaliation and more violence while ignoring the common historic failures of reconciliation.
- We urge European countries to fight against the discrimination that Israeli and Palestinian youth suffer as a result of the violent acts committed, as they do not represent youth-led peacebuilding and reconciliation processes. We call on Europe and all Europeans to actively engage in supporting peace and victims of war and oppression. Our generation demands permanent peace, justice, and respect for Human Rights by all and for all.
- As advocates for human rights and peace, we underscore the vital role of youth in conflict resolution, aligning our stance with the principles of UN Resolution 2250. Recognizing the urgency, we call for the initiation of youth-led peacebuilding and reconciliation processes. We believe that through the empowerment of younger generations, a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved.
- In light of the distressing targeting of Jewish students with antisemitic offenses during times of conflict in the Middle East, we call upon European universities and schools to proactively safeguard the well-being of their Jewish students and to create an environment free from discrimination.
- In light of the distressing targeting of Palestinian students with Islamophobic offenses during times of conflict in the Middle East, we call upon European universities to proactively safeguard the well-being of their Palestinian students and to create an environment free from discrimination.
- Recognizing the unique challenges faced by Palestinian students unable to leave Gaza, we further call for the facilitation of their admission into European universities and schools as an affirmative step toward providing them with educational opportunities and fostering global understanding.
- Calls upon universities, schools, national, and international institutions to implement measures aimed at countering discrimination. It is imperative
  - to ensure that public spaces are safe for everyone, fostering an environment of inclusivity and tolerance.
  - Calls on European and international institutions to implement essential measures ensuring the safety of Jewish and Muslim citizens in Europe, including swiftly providing protection to schools, universities, social spaces and places of worship.

\*1 [181 UN Resolution](#)

\*2 Israel/Palestine: Fifty years of occupation, Fifty years of human rights violations. Published by Amnesty International United Kingdom Section. September 2017. [https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-09/3.%20Campaign%20Briefing%201%20-%20Israel%20Palestine%2050%20years%20of%20occupation.pdf?5wqex6EBe\\_M50pnGGMD0t1UJj3FPvx6q](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-09/3.%20Campaign%20Briefing%201%20-%20Israel%20Palestine%2050%20years%20of%20occupation.pdf?5wqex6EBe_M50pnGGMD0t1UJj3FPvx6q)

\*3 The origins and evolution of the Palestine problem. United Nations. New York, 2014. <https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/OE-Part-V.pdf>

\*4 Israeli – Palestinian conflict. Council for Arab-British understanding. <https://www.caabu.org/sites/default/files/resources/History%20of%20Israel%20Palestine.pdf>

\*5 [2250 UN Resolution](#)

\*6 [Request for the indication of provisional measures of the international court of justice on January 26, 2024.](#)



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