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ACTIVISM

## Joining forces: Time for Jews to unite in the struggle against Zionism, apartheid and genocide

The First Jewish Anti-Zionist Congress will take place from June 13 to 15 in Vienna, Austria, with the aim of amplifying Jewish voices against Zionism and assisting the global movement for justice and liberation in Palestine.

BY [HAIM BRESHEETH-ŽABNER](#) AND [RONNIE BARKAN](#) - JUNE 12, 2025 - 7

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PROTESTORS CARRY A BANNER READING, "JEWISH BLOC FOR PALESTINE" AT THE FRONT OF A MARCH. (PHOTO COURTESY OF JEWISH ANTI-ZIONIST CONGRESS)


Anti-Zionism is as old as political Zionism. Both movements were born in the same year, 1896. One was a small movement, started by a Viennese journalist, Theodor Herzl, while the other was a mass movement of Jewish workers in Eastern Europe and Russia – the Socialist Labour Bund. While the Bund became a large movement in several East European countries – in Poland, for example, it was the second largest party in the Sejm, the Polish Parliament – Zionism represented less than 1% of the Jewish population in Europe. During the great period of Jewish emigration out of Eastern Europe starting in 1881, millions of Jews immigrated to North and South America, Britain, South Africa, and Australia. During the same period, a few thousand Zionist Jews immigrated to Palestine.

If not for Hitler, Zionism would have remained a small and insignificant Jewish colony in Palestine in all probability. The six million Jews who died in the Holocaust were not Zionists – most were anti-Zionist, either as Bundist Socialists, or Ultra-Orthodox religious Jews, who saw Zionism as anti-Jewish in the extreme. By exterminating the great Jewish communities of Europe, the Nazis killed off Anti-Zionism, leaving behind some 250,000 survivors, mostly incarcerated in European DP camps after WW2.

Europe, the U.S., UK, Canada, and the rest of the West were loath to take in any survivors, if they could help it. So instead of offering the broken people who survived the Nazis a home in their own lands, they just sent them to Palestine – out of sight, out of mind. This is one of the main reasons that these states voted in 1947 for dividing Palestine – the larger part – 55% – for Zionism, with the rest – 44% – ‘given’ to the indigenous population, the Palestinians, who made up the great majority – more than two thirds – of the population. This kind of justice has been applied to Palestine by the West ever since.

The Nakba in 1948 compounded the severe injustice of the UN depriving Palestinians of 55% of their land, in order to find a place for the victims of European fascism and Nazism – a conflict the Palestinians or other Arabs had no part in. This injustice, which the UN decided not to address apart from passing resolutions defied by Israel, had only deepened in 1967, with Israel taking control of the whole of Palestine, and starting to settle it illegally. Today, Palestinians do not control even 5% of their own country.

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Despite this, the UN has avoided any sanctions against Israel. All efforts to start sanctions were all vetoed by the West. This has been the situation since 1948, but it does not have to be that way.

While the West, led by the U.S., automatically vetoes all Security Council Resolutions against Israel, it cannot veto UNGA resolutions, which constitute international law. In 1974, the UNGA voted to suspend South Africa for the crime of Apartheid. It was passed by a large majority—91 for, 22 against. Most of the West, led by the US, UK, and France, voted *against*. South Africa was only readmitted in 1994, under President Mandela.

There is no reason why this cannot happen again. If this is the right action against the crime of apartheid, how much more justified is it against Israeli crimes, including genocide, mass starvation, denial of medication, the mass destruction of housing, universities, schools, mosques, and basic services including water purification, sewage disposal, electricity production, roads and agricultural land – all bombed out of existence. There seems to be no war crime that Israel has not enacted in Gaza, with the full support, funding, and armament supplied by the West.

The First [Jewish Anti-Zionist Congress](#) is to take place from June 13 to 15 in Vienna, the hometown of Theodor Herzl, the father of political Zionism. It intends to use the voice of anti-Zionist Jews, whose numbers have swelled worldwide in the last decade, especially since October 7, 2023, to assist a necessary and urgent change in Western attitudes towards the crimes of Zionism.

