
How the Israeli Government is Utilising the Term ‘Antisemitism’ to Silence Critiques of Israeli Illegal Actions

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Abstract

This paper investigates the strategic appropriation of the term "antisemitism" by the Israeli government to suppress criticism of its actions, particularly those perceived as violating international humanitarian law and human rights in the Palestinian territories. It explores the historical evolution of the term, the controversial use of the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) working definition of antisemitism, and the implications of conflating political critique with racial or religious hatred. Through analysis of case studies involving activists, academics, and international organizations, the study demonstrates how accusations of antisemitism are often employed to delegitimize legitimate political discourse and shield Israeli policies from accountability. The paper argues that this instrumentalization of antisemitism dilutes the term's significance, undermines efforts to combat real antisemitic threats, and poses a danger to freedom of expression and global human rights advocacy. Recommendations are made to adopt clearer definitional boundaries that respect both the fight against antisemitism and the right to critique state conduct under international law.

Keywords: antisemitism, Zionism, Jewish, criticism, free speech, silence

Introduction

In recent years, the term ‘antisemitism’ has increasingly been weaponised in public discourse, particularly in relation to criticism of Israeli government policies and actions. This development raises serious concerns, as it can obscure legitimate debates about Israeli policies and human rights violations, especially with regard to the treatment of Palestinians. Hence, disagreement and discussion about accusations of antisemitism are inevitable since these varied methods provide differing conclusions about whether something is antisemitic or not.¹

The use of ‘antisemitism’ to silence critics of Israel is a violation of freedom of expressions, human rights and international law has become a major tool for defending the Israeli government’s actions, often deflecting attention from issues such as the Israeli occupation of

¹ Dov Waxman, David Schraub and Adam Hosein, ‘Arguing about Antisemitism: Why We Disagree about Antisemitism, and What We Can Do about It’ (2022) 45(9) *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1803.

Palestine, military operations and the claim by the UN of the ongoing genocide and humanitarian crisis in Gaza.² Moreover, there is a question as to whether antisemitism is equivalent to anti-Zionism; this will be discussed in more detail.

While antisemitism is a real and dangerous form of hatred that has caused untold suffering, especially during the Holocaust, the misuse of the term to silence discourse on Israel's policies can have damaging effects, both on the fight against real antisemitism and on the ability to engage in meaningful discussions about the Israel–Palestine conflict. Even Jews who criticise the Israeli government's cruel and inhumane treatment of the Palestinians risk being labelled antisemitic or anti-Jewish.³ This article explores how the term 'antisemitism' has been used to stifle criticism of Israel, and why this tactic is not only counterproductive but also dangerous for both Jewish communities and global discourse.

Theoretical Implications of Studying the Israel–Gaza Conflict as Genocide

Expanding the Concept of Genocide

The Gaza case challenges the traditional understanding of genocide (as codified in the 1948 Genocide Convention) by forcing scholars to interrogate whether genocide must always be “total annihilation,” or whether systemic destruction of life, health, infrastructure, and survival conditions also qualifies. It raises the question of whether “slow violence” and structural genocide can be integrated into genocide studies.⁴

Intersection of Genocide and Colonialism

The case engages with debates in settler colonial theory, particularly the idea that settler colonialism is inherently “a structure, not an event”, and that genocide may function as a recurring tool of elimination rather than a one-time act.⁵ It contributes to comparative genocide studies, linking Palestine to other contexts such as Indigenous dispossession and apartheid.

Redefining International Law and Human Rights Discourse

Studying Gaza highlights the limitations of international law in preventing or prosecuting genocide when the accused is a powerful state with strong international backing. It interrogates the politicization of legal definitions how terms like *antisemitism* or *terrorism* may be mobilized to suppress genocide discourse. The case questions whether international law is universal or structurally biased in favor of global power dynamics.

² Rights expert finds 'reasonable grounds' genocide is being committed in Gaza, https://www.ungeneva.org/en/news-media/news/2024/03/91946/rights-expert-finds-reasonable-grounds-genocide-being-committed-gaza?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

³ Stephanie Hollington-Sawyer, 'Beautiful Dream of Israel has Become a Nightmare', Dr Gabor Maté (Blog Post, 28 July 2014) <<https://drgabormate.com/beautiful-dream-israel-become-nightmare/>>.

⁴ Nixon, R. (2011). *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press.

⁵ Wolfe, P. (2006). Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 8(4), 387–409.

Memory, Narrative, and Competing Victimhood

The Israeli–Palestinian case reveals how the Holocaust and Jewish historical trauma are invoked in ways that complicate discussions of genocide. Theoretical debates emerge over whether one group’s victimhood can be used to justify or obscure another’s suffering (*competitive victimhood theory*).⁶

Moral Philosophy and Responsibility

The case forces scholars to revisit philosophical questions about collective responsibility, moral injury, and the duties of bystander states.⁷ It highlights the ethical responsibility of scholars, journalists, and policymakers in naming or avoiding the term *genocide*.

Implications for Peace and Justice Studies

Conceptualising Gaza as genocide complicates the frameworks for conflict resolution: if genocide is ongoing, is "peace negotiation" sufficient, or is justice and accountability a prerequisite? It challenges transitional justice models that assume symmetrical power relations between parties.

The Practical Implications of Studying the Israel–Gaza Conflict as Genocide

Strengthening International Accountability

Framing the conflict as genocide puts legal and political pressure on international institutions (UN, ICC, ICJ) to respond under the *Responsibility to Protect (R2P)* framework. It creates avenues for litigation, sanctions, and accountability measures against state and non-state actors.⁸

Policy Development and Humanitarian Response

Recognising genocide informs humanitarian strategies, ensuring that aid, reconstruction, and mental health interventions address the scale of destruction and trauma. It influences donor priorities, shifting support from short-term relief to long-term protection and justice mechanisms.⁹

Preventing Future Atrocities

⁶ Noor, M., Shnabel, N., Halabi, S., & Nadler, A. (2012). When suffering begets suffering: The psychology of inter-group competitive victimhood between adversarial groups in violent conflicts. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 16(4), 351–374.

