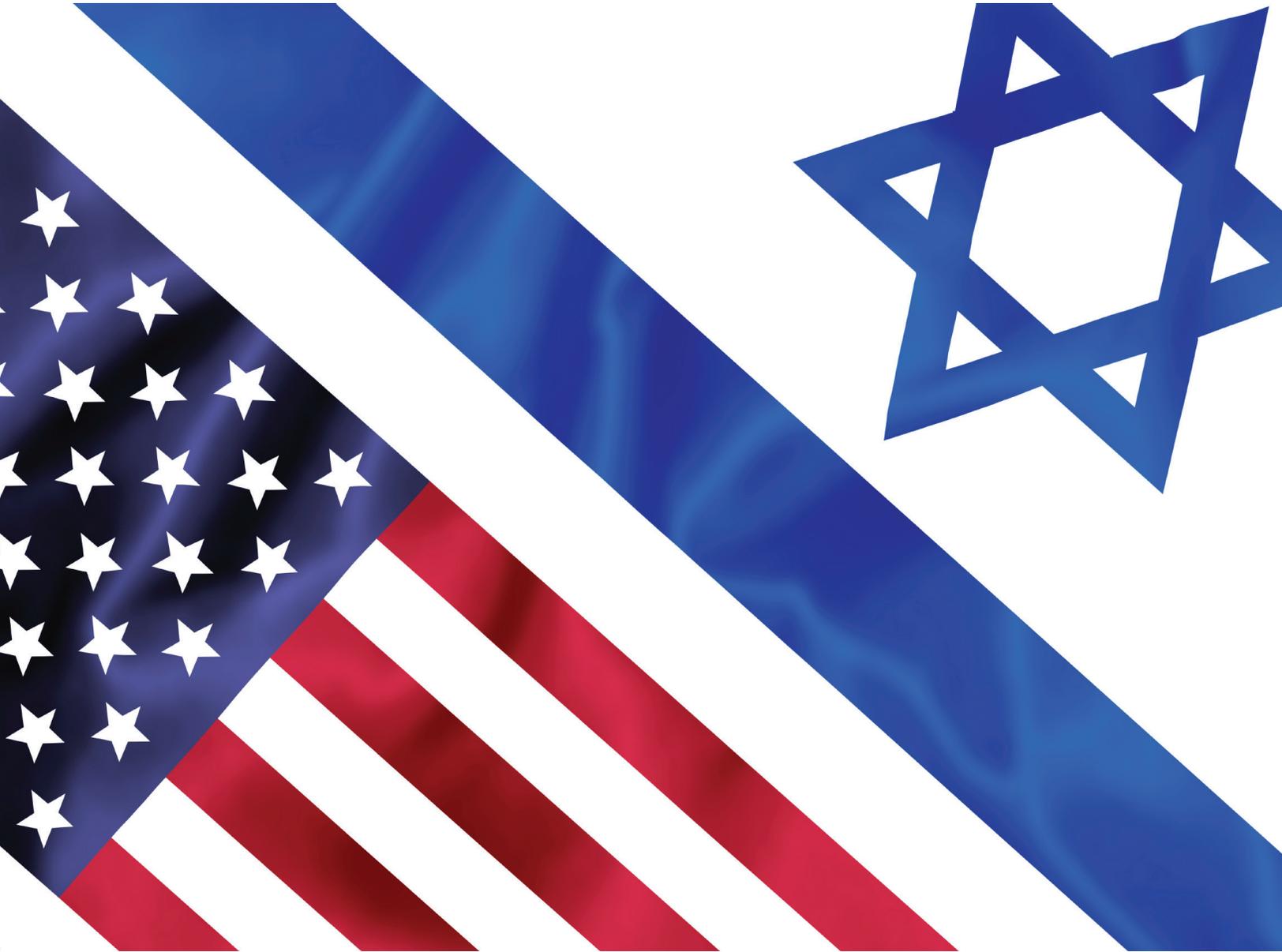


HADASSAH THE WOMEN'S ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA, INC.



HOW TO TALK ABOUT ISRAEL



The Jewish Federations[®] OF NORTH AMERICA | ISRAEL ACTION NETWORK

Project in partnership with JCPA

HOW TO TALK ABOUT ISRAEL

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HADASSAH

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc. is the largest women's and largest Jewish membership organization in the United States. Through Hadassah International, Ltd., it maintains a presence in twenty-one countries around the world. In Israel and around the globe, Hadassah supports a number of important health, education and humanitarian endeavors. In the United States, Hadassah members, found in every Congressional District, are part of a national network that reflects our focus on empowering women, leadership development, education, personal growth, advocacy and Jewish continuity.

Since our founding in 1912, Hadassah volunteers have worked tirelessly, striving to sustain the health and well-being of the people of Israel and throughout the world.

Our greatest achievement is the Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO). Located in Israel, Hadassah considers HMO is the most technologically advanced medical center in the Middle East focusing on compassionate patient care, educating the next generation of medical professionals and conducting cutting edge research. HMO's facilities serve as a bridge to peace where doctors, nurses, staff, students and patients from all backgrounds and ethnicities in the region come together for a common purpose—to heal all who are in need. In recognition of this vital work, Hadassah Medical Organization was nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

In addition to supporting HMO, we are committed to supporting Youth Aliyah villages in Israel which provide shelter, education, training, and nurturing for young immigrants and children at risk; offering scholarships to participants in Young Judaea programs (now independent, it was the Zionist Youth movement of Hadassah for many years); and supporting the land and people of Israel through a project with the Jewish National Fund.

We also fund U.S. Initiatives which empower our leadership and membership through education, advocacy, and leadership training programs. These include: Defining Zionism in the 21st Century, an online, free of charge, fully captioned, monthly speakers series that explores today's many definitions of Zionism; Hadassah-Hadassah/Brandeis Virtual Conversations, an online Book & Author Experience; Go Forth & Study, monthly Jewish/Zionist Education packets; Hadassah Shabbat Zachor, an annual opportunity to connect Hadassah with communities to acknowledge its founding during the season of Purim; Every Beat Counts: Hadassah's Heart Health Program™; Every Step Counts: Hadassah's Walking Program; Check It Out© For Adults and Check It Out© For Teens, Breast Cancer Awareness Programs; and Hadassah's Leadership Fellows program.

Hadassah advocates at the local, state and national levels on issues of importance to American women and the Jewish community. Our broad range of policy statements and resolutions cover such topics as: Gender Equity in Medical Research (GEM), Human Trafficking, Women's Economic Equity and Security, and many more! We have co-signed amicus briefs in support of civil rights, reproductive rights and separation of church and state through Hadassah's Attorneys Council Amicus Brief Program.