We believe it is crucial to create an international political movement for ending Zionism and decolonising Palestine. The genuine organisation representing Palestinian civil society is the BDS/BNC movement, with which we are aligned, which we fully support, and which will be led by. The various progressive forces in Europe and elsewhere must unite behind it, and we hope the Congress will assist this process. We intend to enable opposition to Zionism, helping Palestine gain support across the globe; we see ourselves as an integral part of such a movement.

With Jews living mainly in the West, making up part of its delinquent elites, this struggle is not just against Zionism in Palestine but against our own Western governments, elites, and deep states who aid and abet in Israeli crimes. Palestine should become the litmus test of every ‘democracy’ in the West. We need to build the struggle together with all progressive and socialist groups everywhere, bearing in mind that some are silent or reluctant to act openly due to political suppression in their society. Some ‘left’ organisations in Europe even support Israel, like in Germany and Austria.

But this is changing. The wide opposition to Zionism is emerging from across society, sometimes unexpectedly, as people realise that the state is using support for Palestine as the stick against freedom of speech and action. And this is where we come in.

The Congress brings together global voices against the crimes of Zionist settler-colonialism, practiced and supported across the West, against the Palestinians and their supporters. The Congress is organised by Jews and Palestinians, but it is for everyone. One does not need to be Jewish to oppose Zionism. We hope for some of the following:

- An event uniting Anti-Zionist Jews, Israelis, Palestinians, and all other groups – blacks, Arabs, Muslims, feminists, environmentalists, and more – against the terrifying crimes by Zionism against humanity, international Law, the environment, political justice, religious tenets – and against the Palestinians. This is also a crime against Jews, denying the history of common existence in Palestine for more than a thousand years, until the arrival of the Zionist colonists.
- A clarion call for all citizens, whatever their politics, religion, history – to unite against toxic Zionism, its lawlessness, brutality, supremacism, racism, and sheer cruelty.
- The Jewish Anti-Zionist voice demonstrates moral fibre, progressive history, legal vigour, morality of coexistence – in joining the struggle against Zionism, fighting on the Palestinian side to liberate not only Palestine – but also liberate Judaism from Zionism.

Both Mandela and Archbishop Tutu reminded us “none of us are free, until Palestine is free!”. A Jewish partner of Mandela, the leader of the armed struggle in South Africa, Ronnie Kasrils, stated in support of the Congress:

*“The question then of bringing together Jewish anti-Zionists from all over the world in such a congress is of historic importance. And it’s a project, of course, it’s a work in progress. The organisers aren’t claiming that they represent the final view and crystallisation of what this is about.*

*But it’s a step towards the creation of now a political movement of anti-Zionist Jews involved with Palestinian people directly, as was the case with a few whites who were directly involved in the struggle to free South Africa.”*



We stand together, because our message is one of peaceful, equal and just coexistence in Palestine – an upgraded version of the Muslim-led Convivencia (life together) in Palestine, North Africa, Al Andalus, the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East, Arabia, Iran, India and few other territories in Southern Europe – where the three religions were existing in accord rather than conflict. This model for resolving conflicts, in a world where conflict has become the standard mode of action, is what we support; the conflict is now not just between nations, religions, states, blocs, and empires, but with nature, the living environment, and its delicate balance supporting life on this planet. Coexistence is the future, if we are to have a future.

Our Congress aims to focus Jewish voices against Zionism, to connect to the liberation of Palestine, and to assist the global movement for justice and peace, for Palestinians and for those Israeli Jews who wish to be part of a democratic, equal polity, from the river to the sea.

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**Thomas Ellenberg** ●

🕒 June 13, 2025 10:34 am

"This is one of the main reasons these states voted in 1947 to divide Palestine..."

No. The primary reason was that the US manipulated the vote by delaying it until the necessary majority was secured, using threats to cut aid to countries that opposed the partition.