⁷ Isaacs, Tracy, *Moral Responsibility in Collective Contexts* (2011; online edn, Oxford Academic, 22 Sept. 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199782963.001.0001>, accessed 3 Sept. 2025.

⁸ Straus, S. (2016). *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa*. Cornell University Press.

⁹ Shaw, M. (2013). *Genocide and International Relations: Changing Patterns in the Transitions of the Late Modern World*. Cambridge University Press.

Genocide studies contribute to early-warning systems for mass atrocities. By studying Gaza, scholars and policymakers may better identify risk indicators (starvation policies, forced displacement, dehumanising rhetoric) applicable in other conflict zones.¹⁰

Public Awareness and Advocacy

Framing Gaza within a genocide framework mobilises civil society, NGOs, and advocacy groups, shaping public opinion and creating grassroots pressure for policy change. It contributes to global solidarity movements, especially around human rights and anti-colonial struggles.

Educational and Memory Work

Documenting Gaza as genocide contributes to historical records that resist erasure, denial, or distortion. It informs curricula in genocide studies, peace studies, and human rights education, shaping how future generations understand state violence.¹¹

Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice

Viewing Gaza through the genocide lens reframes peace negotiations: reconciliation cannot proceed without recognition, accountability, and reparations. It underscores the need for truth commissions, international monitoring, and restorative justice approaches.

Methodology

This article employs a qualitative, desk-based research methodology. It draws on primary sources, including official United Nations reports, international human rights documentation, and legal texts such as the *Genocide Convention (1948)*,¹² alongside secondary sources from peer-reviewed academic literature in genocide studies, international law, and political theory.

The research uses a critical discourse analysis approach to examine how terms such as “genocide,” “antisemitism,” and “self-defence” are framed in political, legal, and media narratives.¹³ Comparative methods are also applied, situating the Gaza case within broader debates on settler colonialism and mass atrocities.

This methodology enables a rigorous evaluation of both the legal thresholds of genocide and the political implications of its denial or recognition, balancing normative theory with empirical evidence.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Schabas, W. A. (2009). *Genocide in International Law: The Crime of Crimes*. Cambridge University Press.

¹² United Nations. (1948). *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 78, p. 277. Adopted by Resolution 260 A (III) of the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948, entry into force 12 January 1951, <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide-convention.shtml>.

¹³ Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2015). *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE.

The distinction between antisemitism and anti-Zionism

In a debate in the BBC titled ‘Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism’, the debaters argued that Zionism, defined as the conviction in the Jewish entitlement to self-determination in Israel, has sparked intense global discussion for many years. Although the US government is taking steps to reinforce its unique bond with Israel, including the transfer of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, there remains significant criticism of Israel and its administration within American political discourse. Can a clear distinction be made between anti-Zionism and antisemitism?¹⁴

According to Norman G. Finkelstein’s book, *The Holocaust Industries*, the facts that emerged about the Holocaust were important to how the Israeli government was shielded post-1967 from criticism of its occupation and policies in Palestine. Additionally, Finkelstein discussed how the victimisation of Jewish people made it possible for them to receive millions of dollars in compensation, turning Germany into a slave to the Jewish people and a staunch defender of their occupation in Palestine. This goes some way towards explaining Germany’s pervasive support for the Genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Finkelstein revealed instances of fabricated narratives from certain Holocaust survivors, highlighting how the Jewish community has dismissed claims that individuals from other nationalities were also victims of the Holocaust, as they seek to ensure that the benefits of the Holocaust narrative are exclusively theirs.¹⁵

In summary, the Holocaust is often regarded as a unique tragedy, solely for the Jewish people, with no other suffering deemed comparable or even remotely similar. This perspective fosters a narrative that emphasises the Jewish experience of suffering and the collective guilt that the global community is expected to bear for the atrocities committed against them. Zionist ideology underscores this narrative of Holocaust suffering, as exclusively for the Jewish people, inhibiting the Palestinians from being recognised as sharing in similar suffering caused by Jewish/Zionist actions.

Another Israeli, Noam Chayut, was born in 1979 and joined the Nachel Brigade as a conscript in 1998. He swiftly rose to the rank of officer and saw sickness, action and crimes against civilian Palestinians during Operation Defensive Shield. He left the army in 2003 and later joined ‘Breaking the Silence’,¹⁶ a platform for former soldiers to record their testimonies about life in the military and the killing of innocent Palestinians. Noam questioned the victimisation of the Jewish people in the Holocaust after he experienced the unjust killing of Palestinians.¹⁷ This story from an Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) veteran should be taken seriously since the source is

¹⁴ Melanie Phillips, Einat Wilf, Mehdi Hasan, Ilan Pappé and Carrie Gracie, ‘Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism’, *Intelligences*² (Podcast) <<https://www.intelligencesquared.com/events/anti-zionism-is-anti-semitism/>>.

¹⁵ Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (Verso Academic, 1st ed, 2025).

¹⁶ *Breaking the Silence* (Web Page) <<https://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/>>.

¹⁷ Noam Chayut, *The Girl Who Stole My Holocaust* (Verso Books, 2014).

not biased; it should tell us that the systematic killing and the army's actions to wipe out Palestinians and disregard human rights are true, and that the Holocaust has been used to justify the army's brutal actions.

The blurring of criticism of Israel with antisemitism

At the heart of the issue is the increasingly common conflation of legitimate criticism of Israeli state policies with antisemitism and Israel's unlawful occupation of its neighbours. Criticising the Israeli government's actions in Palestine or its treatment of Palestinians is not inherently antisemitic, yet this distinction is often ignored. Some argue that Israel's defenders have intentionally blurred the line between criticism of Israel as a state and prejudice against Jews as a people.