Hadassah has a proud history of advocating for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship. As Hadassah members, we are uniquely prepared to challenge misperceptions about Israel, and we commit ourselves to this task. This program guide is intended to provide the tools to meet this challenge. We are grateful to the Israel Action Network, an initiative of the Jewish Council for

Public Affairs and the Jewish Federations of North America (JCPA & JFNA) for collaborating with us to produce this most important document.

THE ISRAEL ACTION NETWORK

The Israel Action Network (IAN) is a strategic initiative of The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), in partnership with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), created to counter assaults made on Israel's legitimacy. IAN was created to educate, organize and mobilize the organized North American Jewish community to develop strategic approaches to countering these assaults, and positively change the conversation about Israel.

Many of these assaults are initiated by the BDS (Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions) movement, which is a global network of individuals and organizations that aims to isolate Israel politically, economically and culturally. Their overall objective is to challenge Israel's right to exist as the sovereign homeland of the Jewish people, through what is often called delegitimization.

Delegitimization occurs on many stages, with many voices, and utilizes various tactics, ranging from economic sanctions, including efforts to boycott Israeli products and divest from Israel, to negative messaging campaigns, such as equating Israel with apartheid South Africa.

To counter such activities, IAN leverages and maximizes the collective ability of JFNA's 153 Jewish Federations and over 300 small non-federated communities, along with JCPA's 14 national member agencies and 125 local community relations committees/councils, to be the go-to source for information, trends, researched messages, strategies, best practices and organizing media tools and campaigns.

The Israel Action Network is thrilled to have collaborated with Hadassah to create this guide and look forward to many years of working together.

INTRODUCTION

Hadassah is often asked for advice about the appropriate way to respond to criticism of Israel from news articles, editorials, television and radio programs, speakers at public forums, and small group gatherings which frequently include individuals from multiple religious faiths. As Hadassah members and leaders, we support the democratically elected Government of Israel. We strive to understand the intricacies of the situation in the Middle East and be articulate and diplomatic advocates for Israel.

To help accomplish this vital task, Hadassah's Programming, Advocacy, Zionism and Education Division, aka the PRAZE Division, updated Hadassah's **How to Talk about Israel**, a guide to effective pro-Israel advocacy, originally created in 2006. This updated guide was written in collaboration with the Israel Action Network (IAN), a strategic initiative of the Jewish Federations of North America in partnership with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA). Hadassah thanks the staff of the Israel Action Network for their collaboration on this guide. This guide combines fundamental techniques and core messages to use when advocating for Israel. We hope it will help supporters of Israel effectively respond to challenging questions about Israel. We believe that as a wider Jewish community we should strive to respectfully, without inflammatory rhetoric, convey an emphasis on core messages about Israel's fundamental values and its inherent right to exist.

Additionally, we have created role-play **Scenarios for Effective Communication**. These scenarios are hypothetical conversations between a pro-Israel advocate and someone who *does not yet have a firm position on Israel or has legitimate concerns about Israel's policies toward Palestinians*. They are designed to stimulate conversation, raise awareness, and provide training on strategic communication.

Also included in this guide are resources covering Israel's shared values with the U.S., the newest Israeli technological advances and Israel's leadership in world health. This information can be used in numerous ways—from speaking and writing about Israel to fielding questions at a dinner party. Share them with colleagues, family, friends, schools, and your community.

For questions and assistance, please contact the PRAZE Division at 212.303.8136 or PRAZE@hadassah.org.

OVERVIEW

Whether around our dinner tables, in our offices, at community programs or on university campuses, we are often involved in discussions about Israel. Although many of us are well-read and knowledgeable, we may occasionally find ourselves at a loss for the appropriate words when participating in a challenging conversation about Israel.

The goal of this guide is to provide individuals with the information and techniques necessary to effectively engage in any conversation about Israel. These conversations could take place in a variety of situations, among a range of people, Jews and people of other faiths, for example:

- College students who find themselves challenged with anti-Israel rhetoric and attitudes;
- Individuals who rely on media information that may be slanted against Israel;
- Community members debating a local store's policy on stocking Israeli products;
- Elected officials who may not be totally familiar with all the issues relating to Israel; and
- Friends at a dinner party.

The core messages in this guide are based on studies and focus groups conducted by some of the nation's leading public opinion researchers and communications strategists. These experts have identified key words, phrases, and specific messaging frameworks that are included in this guide.

Please note that some examples and ideas are repeated in this document as we believe that many people will review sections without necessarily reading every page.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Many of your colleagues and neighbors find themselves confronted with an avalanche of information concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – an issue upon which there is a general lack of knowledge and/or understanding. Most American opinions about Israelis and Palestinians are formed through the media's selective coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and fragments of knowledge they hold about social, political, and religious issues in the Middle East.

Despite not knowing much about the intricacies of Israeli and Palestinian historical narratives, the majority of Americans are significantly more supportive of Israel than the Palestinian Authority.¹ Through greater awareness about Israel's vibrant democracy, leadership in medicine, and groundbreaking technological innovations, certain audiences can develop a greater appreciation and affinity for Israel. **Israel: A Thriving Democracy with Many Accomplishments**, found later in this guide, is a great resource for Israel education and advocacy to friendly audiences.

However, there are constituencies who do question Israel and may be more vulnerable to additional anti-Israel messages. These constituencies may be individuals from among the progressive elements of society, many of whom are focused on the suffering of individuals and generally supportive of struggles for civil rights, equality, and fairness. **If we are to be effective**

¹ More Express Sympathy for Israel than the Palestinians." *Pew Research Center for the People and the Press*. 28 Aug. 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.people-press.org/2014/08/28/more-express-sympathy-for-israel-than-the-palestinians>)

in our outreach and communication about Israel, our advocacy needs to address concerns directly and we should explore altering our messages accordingly. While examples of Israel's accomplishments may be an effective advocacy tool for some audiences, acknowledgment of Israel's own imperfections and sympathy for the Palestinian people may be a necessary conversation starter in other contexts.

The most important part of Israel advocacy is to understand and acknowledge your audience's ideas. What do they believe about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Where might they be getting their information? With which nation do their natural sympathies lie? What are their concerns regarding peace?

DIFFERENT BELIEFS ABOUT THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT:

Hadassah believes in Israel's right to exist. Some people support a two-state resolution in which a secure Israel coexists with an independent Palestinian state. It is our opinion that there is often a lack of understanding among some audiences about the history of the conflict and the major issues that need to be resolved.

