



THE ISRAEL/PALESTINE MISSION NETWORK
of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

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Antisemitism - A system of oppression that consists of ideological or physical targeting of Jews for being Jewish. It is a virulent racism expressed as anti-Jewish thinking and behavior. Exemplified in the 1903 antisemitic text, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, antisemitism treats Jews as a monolithic group with collective characteristics; it stereotypes Jewish people as rich or greedy, and demonizes Jews as all-powerful and secretly in control of economic or political events. Conflating anti-Zionism (criticism of Israel) with antisemitism seriously and wrongly dilutes the definition of this menacing form of discrimination and the violence it underwrites.

Apartheid - An Afrikaans word, meaning 'separation' or 'segregation,' it is the antithesis of democracy and was practiced for decades in South Africa in the twentieth century. It refers to a government-adopted policy of separation by a people in control who see themselves as superior to those of a different race or ethnicity in their midst, thus imposing policies and laws assuring the entrenched privilege of the one race/ethnicity to the daily detriment and suffering of the other. Apartheid is a crime under international law. Israel's practice of separate laws for 7 million Palestinians under their control has been called apartheid by a 2017 [UN Report](#) that was taken down from their website under pressure.

Balfour Declaration - Named after Britain's Foreign Secretary, it is a pledge by Britain in 1917 that laid the foundation for "a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. The British promised Jews a land where non-Jewish natives made up more than 90 percent of the population. The 67-word declaration is widely seen as the precursor that led to the creation of the state of Israel and to the *Nakba*, or catastrophe in Arabic. The late Palestinian-American academic Edward Said at Columbia University, stated that [the Balfour Declaration was](#) "made by a European power ... about a non-European territory ... in a flat disregard of both the presence and wishes of the native majority resident in that territory".

B.D.S. or Boycotts, Divestment, Sanctions - While sanctions ('s') are what a government may impose on another country, boycotts and divestments ('b' & 'd') are non-violent tactics that can be carried out by individuals, groups, companies, or organizations (e.g., churches) who oppose entrenched policies that inhumanely or illegally discriminates, causes suffering, or violates human rights. Palestinian Christians in their ecumenical *Kairos Palestine* document (2009) affirm this non-violent tactic to seriously challenge and hopefully change such oppressive policies. They have called on Christians around the world to join them in these tactics.

A lexicon for understanding Palestinian rights

Colonialism

—*Colonialism* is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another and through military conquest, political control and economic domination and exploitation. The modern European colonial project emerged when it became possible to move large numbers of people across the ocean and to maintain political sovereignty in spite of distance. In Palestine, the economy is totally captive to Israel who maintains complete military, political and economic control over millions, who under the classic definition, are subjects of the state but cannot become citizens.

—*Settler Colonialism* - Yes, Zionism is Settler Colonialism, [says](#) Rabbi Brant Rosen. "Settler colonialism is premised on occupation and the elimination of the native population, while colonialism is primarily about conquest." ~Prof. of Anthropology Tate A. LeFevre. Israeli historian Ilan Pappé sees Zionism as [the last remaining active settler-colonialist project](#), coming at the tail end of the European colonial projects which aimed to replace the native populations.

Checkpoints - Over 100 checkpoints, mostly manned by Israeli military, spread throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), seriously impede and control Palestinian civilian movement from East Jerusalem to other areas of the OPT, including Gaza, Israel, and the outside world. Cattle-cages with long lines and indiscriminate questioning often turn a ten minute trip into an hours-long dehumanizing ordeal. These daily discriminatory practices make especially visible the charge of apartheid.

Ethnic cleansing - A systematic forced removal of ethnic or racial groups from a given territory by a more powerful ethnic group, often with the intent of making the land ethnically homogeneous. Based on recently declassified Israeli state documents, the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé has documented what happened in the creation of Israel in his 2006 book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*.

Exceptionalism (political and theological) - Exceptionalism is the belief and practice that "my people" are special, unique, or chosen by God and therefore exempt from the rules, laws, and behavior required of other peoples. In short, exceptionalism uses double standards, which often result in self-delusion, hypocrisy, and the oppression of other peoples.

Hamas - An Arabic acronym that stands for The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas is a political party based in political Islam; it promotes its own notions of piety in its attempts to govern the Gaza Strip. Hamas has risen to popularity in Gaza because of its stated refusal to honor past agreements between the secular Palestinian Authority and Israel, and because these agreements give away rights enshrined in international law. While their record of governance has been problematic, they have provided welfare for many families whose needs are not met and have filled a vacuum in a dire and desperate situation.

Intifada - An Arabic word literally meaning "shuddering" or "shaking off, it is used when referring to the concept of resistance or uprising against oppression. In the Palestinian context, the word refers to attempts to "shake off" the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the First and Second Intifadas, which began in 1987 and 2000. Their legal right to self-determination allows Palestinians to resist occupation based on the 1960 UN *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, and also in the Fourth Geneva Convention and its subsequent protocols.

