

# A Call for United States Government Sanctions on Israel

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement; June 24, 2015

[www.lajewsforpeace.org](http://www.lajewsforpeace.org) <https://www.facebook.com/LAJP.org>

Decades of United States efforts have failed to end Israel's occupation of Palestinian areas and failed to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel, with both sides living in peace, security, and prosperity. For the good of all parties – Palestinians, Israelis, and Americans – we call on the United States government to impose sanctions on Israel until the conflict is resolved through compliance with United Nations resolutions.

**LA Jews for Peace** calls on President Obama to follow through on his March 19, 2015, comments to Prime Minister Netanyahu, that the US would reassess its options regarding the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, including diplomatic protection at the United Nations<sup>1</sup>. But President Obama has already stepped back from that position by shielding Israel from accountability at the UN. His administration successfully lobbied to keep Israel off the list of armies that kill and maim children, less than a year after Israel's assault on Gaza killed 540 children and wounded 2,955<sup>2</sup>.

The U.S. should now use government sanctions to persuade Israel to permit a sovereign Palestinian state, just like the US successfully used government sanctions to limit Iran's nuclear program and to end South African apartheid. **LA Jews for Peace** proposes that the Obama Administration begin these sanctions by lifting Israeli immunity at the Security Council through automatic US vetoes.

**LA Jews for Peace** also joins the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and prominent Christian clergy<sup>3</sup> in calling for enforcement of the Arms Export Control and Foreign Assistance Acts. These laws restrict U.S. military aid to legitimate defense and prohibit military aid to countries that abuse human rights. Rather than stop arming Israel, as dictated by U.S. law, the Administration is buying-off Israeli opposition to an Iran nuclear deal with new shipments of American first-strike weapons<sup>4</sup>, including the F-35 and bunker-buster bombs.

There are many other sanctions that the United States can take to change the dynamics of the Israel-Palestinian conflict and induce Israel to end the occupation. **LA Jews for Peace** also calls for the Obama Administration to enact sanctions on Israel that:

- Transfer funds from illegal arms exports to local humanitarian agencies and organizations benefiting both Israelis and Palestinians.
- End exemptions for US citizens who serve in the Israeli army.
- Revoke the tax-exempt status of U.S. philanthropies that donate funds to the Israeli army and to settlements.

If these sanctions do not end the occupation, then the US government should turn to the same sanctions it imposed on South Africa. For example, our government could:

- Ban visits by Israeli officials who advocate racist and militaristic policies.
- Freeze Israeli assets in US banks and limit Israeli financial transactions.
- Ban commercial trade with the United States.

<sup>1</sup> Ha'aretz, March 19, 2015: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.647965>

<sup>2</sup> NY Times, June 8, 2015: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/09/world/middleeast/israel-and-hamas-are-kept-off-a-grim-list.html>

<sup>3</sup> United Methodist Church Holy Land Task Force: [https://www.umhltf.org/UMs\\_Holy\\_Land\\_Task\\_Force.html#15\\_Leaders\\_Ltr\\_to\\_Congress](https://www.umhltf.org/UMs_Holy_Land_Task_Force.html#15_Leaders_Ltr_to_Congress)

<sup>4</sup> NY Times, June 9, 2015: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/10/world/middleeast/general-martin-dempsey-reassures-israel-on-security.html>