Israel's defenders often claim that questioning Israeli government policies or highlighting human rights violations against Palestinians is a form of antisemitism.¹⁸ This view gained significant momentum in the early 2000s, particularly with the rise of the 'anti-Zionism equals antisemitism' argument. Zionism, the movement for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Israel, is distinct from Judaism, the religion practiced by Jews, yet the two are frequently conflated in political discourse. This false equivalence suggests that opposing the Israeli state or advocating for Palestinian rights is equivalent to opposing Jews as a whole. For example, the International Criminal Court (ICC)-issued arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been described by the Israeli Prime Minister as disgusting and antisemitic.¹⁹

Hence, even the highest court in the world, which was established in 1948 after the Second World War to investigate, prosecute, and try individuals accused of committing war crimes and genocide, and one group of those affected by genocide is the Jewish people.²⁰ This is considered by many human rights organisations, observers, and academics to be a contradiction of what the court was established for and the integrity of its members.

Another example of how the Israeli government applies the weapon of antisemitism every time their government is criticised is when the forging minister of Israel, Gideon Saar, said 'the Republic of Ireland had crossed "every red line"'. In a statement, he said Israel's ambassador to Dublin had been recalled in the past following what it called Ireland's 'unilateral decision to recognise a Palestinian state'. He added that the decision followed Ireland's announcement of its support for South Africa's legal action against Israel in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing the country of 'genocide'. Mr Saar said, 'The actions and anti-Semitic rhetoric used by

¹⁸ American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), 'Keeping Israel Safe and America Strong' (Web Page, 2025) <<https://www.aipac.org/>>.

¹⁹ 'Netanyahu "Rejects with Disgust" to ICC Arrest Warrant', *Deutsche Welle* (online at 22 November 2024) <<https://www.dw.com/en/netanyahu-rejects-with-disgust-icc-arrest-warrant/live-70838468>>.

²⁰ International Criminal Court (Web Page, 2025) < www.icc-cpi.int.

Ireland against Israel are rooted in the de-legitimisation and demonisation of the Jewish state, along with double standards.²¹

In this framework, any criticism of Israeli policies—whether about settlement expansion in the West Bank, the blockade of Gaza or military actions against Palestinians—can be branded ‘antisemitic’. This tactic not only ends debates about Israel but also shifts the conversation away from the issues at hand. Instead of discussing the facts on the ground—such as the conditions of Palestinians under occupation or the international law violations tied to Israeli settlements—attention is diverted to whether the criticism is antisemitic.

The case of the ‘international definition’ of antisemitism

A key moment in the weaponisation of antisemitism came with the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism in 2016. This definition expanded the scope of what might be considered antisemitic by including examples related to Israel, such as ‘denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination’ or ‘drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis’.²²

While the IHRA definition is important for identifying and combating actual antisemitism, critics argue that its inclusion of Israel-related criticisms creates a loophole that is ripe for abuse. The adoption of this definition by governments, universities and organisations around the world has made it easier for pro-Israel groups to accuse critics of the Israeli state of antisemitism, even when their words or actions are not antisemitic in any meaningful sense.²³

For example, when the United Nations Human Rights Council condemns Israel for its treatment of Palestinians,²⁴ or when activists and organisations call for boycotts of Israeli goods to protest the occupation,²⁵ these actions can now be framed as antisemitic by those who wish to delegitimise Palestinian solidarity movements. This has been seen in the backlash against figures

²¹ ‘Israel to Close Embassy in Ireland As It Criticises “Anti-Israel Policies”’, *BBC News* (online at 16 December 2024) <<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cq62mge27r0o>>.

²² Bernard Harrison and Lesley Klaff, ‘IHRA Definition and its Critics’ in Alvin H Rosenfeld (ed), *Contending with Antisemitism in a Rapidly Changing Political Climate* (PDF Book Section, Indiana University Press, 2021) 9 <<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/29738/3/Klaff-IHRADefinitionCritics%28AM%29.pdf>>.

²³ ‘The Weaponization of Antisemitism in the Debate over Israel’, *The New York Times* (New York, February 2021).

²⁴ Amnesty International, ‘Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory’ (Web Page, 2025) <<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/report-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/>>.

²⁵ Whizy Kim, ‘The Boycott Movement against Israel, Explained’, *Vox* (online at 28 October 2023) <<https://www.vox.com/world-politics/23935054/boycott-movement-palestine-against-israel-bds>>

like Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn, who have faced accusations of antisemitism largely for their criticism of Israeli policies.²⁶

Marginalising and stigmatising: The impact on free speech and public discourse

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares that ‘everyone has the right to freedom of expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers’.²⁷

The European Union’s adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism has led to widespread restrictions on the rights of assembly and freedom of expression, according to research from a rights group.²⁸ However, the ELSC report states that the definition has been adopted and implemented in a way that silences criticism of Israeli government policies and practices while simultaneously encouraging and validating the suppression of advocacy for Palestinian rights.

In the UK, lawyers and retired judges argue that the IHRA²⁹ Working definition undermines freedom of expression, and the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, was wrong to forcefully impose it on universities. Prof David Feldman, director of the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London, has criticised its shortcomings.³⁰

The IHRA added to this definition illustrative examples of statements that could be antisemitic when ‘taking into account the overall context’. The majority of these examples do not refer to Jewish people in general but to Israel. They have been widely used to suppress or avoid criticism of the State of Israel.³¹

²⁶ Kate Aronoff, ‘Accusing Bernie Sanders of Antisemitism? That’s a New Low’, *The Guardian* (online at 18 December 2019) <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/18/the-rights-accusations-of-antisemitism-against-sanders-are-cynical-and-dangerous>>.

²⁷ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, GA Res 217A (III), UN GAOR, UN Doc A/810 (10 December 1948) art 19.

