



TOWARDS A PROGRESSIVE VISION OF JUSTICE FOR ALL

Legislative Guide

Right-wing, repressive, and anti-democratic governments are rising around the globe. This global crisis for freedom and human rights necessitates strengthening and renewing the progressive movement for justice.

A symptom of this crisis is the impending “peace plan” by the Netanyahu and Trump administrations that excludes the rights of the Palestinian people. In this moment of political and humanitarian crisis, Palestinian community and advocacy organizations in the U.S., supported by partners across the progressive movement, released the Freedom Is the Future vision and policy demands. Freedom Is the Future calls for freedom and self-determination, the right to return to the Palestinian homeland, the freedom to thrive, and the right to resist for the better world we know is possible.

Our progressive values lead us to translate this progressive vision of justice, a call from the people most impacted, into a rights-based framework for Palestine/Israel politics on Capitol Hill in 2020.

A PROGRESSIVE VISION REQUIRES NEW POLICIES CENTERING ACCOUNTABILITY AND RIGHTS.

1. Support H.R. 2407 to advance Palestinian children’s rights and challenge the brutal Israeli military occupation. The Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act is historic legislation that paves the pathway to justice through accountability and respect for Palestinian rights. Support H.R. 2407, which aims to end U.S. funding for the Israeli military’s systemic physical and psychological abuse of Palestinian children and lay the groundwork for justice for child victims of Israel’s military detention system.

2. Support Dear Colleague letters to advance justice for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, challenge the Israeli blockade, and end the humanitarian crisis. Palestinians in the besieged coastal enclave are trapped by Israel’s land and sea blockade, targeted by routine Israeli bombing, and shot by Israeli military snipers when marching for their freedom. Restoring humanitarian assistance is only the first step. To address the root of the humanitarian crisis and ongoing injustice, progressives must demand an end to U.S. complicity in the Israeli blockade.

3. Support legislative vehicles to advance a coherent progressive foreign and domestic policy—which means challenging U.S. support for Israeli separate-and-unequal rule. The U.S. must build respect for and protect human rights, equal rights, and justice at home and abroad. That requires challenging U.S. support for Israel's discriminatory, separate-and-unequal political and legal system that grants Jewish Israelis full rights and privileges while relegating Palestinian citizens of Israel to second-class citizens in their own homeland and disenfranchising those in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.

PROGRESSIVE VALUES OF JUSTICE FOR ALL NECESSITATE TRULY PROGRESSIVE ALTERNATIVES TO THE STATUS QUO.

1. Move beyond the misleading framings of S. Res. 234 and H. Res. 326, which perpetuate injustice in Palestine/Israel. These resolutions—the House version of which passed over objections of key progressives—undermine a just peace by repeating hollow calls for a defunct two-state solution and the paradoxical and harmful myth that Israel can be both Jewish and democratic. False claims to U.S. neutrality in a “peace process” provide cover for the Israeli government's continued brutal military occupation of Palestinian lands and undemocratic system of ethno-religious supremacy and disenfranchisement of Palestinians. A values and rights-based approach demands accountability for the Israeli government's ongoing human rights violations by ending unconditional U.S. diplomatic and military support for Israel. Oppose S. 3176, which would codify largely unconditional military funding to Israel.

2. Defend the right to boycott for justice: Support H. Res 496 and oppose H.R. 5595 and H. Res. 782. Supporters of freedom must support legislation that defends the First Amendment-protected right to boycott (H. Res 496), including boycotts for justice for the Palestinian people, and oppose any legislation that legitimizes attacks on protected free speech (H. R. 5595, H. Res. 782). 4 in 5 Democrats, 3 in 4 independents, and 6 in 10 Republicans support the constitutional right to boycott for justice in Palestine (January 2020 UMD Critical Issues Poll). Right-wing politicians are leading repressive efforts against boycotts for justice without constituent support: The re-introduced Israel Anti-Boycott Act (H.R. 5595) has only one Democratic cosponsor and a new all-Republican resolution demonizes BDS (H. Res. 782). Progressives must challenge repression and amplify calls for justice.

3. Propose real progressive alternatives to S.1727 and H.R. 3104. The Partnership Fund for Peace Act of 2019 substitutes economic development for recognition of the Palestinian people's political rights. Even center-left proponents of the bill acknowledge its alignment with the Trump administration's undermining of Palestinian rights. The U.S. should not pursue an economic band-aid approach as an alternative to freedom and self-determination.