When talking about Israel, we must recognize that the end goal is NOT to change the minds of those who do not support Israel's right to exist. Instead, we must create an open and safe space to dialogue about the democratic values we share. To accomplish this, we must first understand the views of some Americans regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.²

1. **ISRAEL IS STRONG:** From military, economic, and political standpoints, Israel is perceived by many Americans to possess great strength. Thus, many people believe Israelis have a much greater responsibility for resolving the conflicts and making compromises for peace while acting humanely to guarantee rights for the Palestinians.
2. **ISRAEL BENEFITS FROM STRONG AMERICAN SUPPORT:** Since Israel receives major political and economic support from the U.S., many people believe Israel has a greater responsibility to resolve conflicts in the region. Furthermore, Israel is held to a higher standard than other countries because of its Western political system and the democratic values it strives to uphold. By contrast, Palestinians are seen to be "oppressed" and "suffering" as the underdogs in this conflict.
3. **ISRAEL IS SOMETIMES PERCEIVED AS BEING INSINCERE IN ITS DESIRE FOR PEACE:** Israel is too often perceived as being unwilling to make the concessions necessary for peace, while denying many rights to Palestinians. We believe that sense of Israeli intransigence stems from three ideas: (A) The role of Judaism in governing the state, (B) Current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is perceived to be insincere in his desire to reach a peace agreement, and (C) Israeli settlements are viewed to inflame the situation and are cited as clear evidence that Israel is not committed to a two-state resolution.

Due to a lack of understanding of the depth and nature of the conflict, the pro-Israel community is encouraged to incorporate into their messaging verifiable historical evidence for Israel's overtures to the Palestinians for peace and assertions made to provide a more balanced picture of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

² General American views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict listed below obtained from the polls conducted by Dr. Frank Luntz of Luntz Global in August 2014.

KNOW THE FACTS: EFFECTIVE ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ISRAEL

WHAT IS ZIONISM?

Zionism, quite simply, is Jewish nationalism, or more elaborately, the Jewish movement of national liberation, first to build and now to perfect a Jewish democratic state in the Jewish people's ancestral homeland. Originating in the late 19th century, decades before Israel was established in 1948, Zionists maintained that the Jewish people, who had been subjected to discrimination, persecution and anti-Semitism in many lands, would be free to determine their own future only through the re-establishment of a Jewish state. Jews were, and are, a people bound by a common history traced back three thousand years with a common culture, a sense of communal destiny, a commitment to the land in Israel, and an overall sense of interconnectedness. The Zionist movement believes that *Am Yisrael*, the Jewish people, can find ultimate individual and collective fulfillment with a thriving, democratic, *Medinat Yisrael*, a State of Israel, in *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel.

HOW CAN ISRAEL SIMULTANEOUSLY BE BOTH JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC?

Like many other liberal democracies, Israel celebrates and cultivates its majority Jewish culture while remaining dedicated to preserving full equality for all of its citizens. There is no contradiction in keeping Israel's Jewish and democratic character, even with a sizeable non-Jewish minority citizenry comprised mostly of Arab-Israeli citizens. (Arab-Israelis are distinct from Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza, and parts of Jerusalem who are not citizens of Israel.) Israel can be – and is – both the nation state of the Jewish people and a state of all its citizens, which guarantees “complete equality of social and political rights...irrespective of religion, race or sex,” and “freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture,” as enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence. The term “Jewish State of Israel” is sometimes misunderstood to mean that Israel is a theocracy. In fact, this term refers to the Jewish character of the state, which has the primary purpose of serving and protecting the Jewish people. For example, state holidays reflect the Jewish calendar. Instead of Sunday being a day off, the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, is the day of rest in Israel.

As within many other democracies, some people believe that minority citizens experience discrimination. As a result, they believe that Israel's government must do more to prevent discrimination of minorities in the workplace and allocate more state resources to these communities. These citizens nevertheless participate in state elections, are members of Israel's parliament, and exercise freedom to protest any perceived inequalities. While the inherent tension of balancing Israel's dual identity as a nation-state of the Jewish people and a state for all its citizens remains, the struggle to fulfill the promise of full equality made in the Declaration of Independence is ongoing.

IS ISRAEL AN APARTHEID STATE?

The accusation that Israel is an apartheid state is both factually and morally incorrect. It is a misuse of this inappropriate label to describe Israel, a society similar to the U.S., where equal rights for all are enshrined in Israel's founding document, its Declaration of Independence. In Apartheid South Africa, those who were white enjoyed rights and privileges that black citizens were denied and racist laws forced citizens to live in separate areas and attend separate

schools. Segregation and discrimination extended to ownership rights, the holding of public office, voting, church attendance and even burial. In contrast, Israel offers full political rights under one set of laws that extends to all citizens.

Israel, like every liberal democracy, faces challenges in ensuring fair and equitable treatment of its minority citizens. Nevertheless, Israel's track record compares favorably with other pluralistic democracies. For example, Hebrew and Arabic are both official languages and Arab Israelis are represented at the highest levels of public office. This includes serving as Supreme Court Judges, state ambassadors, members of the Israeli parliament (the Knesset) and government cabinet ministers. Freedoms we all cherish, such as freedom of press, speech and religion, are also centerpieces of Israeli law. All Israeli citizens - Muslims, Christians and Jews, along with significant Druze and Bahá'í populations - enjoy equal political rights and legal protection of their holy sites. We believe all these groups also benefit from a variety of educational and employment opportunities in Israel.

IS IT ANTI-SEMITIC TO CRITICIZE ISRAELI POLICIES?

The act of criticizing the State of Israel, its government, and its policies does not constitute Anti-Semitism. Israelis of all ethnic and religious backgrounds take advantage of their democracy and freedom of speech to criticize regularly – and sometimes harshly – their leaders and various aspects of their society. However, there are often times when criticism of Israel crosses the line into Anti-Semitism or is simply a mask for deeper Anti-Semitic attitudes.

In order to distinguish between legitimate criticism and Anti-Semitism, Natan Sharansky, former Russian Refusenik, holds that those who demonize and delegitimize Israel, or hold the Jewish state to double standards may be making Anti-Semitic claims. Stereotypical portrayals of Israelis as having hooked noses and bent figures, or as a cabal with plans to influence foreign policy and dominate the world, are all Anti-Semitic as these examples are blatantly hostile toward Jews and Jewish history. In addition, holding Israel to a different standard by questioning her right to exist or calling for a “one-state solution” in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which would effectively end Israel's existence as a Jewish state, are Anti-Semitic at their core.³

WHY DOES THE U.S. PROVIDE MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL?

Since 1985, the U.S. has provided nearly \$3 billion in grants annually to Israel.⁴ Almost all of this aid is in the form of military assistance and nearly 75% of these funds are used by Israel to purchase defense equipment from American companies.⁵ Israel's detractors might argue that in order to demonstrate their opposition to Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, the U.S. should stop providing Israel with military aid. However, as Andrew J. Shapiro, the former Assistant Secretary of Political-Military Affairs at the State Department has said, “We don't just support Israel because of a longstanding bond, we support Israel because it is in our national interests to do so.”⁶ The U.S. also gives millions of dollars to Egypt and other countries in the Middle East.