²⁸ European Legal Support Center (ELSC), ‘Suppressing Palestinian Rights Advocacy through the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, Violating the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Assembly in the European Union and the UK’ (ELSC Report, 6 June 2023) <https://res.cloudinary.com/elsc/images/v1685978238/The-Practice-of-Suppressing-Palestinian-Rights-Advocacy-FINAL-PP/The-Practice-of-Suppressing-Palestinian-Rights-Advocacy-FINAL-PP.pdf?_i=AA>.

²⁹ IHRA, ‘Working Definition of Antisemitism’ (Web Page, 2025) <<https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>>.

³⁰ ‘Antisemitism Definition Is Undermining Free Speech’, *The Guardian* (online at 7 January 2021) <<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2021/jan/07/antisemitism-definition-is-undermining-free-speech>>.

³¹ Ibid.

A point of contention in the UK is how to distinguish between Jewish people who perished in the Holocaust and the State of Israel, in which citizens ought to have the freedom to object to its policies.

The use of antisemitism to silence criticism of Israel has profound implications for free speech and democratic debate. When accusations of antisemitism are wielded indiscriminately, they create an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship. Public figures, politicians, academics, and journalists may hesitate to speak out about Israeli policies because of the potential for backlash and reputational damage, which undermines honest dialogue about one of the most pressing geopolitical issues of our time.³²

The story of Anna Younes

Anna Younes, an independent policy writer and researcher based in Germany, said she took a hit to her career after publishing an article speaking out against the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2014. Miss Younes stated, ‘My reputation in public is that of an anti-Semite and my academic career in this country is over ... I am essentially entirely ignored or sidelined.’³³

In 2019, Younes was uninvited to participate in a panel discussion organised by the democratic socialist party Die Linke after organisers received a secret dossier hours before the event took place. The dossier was compiled by the Research and Information Center on Anti-Semitism Berlin and the Mobile Counselling Service against Right-Wing Extremism Berlin. It accused Younes of being an anti-Semite, ‘terrorist’ sympathiser and sexist, based on a paper she wrote about the women’s movement in Hamas, the group that governs the Gaza Strip.³⁴

Younes observed that the statement made it obvious that they had not read the article. Additionally, it becomes evident that it is sufficient to accuse anyone of endorsing extremism and sexism based on people’s self-representation and writing about people’s own topics.

The suppression of dissenting voices also weakens efforts to address genuine human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian territories. Israel’s military operations in Gaza, the expansion of settlements in the West Bank, and its treatment of Palestinian civilians have been widely condemned by international human rights organisations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the United Nations. However, the focus on accusations of

³² Denis Muller, ‘At a Time When Journalism Needs To Be at Its Strongest, An Open Letter on the Israel/Hamas War Has Left the Profession Diminished’, *The Conversation* (online at 28 November 2023) <<https://theconversation.com/at-a-time-when-journalism-needs-to-be-at-its-strongest-an-open-letter-on-the-israel-hamas-war-has-left-the-profession-diminished-218596>>

³³ ‘Adoption of Anti-Semitism Definition Curbs Free Speech: Report’, *Al Jazeera* (online at 7 June 2023) <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/7/adoption-of-anti-semitism-definition-curbs-free-speech-report>>.

³⁴ *ibid.*

antisemitism detracts from these critical discussions and diverts attention away from the ongoing suffering of Palestinians.³⁵

This silencing effect is also felt in the academic world, where scholars who study the Israeli–Palestinian conflict or advocate for Palestinian rights often face harsh criticism and even professional consequences.³⁶ For instance, several academics have lost their jobs or faced disciplinary actions due to accusations of antisemitism. As a result, many scholars are reluctant to engage with topics related to Israel–Palestine for fear of being labelled antisemitic, stifling important academic research and discourse on the conflict.

David Clennon, an Emmy Award-winning actor and longtime supporter of Palestinian rights, wrote via email, ‘Hollywood used to be unanimous in showing its admiration and loyalty to Israel. A new show business generation is beginning to challenge that dominant ideology. And of course, the old guard will do everything in their power to intimidate them.’³⁷

Clennon admits:

I considered requesting anonymity for this interview, but I’m an old-timer, and I don’t have as much to lose as the younger folks who feel empathy and solidarity with the people of Palestine. Furthermore, criticism of Zionist philosophy and practices has resulted in the termination or threats of other actors, writers, and industry workers.³⁸

Other actors, writers and industry employees have been fired or threatened for criticising the ideology and practice of Zionism. But these same criticisms are made by Israelis themselves—intellectuals and political activists. It’s ironic that there is more open debate about Zionism in Israel than is allowed in Hollywood.³⁹

Susan Sarandon is another person who has suffered as a result of speaking up. The United Talent Agency (UTA) fired the Oscar-winning performer and activist due to remarks she made at a recent pro-Palestinian demonstration in New York: ‘Many people are terrified of being Jewish

³⁵ ‘Israel Shuns UN Human Rights Council, Accusing It of “Antisemitism”, *The New Arab* (online at 6 February 2025) <<https://www.newarab.com/news/israel-shuns-un-human-rights-council-calls-it-antisemitic>>.

³⁶ Anna Mier y Teran, ‘War in Palestine and Its Impact on Western Countries’, *Universidad de Navarra* (Web Page, 20 January 2024) <<https://www.unav.edu/web/global-affairs/war-in-palestine-and-its-impact-on-western-countries>>.

³⁷ David Smith, ‘“People Are Being Penalised”: Hollywood Divided over Israel–Hamas Conflict’, *The Guardian* (online at 2 December 2023) <<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2023/dec/02/hollywood-divide-israel-gaza-conflict-susan-sarandon-cynthia-nixon>>.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

right now, and they are experiencing what it's like to be a Muslim in this nation, where violence is a common occurrence⁴⁰

If you criticise Israel's polices or actions, you are antisemitic

This article focuses on facts from the current conflict to demonstrate how the Israeli government and its lobby can label any country, organisation or individual in the world 'antisemitic' regardless of a lack of evidence of antisemitism.