👍 1 0 🗨️

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**joysglobal** ●

🕒 June 13, 2025 12:37 pm

Such an important effort. Best of success. Here's another something, the organizers, and participants might want to consider:

Time for all those wonderful, principled Jews, to sue the such zionist organizations, such ADL, LFI, CFI, and the like, who claim to speak for all Jews. Surely, there is basis for a claim of defamation, slander, libel, and unauthorized appropriation! Make the ADL, and other organization have to admit publicly, with every statement, that they do not speak for all Jews.



Of course it would require great effort, energy and money. Perhaps organizations would join, or a class action law suit.

Those are powerful and well connected organizations, not taken on lightly. I am sure there are those who would volunteer their services, and surely we could get crowd-funding to assist with the legal fees. I am sure there are those who would volunteer their services, and surely we could get crowd-funding to assist with the legal fees.

Does this sound like something worth doing? How can we help make this happen?

👍 1 0 💬

### Vera Gottlieb ●

🕒 June 13, 2025 8:34 am

I didn't watch it but, just a few days ago, there was a short video on YouTube by a rabbi, headlined: ZIONISM IS ANTISEMITISM. With what is going on in Gaza...and now Iran...ANTI SEMITISM will rise!

👍 0 0 💬

### Elizabeth Block ●

🕒 June 13, 2025 11:00 pm

I won't be in Vienna, but I'll be interested to hear about it.

👍 0 0 💬

### Hostage ●

🕒 June 14, 2025 4:34 pm

**Even if Palestine's membership application were subject to Article 27.3 vote, the USA would be required to abstain.**

State parties that employ armed forces, i.e. THAAD missiles and crews, in Israel as part of a coalition, while Israel wages war on Palestine and Iran, are co-belligerents. The USA is a party to the dispute. So it is required to abstain from voting in the Security Council on any related measure in accordance with Article 27 of the UN Charter. That means it cannot veto a cease fire, prevent humanitarian aid resumption, take part in the illegal blockade, or prevent the UN from adopting decisions on Palestine's membership. Full Stop. Palestine is a State party to a contentious case in the ICJ against the USA.

**Why doesn't anyone at MW ever publish that fact?** There are no exceptions and the treaty agreements and declassified confessions speak for themselves. They are readily available online in the UN, US, and Israel state archives. The FRUS states the USA officially recognized Arab Palestines statehood during the Jericho Conference. It subsequent accepted the results of the plebiscite that approved the Union with Transjordan. The USA invented the Vienna Formula that was employed to admit the Union as a UN member state. The High Contracting parties to the

Montevideo Convention agreed that recognition on their part is permanent. The US can only sever diplomatic relations, not statehood. The USA has officially documented that membership in the UN is an Art. 27.2 procedural vote that is not subject to any veto. The Charter requires the Security Council to provide the General Assembly with a recommendation, but nothing in the text requires it to agree in making the ultimate decision on membership.

The UN Charter is subject to the Law of Treaties and can be interpreted like other legally binding instrument. In this case, the United States is a belligerent party to the armed conflict that has illegally sanctioned the ICC, withdrawn from WHO, UNRWA, and etc., launched attacks from its aircraft carriers, employed its anti-missile defense systems inside Israel, and bombed members of the opposing regional alliance of states. It is currently taking part in illegally circumventing UN humanitarian aid to Palestine. But hey, what do I know?

👍 0 0 🗨️

### **Haim Bresheeth-Žabner**

Haim Bresheeth-Žabner is a filmmaker, photographer, historian and film scholar. His films include the widely-shown State of Danger (BBC, 1988). His most recent book is An Army Like No Other: How the IDF Made a Nation (Verso, 2020) Founder of Jewish Network for Palestine.

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### **Ronnie Barkan**

Ronnie Barkan is an Israeli dissident, co-founder of Boycott from Within and member of direct action group Palestine Action. On Nakba Day 2022 he participated in smashing up the UK headquarters of Israel-based Elbit Systems. Barkan focuses on challenging the discourse of lies of so-called liberal Zionism which aims to lend legitimacy to the fundamentally illegitimate Zionist project in Palestine.

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