American national interests are benefited by military aid to Israel in several ways. First, this aid helps Israelis gather intelligence, prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and

³ Sharansky, Natan. "3D Test of Anti-Semitism: Demonization, Double Standards, Delegitimization." *Jewish Political Studies Review* 16:3-4 (Fall 2004): Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.icpa.org/phas/phas-sharansky-f04.htm>)

⁴ Sharp, Jeremy M. "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel." *Congressional Research Service*. 11 Apr. 2014.

⁵ Sharp, Jeremy M. "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel." *Congressional Research Service*. 4 Dec. 2009.

⁶ Shapiro, Andrew J. "Ensuring Israel's Qualitative Military Edge." U.S. Department of State, 04 Nov. 2011. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/rm/176684.htm>)

combat terrorism in the Middle East, thereby aiding U.S. security interests. Second, U.S. military aid to Israel continues to be a reminder to everyone that the U.S. is invested in seeing democracy grow in the region. Americans believe that democracy has the potential to promote peace and stability in the region between Israel and her Arab neighbors, and often acts as an incentive to achieving peace with the Palestinians. Finally, the vast majority of military aid to Israel is, by law, spent on American-made goods and services, and thus helps support American jobs.

IF SETTLEMENTS CONTINUE TO EXPAND, HOW IS IT POSSIBLE THAT ISRAELIS ARE SERIOUS ABOUT PEACE?

While Israeli settlements in the West Bank are interpreted as an obstacle to peace, they are only one aspect of negotiations that must be addressed by Israeli and Palestinian leaders in order to resolve the conflict and establish two states for two nations side-by-side in peace and security. Other final status issues that need to be resolved include establishing borders, the status of Jerusalem, settling of Palestinian refugees, water rights, and security precautions. While some believe that settlements are the primary cause of the conflict, tensions between Israelis and Palestinians were present decades before the first Israeli settlement was established in the West Bank.

Critics of Israel argue that settlement expansion is proof of Israel's insincerity in the peace process, yet Israel has repeatedly proven that it is able to make peace when a true partner emerges. For example, in the 1970's, following Israel's peace accord with Egypt, Israel uprooted all settlements in the Sinai Peninsula and returned the land, conquered in 1967. In the 1990's, Israel made peace with Jordan, and they continue to have normal relations today. In 2000, Israel offered 97% of the disputed territories to the Palestinians and the full recognition of a Palestinian state in return for just two conditions: public recognition of the Jewish state and Israel's right to exist. Yet, the Palestinians refused, and the violence against Israel escalated. Even in incredibly difficult conditions, Israel agreed to cede control of Gaza to the Palestinians, but instead of embracing peace with Israel, Hamas declared war by shelling Israeli towns almost non-stop. For decades, Israel has proven through peace agreement after peace agreement its true intentions.

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY MORE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ON THE PALESTINIAN SIDE?

When attacked by missiles from terrorists in neighboring Gaza, Israelis employ a high-tech missile defense system known as the "Iron Dome," which was developed with critical assistance from the U.S. in response to these decades-long threats. The Iron Dome shoots down incoming rockets from Gaza mid-air with a 90 percent success rate, which is why there are few Israeli civilian deaths.

The high number of Palestinian civilian casualties is tragic and directly attributable to the actions of Hamas, the terrorist group which violently took control of Gaza in 2007. Hamas intentionally endangers Palestinian civilians by placing rockets, rocket launching pads, weapons caches and tunnel openings in private homes, UN schools, hospitals and mosques in order to draw Israel's ire and increase the number of casualties in Gaza. The higher this number, the more Hamas can cynically capitalize on the carnage to advance its propaganda war against Israel. The Israeli Defense Forces have taken tremendous efforts to avoid harming Palestinian civilians. The IDF warns civilians in Gaza of impending strikes on Hamas' rocket launching, production, and storage sites, terror tunnel entrances, and other targets as part of its effort to minimize the deaths of Palestinian non-combatants. The IDF provides phone calls, text messages, dropped leaflets, and fires warning shots whenever possible.

Despite these warnings, Hamas instructs Palestinians to ignore these calls, or sometimes prevents them from leaving. Where Israelis show restraint, often calling off airstrikes if Palestinian civilians are at risk, Hamas' ambition is to kill as many Israelis as possible.

WHAT IS BDS?

“BDS” refers to the tactics of boycotts, divestment and sanctions, which place economic and political pressure on states in order to influence their behavior. By using these tactics, individuals and organizations aim to isolate Israel politically, economically and culturally. Its overall objective is to challenge Israel’s right to exist as the sovereign homeland of the Jewish people, which is often called delegitimization. The delegitimization of Israel is frequently, though not exclusively, promoted with the tactics of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions (BDS).

The Jewish community, along with many in the international community, has supported the use of these methods when appropriate, such as in Apartheid South Africa in the 1980s and in Iran today. Unfortunately, these tactics have been co-opted by the “BDS Movement” that propagates an extreme, inflammatory and biased political agenda designed to demonize Israel, isolate her as a pariah among the community of nations, and ultimately end Israel’s existence as a Jewish and democratic state. To accomplish this, supporters of BDS against Israel engage in a variety of campaigns to encourage punitive measures against Israel. Ultimately, by encouraging activism aimed at demonizing and isolating Israel over time, BDS encourages the erosion of support for Israel amongst Americans.

Boycotts are not new. Ever since Israel’s establishment, the Arab world has tried to use an economic boycott to isolate and weaken Israel politically and economically. While Egypt and Jordan have trade links with Israel, most Arab countries do not trade directly with Israel. The peace plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (proposed by the U.S., European Union, Russia and the United Nations) specifically calls for the normalization of relations between the Arab states and Israel, including the return of trade links. Unfortunately, the BDS Movement opposes normal relations with Israel.

ELEMENTS OF BDS

Boycotts:

Boycott campaigns against Israel are the most commonly used BDS tactic. Boycotts focus on urging consumers not to purchase Israeli goods, not to do business with Israeli companies, and not to associate with Israeli academics or artists. Boycotts encourage the notion that it is simply immoral for conscientious individuals to have normal relations with the Jewish state. As such, these campaigns aim to isolate Israel economically and culturally by targeting specific Israeli companies and institutions for boycott.

