



Don't Commemorate 50 Years of Israeli Military Occupation of East Jerusalem: Oppose S.Res.176 and H.Res.328

- [S.Res.176](#) and [H.Res.328](#) commemorate the 50th anniversary of what is termed the “reunification of Jerusalem.” The US Campaign for Palestinian Rights strongly opposes these resolutions and urges Members of Congress not cosponsor or vote for them.
- For the past fifty years, Israel has held East Jerusalem under belligerent military occupation. Official US policy recognizes East Jerusalem as an inseparable part of the West Bank and affirms that Israel’s conduct in East Jerusalem must adhere to the responsibilities of an Occupying Power as defined by the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel’s construction of settlements and its wall, along with its expropriation of Palestinian land and demolition of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem are illegal under international law, as articulated most forcefully by the [Nixon administration](#) in 1969. This half-century of Israeli military occupation and its attendant violations of international law are no cause for celebration.
- These resolutions incorrectly claim that people of all faiths are permitted to pray at their holy sites in Jerusalem under Israeli administration. That claim is patently false for Palestinian Muslims and Christians who are not residents of East Jerusalem. Palestinians living in the West Bank must apply to the Israeli military occupation authorities for a special religious permit to pray at Muslim and Christian holy sites. Israel routinely rejects permit requests and restricts the number of Palestinians who are granted permits. It is nearly impossible for Palestinian Muslims and Christians in the Israeli-blockaded Gaza Strip to pray at holy sites in Jerusalem.

As former Palestinian negotiator Hanan Ashrawi wrote in [Haaretz](#), “Israel will continue to vary the numbers of permits issued at every holy occasion at whim, and Palestinians will continue to say what they see: that the vast majority of our people have not been able to reach their holy places in Occupied East Jerusalem.”

- These resolutions also completely ignore the [discriminatory, separate-and-unequal regime](#) under which Palestinians live in Jerusalem. Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are not Israeli citizens and cannot vote in Israel’s parliamentary elections. Israel regularly revokes the residency rights of Palestinian Jerusalemites, expropriates their land, and demolishes their homes in a systematic plan to engineer a favorable demographic balance in the city. Palestinian residents of Jerusalem also face gross discrimination from the Jerusalem municipality in terms of allocations for services provided such as building permits, education, health care, sanitation, etc. Even [Israel’s comptroller](#) recently criticized this discrimination.
- The Senate version of the resolution calls upon the President to abide by the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 ([Public Law-104-45](#)), which if implemented would move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Such a move would upend 70 years of a bipartisan US policy not recognizing any nation’s claim to sovereignty over Jerusalem. Moving the embassy would prejudge the status of Jerusalem thereby contradicting the resolution’s assertion that the status of Jerusalem should be resolved through negotiations. For additional details, please see the US Campaign’s policy paper: [Moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem: Historical, Legal and Policy Considerations](#).