

E02

Motion

Proposer: Lubna Speitan

Title: Zionism is Racism

Type: E Motion (Policy)

Synopsis

This motion defines Zionism, recognises its continued harm to Palestinians, and seeks to clarify that the Green Party is opposed to Zionism. It further affirms the right to self-determination and liberation of the Palestinian people and supports the establishment of a single democratic Palestinian State in all of historic Palestine.

Motion text

Zionism is a political ideology which called for the creation – and, now it exists, the continuity – of an ethnonationalist Jewish State in historic Palestine to the exclusion and/or domination of the non-Jewish population. The real, material manifestation of Zionism has been the historic and ongoing dehumanisation, displacement, dispossession, disenfranchisement and destruction of Palestinians. This is based upon European settler-colonial systems of domination and oppression, which has also created racial hierarchies between Jews of different ethnicities in Palestine.

CONFERENCE RESOLVES THAT:

1. The Green Party declares itself to be an anti-Zionist party.
2. The Green Party rejects attempts to normalise the racist subjugation and oppression of Palestinians; to equate anti-Zionism with antisemitism; to deny or minimise Palestinian human rights; to create hierarchies of racism; and to normalise or attempt to justify apartheid, ethnic cleansing or genocide. We affirm that definitions of anti-Jewish discrimination should not equate Jewish identity with Zionist ideology or political practice. As with any ethnicity or faith group, no single political ideology should be ascribed to an entire people.
3. Following from Motion E05, which affirmed that Israel is an apartheid State committing genocide, and Motion E07 supporting reparations and accountability, the Green Party supports the establishment of a single democratic Palestinian State in all of historic Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital, equal rights for all, and the right of return for Palestinians and their descendants.
4. The Green Party affirms the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination, including the right of the Palestinian people to resistance and liberation from Israeli occupation, domination and subjugation, and acknowledges that the struggle to achieve that liberation by all available means under international law is legitimate.
5. The Green Party heeds the call from Palestinian civil society to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era, and calls upon the United Kingdom Government to impose full embargoes and sanctions against Israel.

6. The Green Party calls for the release of all Palestinian prisoners of conscience (including Marwan Barghouti), the end of the use of administrative detention of Palestinians by Israel, and the treatment of Palestinian combatants in accordance with international humanitarian law, including in particular those provisions dealing with prisoners of war in the First Additional Protocol of the 1977 amendments to the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts.

7. The Green Party calls for the removal of Palestine Action from the list of proscribed organisations in Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000 (i.e. de-proscription).

8. The Green Party calls for the release of all prisoners detained for non-violent direct action in support of Palestinian rights and the end of the genocide, apartheid and the illegal occupation of Palestine and supports the demands of the Prisoners for Palestine 4

ACTIONS FOR THE PARTY TO TAKE:

The Green Party adopts the following action points:

1. This motion will be incorporated into the Green Party's Record of Policy Statements as appropriate and promoted in accordance with our rules and procedures.
2. Zionism, as defined above, will be treated as any other form of racism, ~~and this motion will be implemented by the Anti-Racism Policy Working Group as appropriate and in accordance with its ordinary practice.~~ *[SOC note sentence deleted 0o0 no consequential action (SOCC E2(f))]*
3. ~~The positions on international policy within this motion will be implemented by the International Policy Working Group as appropriate and in accordance with its ordinary practice.~~ *[SOC note sentence deleted 0o0 no consequential action (SOCC E2(f))]*

We affirm our commitment to explicitly opposing Zionism in our internal and external communications going forward.

The UK and Welsh Parliaments, the London and Mayoral Assemblies, and Local Councils and Local Authorities must exercise their authority to end the genocide, occupation and apartheid. Elected Green representatives will continue to put pressure on all and any relevant bodies to achieve these goals. This motion ensures our positions comply with international law, equity, and our commitment to justice and human rights.

MPs, London and Mayoral Assembly Members, Councillors, and prospective Members of the Senedd should take measures at their respective chambers to create local, sub-national, and national action for Palestine, ending any investments in Israel; demanding peace and accountability, and an end to the egregious violations of international humanitarian law and the genocide conventions, and an immediate move towards accountability, reparations, and justice for the Palestinian people.