UN experts have accused Israel of 'genocidal acts' and using sexual violence as a war strategy in Gaza.⁴¹ The Israeli government has rejected the findings of the UN. The Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu, has labelled the accusations as baseless, claiming that the UN is continuing antisemitic attacks against Israel.⁴²

Netanyahu has referred to the ICC's arrest warrant as 'antisemitic'. The ICC has issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant and the Hamas commander.⁴³ Netanyahu has called the ICC's arrest warrant 'antisemitic'.⁴⁴ However, Geoffrey Robertson KC, a leading human rights lawyer who has been a UN war crimes judge, argued that the ICC arrest warrant for Netanyahu was 'not antisemitic'. Robertson added:

We've had Kenyan leaders issued with warrants. They turned up, they were given bail, and they fought the case through lawyers. It never got to trial. So there are precedents. But never perhaps a leader that is so blindly backed by America, which is not a member of the court, but will bring pressure upon it. And we just hope that the judges are independent enough and they've shown independence by issuing this arrest warrant today.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ United Nations, 'Rights Probe Alleges Sexual Violence Against Palestinians by Israeli Forces Used as "Method of War"', *UN News* (online at 13 March 2025) <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1161081>>.

⁴² Lazar Berman, 'Netanyahu Slams UN Council behind "Genocide" Report as "Antisemitic, Irrelevant"', *Times of Israel* (online at 13 March 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/netanyahu-slams-un-council-behind-genocide-report-as-antisemitic-irrelevant/>.

⁴³ United Nations, 'ICC Issues Arrest Warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant and Hamas Commander', *UN News* (online at 21 November 2024) <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/11/1157286>>.

⁴⁴ 'Netanyahu Calls ICC's Arrest Warrant "Antisemitic"—Video', *The Guardian* (Reuters, 21 November 2024) <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2024/nov/21/netanyahu-calls-icc-arrest-warrant-antisemitic-video>>.

⁴⁵ Matt Frei, 'ICC Arrest Warrant for Netanyahu "Not Anti-Semitic" Says Leading Human Rights Lawyer', *4 News* (online at 21 November 2024) <<https://www.channel4.com/news/icc-arrest-warrant-for-netanyahu-not-anti-semitic-says-leading-human-rights-lawyer>>.

The Vatican has called for a probe into potential genocide in Gaza and Netanyahu has criticised Pope Francis over his remarks on genocide in Gaza.⁴⁶ Even the highest spiritual leader of the world, when calling for an investigation into the possibility of genocide, has been attacked harshly by the Prime Minister of Israel. Netanyahu described Pope Francis' comments as disgraceful and rebuked the Vatican's stance.⁴⁷ On another occasion, Israel warned the Vatican against making false 'parallelisms'.⁴⁸

Pope Francis only asked for peace and spoke about the victims and the suffering, but the Israeli Embassy to the Holy See has warned the Vatican to avoid what is described as 'linguistic ambiguities' and 'parallelisms' that would equate the aggressors in the conflict with its victims. Again, the Israeli government never misses any opportunity to accuse anyone regardless of their position or even their request to say anything and censors them straight away to teach others to remain silent.

An Amnesty International investigation has concluded that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza.⁴⁹ The Amnesty International investigation came to the conclusion:

Unprecedented scale and magnitude

Israel's actions following Hamas's deadly attacks on 7 October 2023 have brought Gaza's population to the brink of collapse. Its brutal military offensive had killed more than 42,000 Palestinians, including over 13,300 children, and injured over 97,000 more by 7 October 2024, many in direct or deliberately indiscriminate attacks, often wiping out entire multigenerational families. This has caused unprecedented destruction, which experts say has occurred at a level and speed not seen in any other conflict in the twenty-first century, levelling entire cities and destroying critical infrastructure, agricultural land and cultural and religious sites. It thereby rendered large swathes of Gaza uninhabitable. 'Again, Israel has adamantly rejected allegations

⁴⁶ Louise Guillot, 'Pope Calls for Probe into Potential Genocide in Gaza', *Politico* (online at 17 November 2024) <<https://www.politico.eu/article/pope-francis-probe-investigate-genocide-gaza-israel-benjamin-netanyahu-book/>>.

⁴⁷ 'Netanyahu Criticizes Pope Francis over Gaza Genocide Inquiry Request', *Islamic Republic News Agency* (online at 21 November 2024) <<https://en.irna.ir/news/85666788/Netanyahu-criticizes-Pope-Francis-over-Gaza-genocide-inquiry>>.

⁴⁸ Elise Ann Allen, 'As Pope Appeals for Peace, Israel Warns Vatican against False "Parallelisms"', *Crux* (online at 9 October 2023) <<https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2023/10/as-pope-appeals-for-peace-israel-warns-vatican-against-false-parallelisms>>.

⁴⁹ Amnesty International, 'Amnesty International Investigation Concludes Israel is Committing Genocide against Palestinians in Gaza' (Web Page, 5 December 2024) <<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza/>>.

of genocide as antisemitic ‘blood libel’.⁵⁰ Amnesty International called on the United States to arrest Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.⁵¹

The organisation said in a series of posts on the ‘X’ platform: ‘By receiving Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is wanted by the ICC on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, the United States is showing contempt for international justice.’

‘The United States has a clear obligation under the Geneva Conventions⁵² to seek out and attempt to extradite persons accused of committing or ordering the commission of war crimes’, the organisation said. ‘Individuals alleged to have committed war crimes or crimes against humanity should not be given safe haven, it stressed.’⁵³

This is how an open letter, recently published by a distinguished group of scholars of the Holocaust and antisemitism, begins. Its main concern is that appealing to the memory of the Holocaust risks obscuring the understanding of antisemitism and dangerously misrepresents the causes of violence in Israel and Palestine.⁵⁴ ‘We write to express our dismay and disappointment at political leaders and notable public figures invoking Holocaust memory to explain the current crisis in Gaza and Israel.’⁵⁵

The scholars quote several problematic statements and acts by Israeli, European and American officials in the context of Israel’s ongoing assault on Gaza following the Hamas-led attack on 7 October.