For example, an active campaign exists against Sabra Hummus, which is partly owned by an Israeli company. At the urging of local BDS student activists, some universities have stopped selling this brand of hummus or have begun to offer an alternative to Sabra for those who observe the boycott. Boycotts of Israeli products by foreign customers has had an impact on Israeli providers. Income derived from exports of Israeli producers in the West Bank dropped \$29 million in 2013. This was the result of a boycott campaign in Britain and Scandinavia which boycotted Jordan Valley peppers, grapes and herbs.⁷ While the Jordan Valley farmers suffered considerable financial loss, the overall loss for Israeli agricultural

⁷ Laub, Karen. "Jordan Valley Settlements Hit by Boycott Campaign." *Associated Press*. 10 Jan. 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/minister-lack-peace-will-hurt-israeli-economy>)

exports was minimal. Hadassah and other members of the Jewish community seek to counter boycotts of Israeli products with buy Israeli goods campaigns.⁸

Other boycott campaigns seek to prevent Israel from participating in cultural events. Often, when musicians announce an upcoming concert in Israel, they are subjected to vigorous lobbying in the form of petitions and social media campaigns by BDS supporters urging them to cancel their Israeli dates. BDS campaigns have also targeted the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra and various Israeli sports teams that perform on occasion in the United States. Such campaigns have urged individuals to boycott the events and the producers to cancel them.

The most recent BDS campaign strategy seeks to impose an academic boycott on Israeli academic institutions. Arguing that no representative of an Israeli academic institution nor the Israeli government should be permitted to participate in academic associations upholding the boycott, this campaign urges professors to avoid teaching or lecturing at Israeli universities, or joining in panels sponsored by Israeli academic institutions or the Israeli government.

Divestment:

The messaging around divestment campaigns is very similar to that of boycotts, but goes one step further—encouraging individual investors and investment funds to withdraw their investments from companies allegedly profiting from Israeli human rights abuses. Utilizing the language of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI), divestment campaigns aim to demonstrate that doing business with Israeli companies, or even American companies that operate in or export to Israel, is unjust.

Divestment campaigns are most common on university campuses. Universities often have major investments in many different corporations, some of which have been targeted by BDS activists. In the past several years, student BDS activists have submitted divestment resolutions to their local student governments attempting to urge the student government to ask the Board of Trustees to withdraw the university's investments from corporations allegedly involved in enabling Israelis to abuse Palestinians.

In addition, BDS activists have also engaged with mainline churches, and state and city pension funds such as TIAA-CREF, urging them to divest from corporations doing business with Israel. The 2014 Presbyterian General Assembly passed a measure to divest from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, whose products are used by the Israeli government in the Palestinian territories.⁹

Many individuals sympathetic to BDS have divested their stock in companies deemed by the BDS activists to be supporting the Israeli occupation.

⁸ "BuyIsraelGoods.org." Israeli Products Home. America-Israel Chamber of Commerce. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.buyisraelgoods.org/>)

⁹ Johnson, Annysa. "Rabbis Protest as Presbyterian Church USA Considers Divestment." *Journal Sentinel*. 18 June 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.jsonline.com/news/religion/rabbis-protest-as-presbyterian-church-usa-considers-divestment-b99294044z1-263754921.html>)

Sanctions:

Sanctions typically refer to attempts by national governments, multilateral organizations and other international bodies to limit or ban trade and other relations with certain states. While some BDS campaigns do include calls for sanctions, most typically focus on supporting boycotts or divestment.

Importantly, the United States and Western countries—which were supportive of sanctions against Apartheid-era South Africa and Iran—have so far rejected applying sanctions to Israel. Indeed trade, scientific exchanges and cultural relations have flourished between Israel and the rest of the world over the last decade. In fact, in 2010, the influential Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) voted unanimously for Israel to join its ranks, praising its scientific and technological progress as having “produced outstanding outcomes on a world scale.”¹⁰

Official sanctions against Israel are less frequent, but remain a major concern. Every so often there are rumors that certain European countries are thinking about sanctioning products produced in Israeli settlements, as well as small-scale support for the imposition of individual sanctions against some of Israel’s most extreme right-wing politicians, who support the annexation of the disputed territories. Recently the European Union threatened Israel with sanctions¹¹ and an internal report of potential sanctions was leaked to the press.¹² Though unlikely, maintaining Israel advocacy to elected officials is essential to ensure that economic sanctions on Israel are not imposed by the global community.

THE BDS MOVEMENT

The BDS Movement is a global network of activists that attempts to have its agenda adopted by institutions including colleges and universities, faith-based communities, labor unions, civil and human rights organizations and minority groups, as well as others they can successfully influence. While BDS activists claim they are interested in an equitable and peaceful solution to the conflict, the goal of BDS is to undermine the democratic Jewish state of Israel and the two-state solution, and to create one Arab majority state. To accomplish this goal, the BDS movement offers a distorted, intolerant and one-sided picture of a complex situation. At the same time, the boundaries of the BDS Movement and its supporters are not always clearly defined. Often the BDS Movement attempts to co-opt well-meaning people who seek an immediate peaceful resolution to a complex, long-standing conflict. It is thus essential to recognize the true goals of the BDS Movement. BDS offers a false choice of acting either in Israeli or Palestinian interests while the goal should be to act in both of their interests.¹³

Despite claiming to seek “peace,” the BDS Movement works unambiguously to undermine the “two states for two peoples” solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is the commonly

¹⁰ "Accession: Estonia, Israel and Slovenia Invited to Join OECD." OECD. 5 Oct. 2010. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.oecd.org/about/membersandpartners/accessionestoniaisraelandsloveniainvitedtojoinecd.htm>)

¹¹ Newman, Marissa. "EU 'deeply Disappointed' by Settlement Announcement." *Times of Israel*. 5 June 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.timesofisrael.com/eu-deeply-disappointed-by-settlement-announcement>)

¹² Ravid, Barak. "Haaretz Obtains Full Document of EU-proposed Sanctions against Israel." *Haaretz*. 17 Nov. 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.626946>)

¹³ Massad, Joseph. "Recognizing Palestine, BDS and the Survival of Israel." Weblog post. *The Electronic Intifada*. 16 Dec. 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://electronicintifada.net/content/recognizing-palestine-bds-and-survival-israel/14123>)

accepted goal of the U.S., the European Union and the United Nations.¹⁴ For example, the BDS Movement calls for the return of Palestinian refugees (from the Arab war against the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948) to move into modern day Israel, not a Palestinian state, which would eliminate the State of Israel as we know it and replace it with an Arab majority state in all of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza.

Omar Barghouti, one of the founders of the BDS Movement stated, "Good riddance! The two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is finally dead. But someone has to issue an official death certificate before the rotting corpse is given a proper burial and we can all move on..."¹⁵ Even Norman Finkelstein, a prominent and harsh critic of Israel, denounced the BDS Movement because it aims for "the end of Israel."¹⁶ Clearly the strategy of the BDS Movement is to delegitimize Israel's very existence in order to secure a one-state solution to the conflict through Israel's dissolution as a Jewish and democratic, multicultural state.