SOC moved this to background:

The practice of Zionist ideology, promoting ethnonationalism, privileges one ethnic group on the basis of the subjugation of others. Zionism is Israel's foundational ideology.

Zionism has created and seeks to maintain – and where possible – expand, an apartheid regime between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, designed to cement the supremacy of one group, Jews, over another, Palestinians. As such, Zionism is racist.

This motion is aimed at the political ideology and practice of Zionism, as defined, and not at the religious or ethnic background of those who may identify as Zionists. Not all Jews are Zionists and not all Zionists are Jews.

Rejecting Zionism and supporting the liberation of the Palestinian people is not discriminatory against Jewish people. Nor is it discriminatory to support the establishment of a single democratic Palestinian State between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea with equal rights for all.

Zionism is fundamentally incompatible with anti-racist principles, equality and justice.

Has your motion been submitted to a previous Conference?

Spring Conference **Yes**
2026:

Background paper [PDF]

Zionism is Racism: Briefing Paper

Introduction

1. This motion formally acknowledges that Zionism is Racism. Drafted and developed by Palestinian members, in consultation with Global Majority Greens, Muslim Greens, Jewish Greens, Greens Organise, Young Greens, Vegan Greens, Policy, LGBTIQ+ Greens, Trans Greens, external groups, academics, historians and legal experts. This work will ensure anti-racism, equity, and decolonial principles are applied as required by the Anti-Racism Policy Platform. External supporting campaign groups also include Greenwich Palestine Alliance (GPA), Trade Unionists for Palestine (TUP), International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN), Jewish Network for Peace (JNP), Palestine Pulse, Cambridge PSC, Cambridge Artists for Palestine.
2. Both the motion (Zionism is Racism) and the briefing paper have principally been drafted by Palestinians, who possess direct lived experience of Zionist settler-colonialism, apartheid, and racial domination. This knowledge is central to understanding structural oppression as per the Green Party's Anti-Racism Policy. Their work has been supported by input from allied voices, including from the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and atheist communities.
3. The motion builds on existing Green Party motions and resolutions, which affirm '*Israel is an apartheid state committing genocide*' (Motion E05 in the 2024 Manchester Conference); call for the '*IDF to be proscribed as a terrorist organisation*'; urge '*the UK formally apologise to the people of Palestine for the Balfour Declaration*', and demand Israel's unlawful occupation and war crimes must end immediately with reparation and accountability (E07 GPEW 2025 Emergency Motion passed at Bournemouth Conference). However, none of these positions identifies the underlying racist ideology which has and continues to inspire the dehumanisation, displacement, dispossession, disenfranchisement and destruction of Palestinians by Israel. The motion seeks to rectify that failure.

4. In addition, the motion recognises the legitimacy of some of the central issues within the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, including that: (a) anti-Zionism is categorically different from antisemitism and the two should never be conflated; (b) Zionism is a racist settler-colonial ideology; (c) the Palestinian people's right to self-determination includes the right to resistance and liberation from Israeli occupation, domination and subjugation; (d) seeking to end that Israeli occupation, domination and subjugation non-violently requires heeding the call from Palestinian civil society to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era; and (e) all Palestinian prisoners of conscience (including Marwan Barghouti) should be released.
5. This briefing papers expands on some of these issues and refers party members to further sources of information on relevant topics.

Anti-Zionism is Not Antisemitism

6. Opposition to the political ideology and State system of Zionism must not be conflated with antisemitism, as reflected in the Green Party's Anti-Racism Policy. Jewish identity is not synonymous with any nationalist project. Zionism is a political ideology not a religion or an ethnic group. Supporting Palestinian liberation and a single democratic Palestinian state with equal rights is a moral and political stance, not an act of religious or ethnic discrimination. Conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism obscures real daily structural racism and oppression against Palestinians and harms genuine efforts to combat antisemitism .