The Israeli Ambassador to the UN uses the Holocaust to escape from questions about the genocide in Gaza. This comparison is extremely concerning. The Israeli Ambassador to the UN donned a yellow star featuring the words ‘Never Again’ while addressing the UN Security Council. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu stated that ‘Hamas are the new Nazis’, framing the war on Gaza as a battle for Western civilisation in the face of barbarism. Further, US President

⁵⁰ <<https://abcnews.gov.com/international/wireStory/amnesty-international-genocide-occurring-gaza-accusation-israel-rejects-116468806>>.

⁵¹ Amnesty International, ‘US Must Arrest Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Surrender to ICC’ (Web Page) <<https://www.amnesty.org.au/US-must-arrest-israeli-prime-minister-netanyahu-and-surrender-to-icc/>>.

⁵² *Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, signed 12 August 1949, GC 75 UNTS 973 (entered into force 21 October 1950) <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.33_GC-IV-EN.pdf>.

⁵³ Amnesty International, ‘US Must Arrest Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’, n 51.

⁵⁴ Marco Carnelos, ‘War on Gaza: Invoking the Holocaust to Justify Israeli War Crimes Dishonours Its Victims’, *Middle East Eye* (online at 22 December 2023) <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/war-on-gaza-invoking-holocaust-justify-israeli-crimes-dishonours-victims>>.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Joe Biden remarked that Hamas was ‘engaged in barbarism that is as consequential as the Holocaust’.⁵⁶

The comparison to the Holocaust is emotionally powerful but controversial; some Jewish voices, including Holocaust survivors, have criticised Israeli policies towards Palestinians, while others see any comparison as deeply offensive and historically inaccurate. The historical context of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian dates well before 1946, rooted in national movements of Zionism to find a home for the Jewish people at the cost of the Palestinians who were under the British rule.⁵⁷ The 1947 UN Partition Plan, Israel’s 1948 Declaration of Independence, and the subsequent Arab–Israeli wars have all contributed to the current situation. Since 1967, Israel has occupied the West Bank and Gaza (though it withdrew settlers and troops from Gaza in 2005, it maintains a blockade along with Egypt).⁵⁸

Australia has been accused of antisemitism.

Ayelet Shaked, a right-wing politician who left parliament in 2022, accused the Australian government of anti-Semitism after her visa was rejected last month, sparking backlash from the Israeli government.⁵⁹

It is evident that any action perceived as unfavourable by the Israeli government is labelled ‘antisemitism’. In his initial public remarks on the issue, Australian Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke stated that he refused a visa to a former Israeli government minister due to concerns that her presence would jeopardise social cohesion.⁶⁰ In response, Zionist Federation of Australia President Jeremy Liebler tweeted, ‘The Australian Government’s decision to refuse a visa to Ayelet Shaked is both baffling and deeply offensive.’⁶¹ Regardless of the tight relationship between Australia and Israel, Ayelet tweeted on X, ‘The issue here is not that I didn’t get a visa. The issue here is that the current Australian government has become anti-Semitic.’⁶² In other

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ United Nations, ‘Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem: 1917–1947’ (Web Page) <<https://www.un.org/unispal/history2/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i-1917-1947/>>.

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, ‘Israel’s Occupation: 50 Years of Dispossession’ (Web Page, 7 June 2017) <<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/06/israel-occupation-50-years-of-dispossession/>>.

⁵⁹ Maani Truu, ‘Home Affairs Minister Says He Denied Israeli Politician Ayelet Shaked’s Visa over Social Cohesion Concerns’, *ABC News* (online at 1 December 2024) <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-12-01/ayelet-shaked-visa-burke-social-cohesion/104669788>>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Sam Sokol and ToI Staff, ‘Ex-minister Shaked Denied Visa to Australia, Reportedly Since She Might “Incite Discord”’, *Times of Israel* (online at 21 November 2024) <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/ex-minister-shaked-denied-visa-to-australia-reportedly-since-she-might-incite-discord/>>.

⁶² @Ayelet__Shaked, ‘The Issue Here Is Not That I Didn’t Get a Visa. The Issue Here is That the Current Australian Government Has Become Anti-Semitic’ (X, 21 November 2024, 10:38 pm) <https://x.com/Ayelet__Shaked/status/1859561913203544368/photo/1>.

words, the Israeli government's mentality is, 'If you express disagreement with me or provide objective criticism, it implies that you hold antisemitic views.'

The significant impact of the misuse of the term 'antisemitism' in the United States

According to the Trump administration, many US universities have become proponents of antisemitism and ideological indoctrination.⁶³ This is how the administration views any criticism of the Israeli government/army in relation to war in Gaza, regardless of whether it is genuine. The Trump administration has applied certain measures that have not been considered too controversial, such a ban on masks, which are often used by student protesters during rallies. Other interventions, such as the redefining of 'antisemitism' to include anti-Zionism, a review of hiring processes and an order to place Middle Eastern studies departments under academic receivership for five years, have sparked more concern among faculty and students.⁶⁴ These measures by the Trump administration clearly show that the US administration not only supports Israel but will also silence any voice that may criticise the Israeli government's brutal actions in Gaza.