COUNTERING BDS MESSAGING

The tactics of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions differ, but the messaging is very similar and can be countered with the same arguments. When confronted with BDS messaging, too many audiences are likely to support the movement, since BDS appears to be a non-violent effort, called for by Palestinians, as a means to protect their human rights and pressure Israel into making peace. Others view BDS as simply a means of raising awareness for the Palestinian cause. However, most people are unaware of the true aims of the BDS Movement, which is to delegitimize Israel and deny its right to exist.

In order to counter Anti-Israel or pro-BDS messaging it is essential to emphasize Israel's right to exist, it is especially important to emphasize that BDS is counterproductive to achieving peace. The goal of peace depends on both Israelis and Palestinians working together with international support toward a negotiated two-state solution which benefits both sides. Effective arguments should focus on the importance of creating an environment for economic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In contrast, BDS tactics are one-sided and are focused solely on pressuring Israel, thus creating a distorted picture of the region. Rather than improve the situation, these advocates undermine the internationally-backed peace process that is premised on the development of mutual understanding and respect. Economic boycotts and divestment actions does not help the Palestinian people because their very livelihood may be at stake if employers are not able to pay wages to their Palestinian workers. Even Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas himself has spoken out against boycotts of Israel as counterproductive. The path to the two-state solution depends on creating an atmosphere of peace and reconciliation combined with economic development and political achievement.

¹⁴ "Quartet Statement, Trieste, 26 June 2009." UN News Center. UN, 26 June. 2009. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/middle_east/quartet-26jun2009.htm)

¹⁵ Barghouti, Omar. "Relative Humanity: The Fundamental Obstacle to a One-State Solution in Historic Palestine (1/2)." Weblog post. *The Electronic Intifada*. 6 Jan. 2004. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://electronicintifada.net/content/relative-humanity-fundamental-obstacle-one-state-solution-historic-palestine-12/4939>)

¹⁶ O'Neill, Sean. "In Flinching Move, Finkelstein Slams Boycott Movement." Weblog post. *+972 Blog*. 16 Feb. 2012. Web. 15 Jan. 2015. (<http://972mag.com/in-flinching-move-finkelstein-slams-boycott-movement/35497>)

EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS AGAINST BDS

Pro-Israel advocates are encouraged to make use of the following core arguments when combating Anti-Israel or BDS campaigns in the community. These arguments have been compiled through research conducted on the attitudes of general and progressive audiences regarding their knowledge and opinions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the BDS Movement. This research was sponsored by the Israel Action Network in 2014.

Environment of cooperation: Effective arguments against BDS focus on the importance of creating an environment for economic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians, as opposed to BDS. Such efforts are supported by international leadership, including the U.S. and the European Union. This is a perfect opportunity to talk about Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) and Hadassah's work in Jerusalem and around the world. Specifically, you can describe the staff at HMO which is made up of many Palestinian doctors, nurses and other professionals in addition to the many patients at HMO from every culture and region in the Middle East.

- Example: The Roadmap Peace Plan proposed by the U.S., European Union, Russia and the United Nations specifically calls for the normalization of relations between the Arab states and Israel, including trade links. If we truly want to help both parties, we should be encouraging constructive engagement, investment and a negotiated solution, instead of boycotts, divestment, and sanctions.
- Example: Supporting BDS runs counter to and would undermine the current efforts to bring the parties to the table for peace negotiations that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and leaders in the Arab world are working to facilitate to create a lasting peace and a two state solution where both peoples can live in peace and security.

Constructive peacemaking: Some audiences are likely to be persuaded by terms such as "constructive engagement" and "creating an atmosphere of economic and political cooperation," since both Israelis and Palestinians must be mutually invested in taking necessary steps toward a lasting peace.

- Example: Peace requires economic cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians. We must encourage constructive efforts to bring Israeli and Palestinian academics together on joint projects, including those that foster reconciliation and promote understanding and trust.
- Example: If we truly want to help both parties, we should be encouraging constructive engagement, investment and a negotiated solution. When there is distrust, Israelis will sometimes limit Palestinians freedom of movement. This negatively impacts both students trying to get to classes in Israel and employees with jobs in Israel. Palestinians need their jobs in Israel to support their families. Many Palestinians cannot find jobs anywhere but in Israel.

Open mindedness and even-handedness: Acknowledging Israel's role in the conflict increases the credibility of those making pro-Israel arguments by showing even-handedness towards both parties and an open-mindedness to the diversity of opinions.

- Example: We might be aware of problems on the Israeli side, but it's too simplistic to just boycott one side when both sides share responsibility for a complex conflict. (Note: Starting with this line makes the argument more powerful by disarming critics at the start.)
- Example: We recognize that others may see it differently, but we should be trying to bring Palestinians and Israelis together to create peace. Rather than acknowledging that both sides are responsible for creating the current conflict, BDS focuses only on pressuring Israel. We should be encouraging efforts that promote mutual reconciliation and coexistence.

Israel is invested in peace: As noted above, there is a great lack of knowledge when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Reminders of Israel's historic compromises and gestures are compelling, as well as the Palestinian Authority's repeated refusal to accept such offers – but must be constructed carefully and credibly. Citing these overtures shows that Israel remains committed to the peaceful goal your audience supports. Some call into question whether the Palestinians themselves want BDS and sourcing Abbas' denouncement is critical.

- Example: BDS targets only Israel, and while we are aware there are problems on the Israeli side, the Palestinians are not blameless in this conflict. Their actions, including terrorism and indiscriminate rocket fire on civilians, refusing previous peace plans and failure to acknowledge Israelis' legitimate right to self-determination have also led to the current situation. For instance, Israeli Prime Minister Barak accepted President Clinton's peace plan but Yasser Arafat did not and instead unleashed a wave of terrorism. We learned from Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014, that concrete paid for by Israel that was meant to build schools and hospitals in the West Bank was instead used to build a sophisticated system of underground tunnels intended to be used to destroy Israel.
- Example: In 1947, the UN recommended a resolution that would create 2 states, one for the Arabs and one for the Jews. The Partition Plan as it was called was a 4 part document attached to the resolution. The Arabs rejected that proposal.
- Example: In the 1970s, Israel made peace with Egypt, and the Sinai was returned. In the 1990s, Israel made peace with Jordan, and they continue to have normal relations today. In 2000, Israel offered 97% of the disputed territories to the Palestinians and the full recognition of a Palestinian state in return for just two conditions: public recognition of the Jewish state and Israel's right to exist. Yet, the Palestinians refused, and the violence against Israel escalated. Even in incredibly difficult conditions, Israel agreed to cede control of Gaza to the Palestinians, but instead of embracing peace with Israel, Hamas declared war by shelling Israeli towns almost non-stop. For decades, Israel has proven through peace agreement after peace agreement its true intentions. Now, it's up to the Palestinians.
- Example: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said in December 2013, "We don't ask anyone to boycott Israel itself."¹⁷ Future prosperity, as well as peace, depends on creating an atmosphere of economic and political cooperation.