Zionism is a Racist and Settler-Colonial Ideology and Practice

7. On 29 November 2022, Al-Haq – an independent Palestinian non-governmental human rights organisation based in Ramallah – launched its report titled: *'Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism'*. The report was endorsed by Addameer (a prisoner support and human rights association); Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights and the Palestinian Centre for human Rights (both independent, non-

partisan, non-governmental human rights organisations based in the Gaza Strip); the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem (whose members are Palestinian non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations); the Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Centre (formerly the Quaker Service Information and Legal Aid Center); the Community Action Center at Al-Quds University (non-profit community rights-based organisation in the Old City of Jerusalem); and the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH).

8. The report explained how an understanding of Zionist settler colonialism is necessary for a comprehensive articulation of Israel's apartheid regime and its root causes. The roots of the ideology lie in the decades of Zionist settler colonisation of Palestine from the 19th century onward:

Zionism emerged within the context of European imperial expansion in the 19th century and was modelled on racial conceptions of human sciences and the nation-state. In its quest for territorial conquest, Zionism was founded as a settler colonial movement whose ideological commitments were inherently racial. Despite the ethnic diversity of Judaism's adherents through the millennia, the dual factors of European Christian persecution of Jews and the rise of racial theories in the 19th century sought to attribute adherence to Judaism with a single, distinct racial group. In this historical context, the late 19th century Zionist movement embraced this view of persons of Jewish faith as a distinct 'race,' enshrining it in the charters of Zionist institutions, including those of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in 1897, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in 1901, and the Jewish Agency (JA) established in 1921. These institutions apply this racialised distinction as a matter of unique Jewish privilege and supremacy over all others, exercised through the exclusive entitlement to 'Jewish nationality,' which is superior to mere citizens in Israeli law and policy.

9. The current Israeli apartheid regime is sustained through institutionalised impunity and by weakening the capacity of the indigenous Palestinian people and institutions to challenge the myriad human rights violations and international crimes maintaining the regime. As the report from Al-Haq explains, the Israeli regime employs policies of visible segregation and material discrimination against Palestinians in the exercise of their individual and collective rights. These underlying policies seek to dominate and oppress the Palestinian people. Spatial separation, isolation, suppression, and concentration of Palestinian communities, on either side of the Green Line, sustain the pattern of illegal population transfer and demographic manipulation inherent to the Zionist settler colonial project.
10. Al-Haq's report makes it clear that the international discourse on Palestine has obfuscated the root causes of the Israeli regime's prolonged, widespread, systematic human rights violations, and extreme material discrimination:
- The long-prevailing 'conflict' paradigm has entrenched the fragmentation of the Palestinian people and international complicity in perpetuating Palestinian oppression. Describing the situation reductively as a 'conflict' between two parties that needs to be resolved by the parties is a misleading approach. Rather, the belligerent occupation is taking place in the context of ongoing Zionist settler colonisation and apartheid, of which it operates as a tool. Failure by third states to recognise this key distinction disregards applicable peremptory norms of general international law and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the cardinal prohibition of the use of force. It further disregards third-party responsibility to refrain from assisting in the maintenance of the unlawful situation and the positive duty of states to cooperate to bring it to an end.*
11. The motion recognises and seeks to reverse the damaging role which the United Kingdom has played in obfuscating the situation.

Right to Self-Determination includes the Right to Resistance

12. In pursuit of the right to self-determination, the Palestinian people's use of force to resist foreign oppression and to complete the establishment of an independent State is an inalienable right well founded in international law. As those familiar with the history of decolonisation will know, various peoples freed themselves from colonial rule and foreign oppression to realize independent statehood after World War II. Their practices serve as convincing evidence for this right to resist under customary international law. Indeed, numerous United Nations General Assembly resolutions recognize the legitimacy of struggling by all available means, including armed struggle, by peoples under colonial domination or foreign occupation to realize the right to self-determination.
13. Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the use of force not only against the territorial integrity or political independence of States, but also in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. One of these purposes is to '*develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples*'. This is an international obligation for all States, including the United Kingdom and Israel. In turn, it is unlawful to use armed force or repressive measures, with a view to supporting or maintaining colonial domination, against peoples striving to throw off the colonial yoke in the exercise of their right to self-determination.
14. The illegality of the use of force against such peoples derives from the fact that such action prevents the exercise of a legitimate right deriving from the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples; from the fact that the General Assembly has repeatedly proclaimed that the use of force to deprive dependent peoples of their inalienable rights constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples; and from the United Nations practice of opposing the idea that the struggle of colonial peoples for their liberation – the most important phenomenon of

the modern age – should be regarded as a violation of the prohibition of the use of force.