Jerusalem - The city of Jerusalem is sacred to all three Abrahamic faiths. Both Israelis and Palestinians consider Jerusalem their capital, making it one of the "final status" negotiation points that will require agreement by all parties.. After occupying East Jerusalem in 1967, Israel massively expanded its municipal boundaries into the West Bank, then annexed it in a move that has been repeatedly rejected as illegal by the UN, including numerous Security Council resolutions. Prior to the Trump administration's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in November 2017, US policy was in line with the international community, which has refused to recognize any country's sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem until a multilateral agreement was reached. See theIPMN.org for more facts on Jerusalem.

Kairos Palestine - *Kairos* is a Greek New Testament term meaning 'time' in a special, urgent sense (cf. Mark 1:14-15; Ephesians 1:10) meant to evoke a heightened awareness of new God-given possibilities for remedy and change, especially for those under extended brutal oppression. *Kairos Palestine* is a confessional document from ecumenical church leaders in the Holy Land (2009),"a word of faith and hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering." The 2010 General Assembly of the PC(USA) "commends for study the *Kairos Palestine* document ('A Moment of Truth'), and endorses the document's emphases on hope for liberation, nonviolence, love of enemy, and reconciliation." As part of the worldwide Kairos movement, KairosUSA.org is a US ecumenical response (2012) to the call of KairosPalestine.ps.

Nakba - The Palestinian *Nakba* ("catastrophe" in Arabic) refers to the mass expulsion of Palestinian Arabs from British Mandate Palestine during the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state. (1947-49). The *Nakba* was a deliberate and systematic military plan to remove Palestinians in order to create a Jewish majority state in historic Palestine, which was overwhelmingly Arab prior to 1948. Internally, Zionist Jewish leaders used the euphemism "transfer" when discussing plans for what today would be called ethnic cleansing. see IMEU.org

Right of Return - Article 13(b) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." The Palestinian right of return has been confirmed repeatedly by the UN General Assembly, including through Resolution 3236, which "Reaffirms also the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return."

Separation Wall - 25-30 feet high and twice the height of the Berlin Wall, Israel has been constructing this 437 mile barrier

along, but mostly deeply inside the "Green Line,"(the internationally recognized Israel-West Bank border) . The majority of some sixty-seven built-in gates are not open on a daily basis to permit-carrying Palestinians. In a 2004 Advisory Opinion, the International Court of Justice condemned the structure, as it impedes the exercise of persons to "the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living," and called for its dismantling. Miles within the Occupied West Bank, it is in the process of absorbing almost 10% of the most fertile Palestinian land. The Wall and multitudinous checkpoints seriously inhibit daily work and travel of the indigenous Palestinian people.

Two-State vs One-State Solution - Israel accelerated its building of settlements on Palestinian lands in the early 90s. Today, obliterating the two-state solution, those lands are so chopped up they have been called "Swiss cheese" by Palestinians and are no longer contiguous or conducive for a state. If the two peoples were to share one state, there would be an almost equal number of Jews and non-Jews in that state. Israel does not want to lose majority control and sees this as a "demographic threat." One-state supporters are now advocating for equal rights for all people, regardless of religion or ethnicity. The New York Times [reported](#) in Jan. 2018 in an article entitled "Emboldened Israeli Right Presses Moves to Doom 2-State Solution," showing Israel's extreme right wing government supports one state with a doctrine of taking all the land. Either way, if not a *de jure* one state, Israel/Palestine is now a *de facto* one state with different laws for different people, i.e. an apartheid system.

Zionism

—*Zionism*: Proposed in 1898 by Herzl as a solution to European antisemitism, political Zionism is a religious or secular ideology based on the idea that Jewish safety requires the establishment of a Jewish homeland in historic Palestine. The declaration of Israel as a Jewish state in 1948 fused nationalism with militarism and expansion. The consequences for the indigenous Palestinian population were and are dispossession, ethnic cleansing, and military occupation.

—*Christian Zionism* (Evangelical, Dispensationalist) The belief that the return of Jesus requires complete Jewish Israeli control of the Holy Land.

—*Christian Zionism* (Mainline Protestant, Roman Catholic) The belief that God promised the Holy Land to modern-day Jews, and/or the belief that because Christian antisemitism contributed to the Holocaust, Christian repentance requires support for whatever is necessary for Israel to create a Jewish state; this keeps Palestinians in bondage and eviscerates them. Christian Zionism and some forms of political (Jewish) Zionism have used biblical and theological texts to justify the existence and discriminatory practices of the current political state of Israel. The General Assembly of the PC(USA) and other official bodies of the denomination have consistently declared, 1) The State of Israel is a geopolitical entity and is not to be validated theologically.* and 2) in its relationship to Palestinians, Israel is accountable to international law and universal human rights covenants.

*A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews, 119th GA, 1987.

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