¹⁷ Goldman, Yoel. "Abbas: Don't Boycott Israel." *Times of Israel*. 13 Dec. 2013. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.timesofisrael.com/abbas-we-do-not-support-the-boycott-of-israel/>)

Israel is not an apartheid state: Pro-Israel students and professionals are highly encouraged to cite facts and clear up inconsistencies to refute pro-BDS arguments. Pro-BDS arguments are often morally and factually incorrect, especially claims that Israel is an apartheid state.

- Example: Apartheid-era South Africa was a state-sponsored system of racial segregation. The situation in the West Bank must be viewed within the context of the ongoing conflict, but the bottom line is that Israel is a pluralistic and democratic society that supports the rights of all people. Just as social injustices are challenged in the American court system resulting in positive changes, so too injustices in Israeli society are brought to the Israeli court and legal system. This often results in positive changes to ensure the rights of all Israeli citizens.

EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS AGAINST ACADEMIC BOYCOTTS

The most convincing arguments against Anti-Israel and pro-BDS messages are in the academic sphere. Academics have generally agreed that academic boycotts run counter to the idea of academic freedom. Broadly, many thought it was fundamentally wrong to restrict the exchange of ideas in the middle of a conflict.

- Example: Peace for both Israelis and Palestinians depends on both parties working together towards a negotiated, mutually agreeable solution. In contrast, an academic boycott is divisive and undermines cooperation.
- Example: Academic freedom means the free exchange of ideas. Promoting an academic and/or cultural boycott of Israel contradicts the principles of academic freedom.
- Example: Academic boycotts are not only an anathema to academic freedom, but they undercut the important role of academics as thought leaders in evaluating and critiquing government policies.
- Example: Israeli academia is pluralistic and diverse and contains many individuals who explicitly oppose Anti-Arab racism, Islam phobia and the military and the civilian occupations of the West Bank. Academics and institutions should be judged by the content of their work, and by the nature of their academic norms and practices, not by the state in which they are employed.
- Example: The focus should be on negotiating borders, not boycotts. Settlements are one of the many challenging topics which should be solved through negotiations, not through BDS tactics.
- Example: It's too simplistic to boycott Israel when both sides share responsibility for a complex conflict.
- Example: **We must encourage constructive efforts to bring Israeli and Palestinian academics together on joint projects, including those that foster reconciliation and promote understanding and trust.**

"17" OR "18" WAYS TO COUNTER BDS AND PROMOTE THE LEGITIMACY OF ISRAEL

1. Use the messaging provided in *How to Talk About Israel* to speak out for Israel and against BDS messaging whenever possible.
2. Run a *How to Talk About Israel* training in your community to teach others about effective messaging and other ways to counter BDS. *How to Talk About Israel* Scenarios have been created for your use in this guide.
3. Monitor your professional associations for Anti-Israel resolutions or measures to divest from Israel, and contact Hadassah and the Israel Action Network if a BDS campaign arises.
4. Help Hadassah and IAN create a list of professors and college or university personnel that can be mobilized to counter delegitimization in academics.
5. Contact your alma mater and local colleges or universities that need to hear from you about how Israel on campus is being portrayed.
6. Review your children's and grandchildren's textbooks for Anti-Israel and Anti-Semitic bias. If you encounter any concerns, complete the Hadassah Curriculum Watch online form. Learn more about the program at <http://www.hadassah.org/advocate/israel-advocacy.html>.
7. Show support for artists and musicians who do go to Israel, and urge others to resist pressure to boycott, through social media and other campaigns.
8. Buy Israeli goods!
9. Thank your local stores for carrying Israeli products, and request they stock Israeli products they aren't carrying.
10. Write letters-to-the-editor or op-eds for your local newspaper in response to a BDS campaign, or in support of Israel more generally.
11. Promote Israel's successes and your personal stories when speaking with family, co-workers, friends, neighbors, even strangers.
12. Share information about Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO), which treats over one million patients a year without regard to race, religion, or nationality.
13. Be an Israel social media ambassador, frequently sharing posts with your networks.
14. Advocate for Israel to your elected officials via email or in-person lobby visits.
15. Attend pro-Israel rallies and events in your community.
16. Encourage elected officials and community leaders to visit Israel and HMO through Hadassah's Influentials-to-Israel (I2I) program.
17. Travel to Israel – and bring Jewish and non-Jewish friends!
18. Participate in Hadassah's Defining Zionism in the 21st Century online speaker series and help expand the conversation about Israel. www.hadassah.org/definingzionism

ROLE PLAYING SCENARIOS:

SCENARIO #1

You're sitting at a small dinner party with a few friends and acquaintances; you're drawn into conversation with an acquaintance sitting on your left. The acquaintance asks whether you have taken any vacations recently. You begin to talk about your recent trip to Israel. Talk of your travel leads to an exchange of remarks about the recent violence in Israel. The acquaintance is up to speed on recent events. She is someone who clearly reads the news and editorial pages on matters relating to Israel and the Middle East. Talk of the violence in Israel leads to a more intense, but still polite, discussion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Scene opens here when the acquaintance asks the following:

Acquaintance: . . . But the Palestinians have been living in the West Bank for many generations. How can Israel keep occupying their land and refusing to give them independence?

You: Well, I'm not certain the situation is that simple. Historically speaking, Israelis have also been living in the land for generations and have almost always been willing to make long lasting peace agreements where there has been a willing partner.

Acquaintance: I don't know how you can say that.

You: In 1979, Israel made peace with Egypt, and returned the land it conquered in 1967. In 1994, Israel made peace with Jordan, and to this day they have normal relations. In 2000 and 2008, the Israelis offered the Palestinians an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza. But the Palestinian leadership rejected both offers. Peace requires a commitment from both parties, and the Israelis have shown that they are invested in peace. It's time for the Palestinian leaders to show they are too.

Acquaintance: I remember that. But, how can you say that Israel wants peace when it goes ahead and creates a vast system of checkpoints, roadblocks, and even the Israel Security Fence? If Israel continues to maintain a military presence in the "Palestinian territories," it seems to be further proof that Israel isn't interested in real peace.

You: All of these have to be viewed within the context of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Israelis have to make tough and sometimes controversial decisions to ensure their citizens' safety. Surely you remember the countless suicide bombing attacks on Israeli civilians in the early 2000's, when over 1,100 Israelis were killed. The Israel Security Fence and the other measures certainly present daily obstacles for Palestinians, but they are present to ensure that Israelis aren't killed or wounded while going to work or school. I know the Palestinians don't have it easy, but I firmly believe that the Israelis ultimately want peace.

Acquaintance: It's not just that there are physical barriers that the Israelis put in place in occupied territory, but I've read that the Israelis restrict Palestinian mobility, and have even killed children during military operations! I've seen the pictures!