15. The provisions of the Charter solemnly recognize the right of oppressed colonial peoples to defend themselves against foreign oppression. The use of force by peoples under colonial domination is not a derogation from the principle of non-use of force in Article 2(4) of the Charter. If such force it is provoked by coercive actions committed by colonial powers in order to prevent colonial peoples from exercising their right to self-determination. The right of self-defence of peoples under colonial domination is the counterpart of the right of peoples to defend their national identity against acts of force or coercion which leave them no alternative.
16. As is self-evident to those familiar with the basic facts of the situation, the Palestinian people have for decades been subject to relentless Israeli coercive actions seeking to prevent them from exercising their right to self-determination. In turn, their resort to the use of force – in accordance with the norms set by international humanitarian law – is lawful, and the motion seeks to recognize that fact.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions

17. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice (“ICJ”) delivered its Advisory Opinion on the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem. The ICJ unequivocally held that the wall – built on occupied Palestinian land – was illegal. The Advisory Opinion was yet another recognition of the illegality of Israel’s colonial and discriminatory policies, to be added to the hundreds of UN resolutions which had condemned such policies and illegal and called for immediate and effective remedies.

18. However, all forms of international intervention and peace-making until then had failed to convince or force Israel to comply with humanitarian law, to respect fundamental human rights, and to end its occupation and oppression of the people of Palestine. In response, Palestinian civil society recognised that people of conscience in the international community have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in the struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott, divestment, and sanctions.
19. Inspired by that struggle of South Africans against apartheid and in the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression, Palestinian civil society called upon international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. They appealed to us to pressure our respective States to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. They also invited conscientious Israelis to support their call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace.
20. This motion heeds that call.

All Palestinian Prisoners of Conscience should be Released

21. The Palestinian prisoners' movement is central to the Palestinian liberation struggle. The prisoners held in Israeli jails – often for lengthy sentences imposed by military courts or under arbitrary administrative detention without charge or trial – are widely regarded as symbols of principled commitment to Palestinian freedom. Moreover, beyond their political significance, the Palestinian prisoners' issue is one that touches many Palestinians intimately. Approximately 40% of Palestinian men in the West Bank and Jerusalem have spent some time in Israeli jails. Prior to 2005, equal percentages could be found in Gaza.

22. Nearly every Palestinian family has experience with imprisonment by Israeli forces, whether that is detention and interrogation or long-term incarceration. If an immediate family member has not been imprisoned, it is rare to find Palestinians in the West Bank, Jerusalem, Gaza Strip, and to some extent Palestinian citizens of Israel, who have not seen an uncle, aunt or cousin detained behind Israeli bars. Indeed, the release of the Palestinian prisoners is a consensus position among Palestinians with strong support from all sectors of society.
23. The motion seeks to recognise the significance of the Palestinian prisoners' movement to the struggle.

Further Reading

- Al Haq: *Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism*:
https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2022/12/22/israeli-apartheid-web-final-1-page-view-1671712165.pdf
- Aureliu Cristescu, Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities: *The Right to Self-Determination*:
<https://docs.un.org/en/E/CN.4/Sub.2/404/Rev.1>
- Palestinian Civil Society Calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel Until it Complies with International Law and Universal Principles of Human Rights:
<https://www.bdsmovement.net/bds-call>
- Palestinian Youth Movement, “*Prisoners are the Compass of Our Struggle*”: *why the release of Palestinian prisoners is central to our liberation*”, Shado Magazine, 6 December 2023:
<https://shado-mag.com/opinion/prisoners-release-palestine-israel-war/>