The Trump administration has formed a Federal Antisemitic Task Force that includes multiple agencies and has spearheaded some of the most well-publicised actions against colleges to date. The task force seeks to examine government financing for institutions that it feels have violated students' civil rights.⁶⁵

Princeton President Christopher Eisgruber said in a recent interview with *The New York Times*, 'What the Trump administration is doing enters a "whole new territory"'; he added, 'the government was using its tremendous power over research dollars to try to control what a private university was doing in terms of matters that are generally considered part of academic freedom. Eisgruber continued: 'There's a very fundamental threat here right now ... to America's research universities that anybody who cares about the strength of this country, our economy, our prosperity, our security, our health should be worried about.'⁶⁶

Irrational use of the term 'antisemitism' continues in the United States, since colleges also face other threats from the federal government. The Department of Education has launched or

⁶³ Sydney Lang, 'The Trump Administration Escalates Its Crackdown on US Universities', *SBS News* (online at 17 April 2025) <<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/podcast-episode/the-trump-administration-escalates-its-crackdown-on-us-universities/derowqcp5>>.

⁶⁴ Sheldon Pollock, 'The US Government Has Sent Columbia University a Ransom Note', *The Guardian* (online at 19 March 2025) <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/mar/19/government-trump-columbia-university>>.

⁶⁵ Jessica Blake, 'What to Know About Trump's Strategy Targeting Colleges' Grants and Contracts', *Inside Higher Ed* (online at 18 April 2025) <<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/politics-elections/2025/04/18/what-know-about-trumps-funding-threats-colleges>>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

actively pursued at least 97 investigations concerning alleged antisemitism and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs, which could imperil those institutions' access to federal financial assistance. Further, the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Energy have moved to cap reimbursements for costs indirectly related to research, which, if enacted, could cost colleges billions.⁶⁷

The Trump administration's war on the supporters of the Palestinians and the attack on American universities took a crucial turn when the Trump administration forced universities to stop students from protesting and threatened to cut university funding in a bizarre and sick show of how America blindly supports the Israeli crimes in Gaza, and a reckoning of American democratic freedom of expression.⁶⁸ Moreover, the arrest warrant for students who protested against the unlawful killing of journalists, rescue teams, humanitarian organisations and the mass killing of children and women placed American democracy and freedom at the same level of other authoritarian countries, such as Egypt and North Korea.

The United States of America, which is supposed to protect international law and human rights around the world, blindly used the term of antisemitism to withdraw from the Human Rights Council, arguing that the council is antisemitic.⁶⁹

The US support for Israel of the injustice and unlawful war on Gaza is based on long relationship, and the result of that support has been the withdrawal from the Human Rights Council, which has weakened both the US's own moral standing and the broader global human rights system. While the council does face legitimate criticism, real influence and reform are only possible through engagement, not absence. This episode highlights the tension between principled leadership and political strategy in international diplomacy.⁷⁰

The US has rejected and challenged the ICC arrest warrants for Israeli officials.⁷¹ Now, Netanyahu is formally a suspected war criminal wanted by the ICC. Yet in Washington, when he

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ The White House, 'Withdrawing the United States from and Ending Funding to Certain United Nations Organizations and Reviewing United States Support to All International Organizations' (Presidential Action, 4 February 2025) <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/withdrawing-the-united-states-from-and-ending-funding-to-certain-united-nations-organizations-and-reviewing-united-states-support-to-all-international-organizations/>>.

⁷⁰ International Justice Resource Centre, 'Consequences of the U.S. Departure from the Human Rights Council' (Web Page, 10 July 2018) <<https://ijrcenter.org/2018/07/10/consequences-of-the-u-s-departure-from-the-human-rights-council/>>.

⁷¹ 'US Rejects ICC Arrest Warrants for Israeli Officials, White House Spokesperson Says', *Reuters* (online at 21 November 2024) <<https://www.reuters.com/world/us-rejects-icc-arrest-warrants-israeli-officials-white-house-spokesperson-says-2024-11-21/>>.

spoke in front of the United States Congress earlier this year, the lawmakers stood up and clapped for him dozens of times, in a bizarre and low action from the country that is considered the biggest democracy in the world. The American Karine Jean-Pierre also reiterated the US argument that the ICC has no jurisdiction over Israeli officials because Israel is not a party to the court. But the court has rejected that rationale, asserting that it has jurisdiction on the matter because Palestine, where the suspected crimes occurred, accepts the court's authority. The US then decided to punish the ICC by imposing a sanction on its members—a situation that has never occurred in history—based on accusations of antisemitism.⁷²

Jewish people have been accused of being antisemitic

It has been reported that Jewish people who protested against the mistreatment and the genocide occurring in Gaza have been accused of antisemitism because they should not oppose the State of Israel and the Zionists.⁷³ This misuse of the term 'antisemitism' can also sow division within Jewish communities. Many Jewish organisations and individuals around the world have expressed strong opposition to Israeli policies, particularly in relation to the treatment of Palestinians. By the conflation of criticism of Israel with antisemitism, a broad range of Jewish voices are marginalised or silenced, undermining the ability of Jewish communities to engage in an open discussion about Israel and its policies.⁷⁴

In *The Telegraph UK*, Kennan Malik denounced critics of Israel as 'un-Jews' or antisemites, which suggests a perversion of history. The story of William Zuckerman, who criticised the Israeli mistreatments of Palestine, and his erasure, is one of many told by Geoffrey Levin in his new book *Our Palestine Question*, on the forgotten history of Jewish dissent in America in the decades following the founding of Israel. The book explores the history of American Jewish opposition to Zionism and support for the Palestinian cause by those who have been accused of un-Jewishness or antisemitism.⁷⁵

In *Genocide, the Holocaust and Israel–Palestine*, Omer Bartov, who was born in Israel in 1954, writes that any signal or mention of the war crimes of the Israeli army is considered a betrayal and antisemitism or/and anti-Zionism, and he emphasises that the obliteration or genocide of the

⁷² The White House, 'Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court' (Presidential Action, 6 February 2025) <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/imposing-sanctions-on-the-international-criminal-court/>>.

⁷³ Abraham Gutman, 'Supporting Palestinian Rights is Antisemitic Because Israel Wants It to Be', *NBC News* (online at 27 May 2021) <<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/how-jews-can-support-palestinian-rights-condemn-antisemitism-ncna1268680>>.

⁷⁴ 'What's the Difference between Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism?', *BBC News* (online at 29 April 2016) <<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-36160928>>.

⁷⁵ Kenan Malik, 'Denouncing Critics of Israel as "Un-Jews" or Antisemites is a Perversion of History', *The Guardian* (online at 11 February 2024) <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/feb/11/denouncing-critics-of-israel-as-un-jews-or-antisemites-is-a-perversion-of-history>>.

Palestinians is an ideology that is fed to Israeli children from the day they are born. Furthermore, Bartov explains, this is part of the Zionist agenda to free Israel (Palestine) from anyone not Jewish. Bartov confirmed in his book that the Israeli army, even in killing children and women, does not feel remorse or guilt because this is its mission and it must be achieved, and this mission was commanded by the Lord—to have a state only for the Jewish people and to prevent another Holocaust from occurring.⁷⁶

Gideon Levy, an Israeli author accused of being antisemitic because he chose to be on the right side of history by saying the truth about the war on Gaza, described the war as a genocide.⁷⁷ His latest article draws a comparison with what happened to the Jewish people in 1903 in Kishinev, Russia, when riots continued for three days and Jewish homes were vandalised; Jewish people had their belonging stolen, women were raped and children were thrown from the second floor of buildings. The number of Jewish people killed in those three days was 49, similar to the number of Palestinian women and children killed yesterday in Gaza. Levy added that the 47 people killed in Gaza included a pregnant woman and four children who were in a salon to have their hair cut as well as another five children who were burned on their white sheets. He emphasised that he had never seen a more frightening picture than this in his entire life. Levy observed that the children of Gaza were not thrown from the windows; instead they have been burned alive. He added, who can dare to say the Israeli army did not intentionally aim to burn children Gaza in a refugee camp who were supposed to be safe and secure from attack? He continued that Israel does not allow the media to visit Gaza to record these crimes, which was what happened in Kishinev, until the Russians allowed the media to enter and a book was written about that crime.⁷⁸

The intentional misuse of antisemitism not only harms Palestinian solidarity movements but also undermines the broader fight against actual antisemitism. Antisemitism is a real and pervasive form of hate that has resulted in the deaths of high number of Jewish people throughout history, most notoriously during the Holocaust. Consequently, by co-opting antisemitism for political purposes, defenders of Israel's policies risk diluting the meaning and importance of fighting actual antisemitic conduct.

Moreover, accusations of antisemitism can alienate people who might otherwise be sympathetic to the plight of the Palestinian people. If individuals fear that they will be labelled antisemites for

⁷⁶ Omer Bartov, *Genocide, the Holocaust and Israel–Palestine: First-Person History in Times of Crisis* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2023).

⁷⁷ Johann Hari, 'Is Gideon Levy the Most Hated Man in Israel or Just the Most Heroic?', *The Independent* (online at 24 September 2010) <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/is-gideon-levy-the-most-hated-man-in-israel-or-just-the-most-heroic-2087909.html>>.

⁷⁸ Gideon Levy and Khan Yunis, 'Gaza's City of Slaughter', *Haaretz* (online at 20 April 2025) <<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2025-04-20/ty-article/.premium/in-the-city-of-slaughter/00000196-4f6b-d9fb-a79f-6feb48d10000>>.

speaking out about the Israeli government's actions, they may avoid engaging with Palestinian human rights issues altogether. This not only hampers efforts to secure justice for Palestinians but also diminishes global solidarity against all forms of hate, including antisemitism.

Reclaiming the narrative: Defending free speech and combating antisemitism

It is crucial to distinguish between legitimate criticism of Israeli policies and hate speech directed at Jews. Opposing the policies of the Israeli government, advocating for Palestinian rights or supporting movements like the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign does not constitute antisemitism. These actions are rooted in the belief that Palestinians deserve equal rights, justice and freedom from occupation.

At the same time, it is essential to continue fighting against antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and all forms of hatred. Antisemitism remains a real and persistent threat to Jewish communities worldwide, and its eradication should be a priority. Nevertheless, that goal can never be achieved by sacrificing free speech or by weaponising the term 'antisemitism' to silence critics of Israel's policies and actions against Palestinians.

To move forward, governments, universities, organisations and influencers should create an environment wherein open, honest discussions about the Israel–Palestine conflict can take place without the threat of accusations of antisemitism being used to shut down valid criticism. That can only be achieved by protecting free speech and addressing the underlying issues of injustice in Palestine, which may give hope to advancing both the cause of Palestinian rights and the fight against real antisemitism.

Conclusion

The US, the EU and other countries have employed the term 'antisemitism' to silence any voices that criticise the State of Israel. This behaviour is not only damaging to Palestinian advocacy but also harmful to the global fight against hatred and discrimination. Authors, universities and human rights organisations should be able to criticise Israeli government policies and military actions in Gaza without being accused of antisemitism. Conflating legitimate political dissent with racial or religious hatred undermines the ability to address the serious human rights violations occurring in Palestine and weakens the struggle against real antisemitism. Balance is crucial when reclaiming the conversation and ensuring that both Jewish communities and Palestinian rights are protected through meaningful, respectful dialogue—free from the manipulation of sensitive terms for political gain.

Criticising the actions of the Israeli government—especially in the context of Gaza, the occupation and the potential for genocide or violations of international law and war crimes—is not inherently antisemitic. Holding any government accountable for human rights violations is a fundamental principle of international justice. However, it is essential that such criticism remains focused on state policies and actions, not on the Jewish people as a whole.

Antisemitism is a very real and dangerous form of hatred that must be unequivocally condemned. At the same time, silencing legitimate criticism of Israel by labelling it antisemitic risks shielding the Israeli government from accountability and undermines the global fight for justice and human rights. The moral imperative is clear: we must be able to denounce oppression wherever it occurs, including in Palestine, while standing firmly against all forms of racism, including antisemitism.

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