You: I've seen them too, and it's awful that so many innocent Palestinians have been killed, especially children. It's an incredibly challenging situation for Israel. On the one hand, Israelis are constantly threatened by tens of thousands of missiles being launched at their cities from Hamas-controlled Gaza, and they need to protect themselves. On the other hand, it's very

challenging to do so when instead of using rockets to protect their children, Hamas terrorists use their children to protect their rockets. What do you think the U.S. would do if Mexico began firing thousands of missiles at its cities?

Acquaintance: Terror is not the problem; the root cause of the problem is the occupation. All these years of occupation, roadblocks, their houses bulldozed, their children being killed ... they are all preventing Palestinians from having any hope for a viable, independent state.

You: The Palestinians have suffered terribly. I know that. But I also believe Israelis have the right to security, and so long as they are threatened by violent attacks from Palestinians, they must do everything they can to protect their citizens. And it's important to note that even when Israelis and Hamas are at war, the Israelis have continued to open field hospitals in Gaza to treat wounded Palestinians, and the border crossings have remained open in order to transfer thousands of tons of medical and food supplies to Palestinians. It's up to Hamas to ensure that the supplies that enter Gaza aren't used to build tunnels to attack Israeli civilians.

Acquaintance: I say end the occupation and you will end the violence.

You: Actually, it's the other way around. Ending the occupation won't bring peace. Bringing a peace accord will end the occupation.

Acquaintance: What do you mean?

You: What's most important now is that we help create an atmosphere of reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians so that they can get back to the negotiating table and make peace. Israel wants peace with its neighbors, and even the Palestinian Authority is committed to a two-state solution.

Acquaintance: You really think so?

You: I do. And peace would benefit both sides.

Acquaintance: Depends on what kind of resolution.

You: Of course. That's why the negotiating process is so important. Our role in America should not be to add to the conflict, but to model cooperation and coexistence in order to truly bring the parties together. We have to be supporters of peace rather than actors acting out the Israeli-Palestinian conflict here. Peace can be achieved, but our role has to be positive and constructive.

Acquaintance: I see what you're saying. You've given me something to think about.

SCENARIO #2

You are a graduate student in a humanities department at a college in New York. One morning, you receive an email from the graduate student union informing you that several weeks from now, there will be a referendum amongst graduate students as to whether or not to impose an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions. This boycott would effectively prohibit the graduate students at your college from engaging with Israeli academics. Upon discussing the issue with a fellow graduate student in your department – one with whom you've worked on a number of studies – you mention that you will be voting against the academic boycott resolution. He is surprised by your statement and informs you that he is certainly considering voting in favor of it. You ask him to elaborate on his opinion...

The scene opens here with the following exchange . . .

Fellow Graduate Student: Well, we need to do something about Israel's human rights abuses against the Palestinians. I think that as academics, we have a responsibility to identify injustice and do what we can to correct it. The academic boycott of Israeli universities can really send a message to the Israeli government that we don't support its policies toward the Palestinians.

You: I hear what you're saying, and I know that the Palestinians don't think they are treated very well under the Israeli government, but I'm not certain that an academic boycott is the best way to create a better situation for the Palestinians. And it certainly won't help lead to the ultimate goal of establishing a Palestinian state next to Israel.

Fellow Graduate Student: Why not?

You: It's too simplistic to boycott Israel when both sides share responsibility for a complex conflict. Plus, an academic boycott runs counter to the idea of academic freedom, since it seeks to limit the free exchange of ideas.

Fellow Graduate Student: But I read that Israel limits the academic freedom of Palestinians, by not allowing certain professors or students into the West Bank to teach or study. Shouldn't we be telling the Israelis that unless they engage with Palestinian academics, we won't engage with them?

You: We're all aware there are problems on the Israeli side, but this type of a boycott would hold Israeli academics responsible for the policies put in place by their government. Academics, like us, and their institutions should be judged by the content of their work and the nature of their academic norms and practice, not by the state in which they are employed. Also, academics play a major role in Israel when it comes to evaluating government policies. If we were to boycott anything in Israel, academics would NOT be the route I would choose.

Fellow Graduate Student: So what about just a simple boycott of Israeli products? Wouldn't that send the message to the Israeli government that Americans disapprove of the occupation? Surely you must agree that boycotts are powerful tools to change society for the better?

You: I think that while some boycotts have had positive impacts throughout the world, boycotting Israeli products to protest Israeli policies toward the Palestinians may not be the right strategy. Many Palestinians are employed to make those products! Peace for both parties depends on both Israelis and Palestinians working together toward a negotiated, mutually agreeable solution. It's our responsibility to encourage positive, constructive efforts to achieve peace, rather than cutting off ties by utilizing a boycott.

Fellow Graduate Student: I just don't understand how that would lead to the end of the occupation.

You: Well, peace is achieved through mutual understanding and reconciliation, and Israelis and Palestinians need more of that now than ever before. We should be supporting organizations that promote coexistence between the two parties in that region, programs that enable them to learn about each other, and initiatives that will foster a generation willing to make compromises for peace. Boycotts seek to tear down and divide, whereas our role should be to build up both peoples' narratives and help them navigate toward a final resolution to the conflict.

Fellow Graduate Student: Ahh, that's very interesting. You've given me something to think about.

You: Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. I'm always happy to discuss this with you.

SCENARIO #3

You are a student at a state run public university that is known for its liberal activism on campus. You decided to go to this school because you are entitled to in-state tuition. You are sitting alone in the dining hall. You meant to grab a quick sandwich before your next class. A fellow student at a nearby table strikes up a conversation. She is the head of a pro-environment group on campus. She recognizes you because you stopped by the environmental group's table at an activity fair. The student asks you what other groups you decided to join. You tell her that you joined the main pro-Israel group on campus—the equivalent of AIPAC. She gets really tense and asks you why you would want to join such a conservative and racist group.

The scene opens here . . .

Fellow Student: Israel is a racist country just like South Africa used to be. It's apartheid to make Arab citizens second class citizens. Why doesn't Israel give its Arab and Jewish citizens the same rights?

You: What do you mean like South Africa? Apartheid was a system of racial segregation, whereas Israel is a democracy. Jewish and non-Jewish citizens of Israel have the right to vote, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and all abide by the same code of laws. There are Arabs who serve in the Knesset, on the Israeli Supreme Court, in the Israeli Defense Forces, and are musicians, artists, businessmen, etc. It's a democracy, just like the U.S.

Fellow Student: Arabs may have the right to vote, but you can't call them equal citizens of Israel. I've read online about the disparity in wealth. It's a joke to say that Arab citizens have all the rights and privileges of Israeli citizens—they are second-class citizens.

You: Well, Arab-Israeli citizens do have the same legal rights and privileges as Jewish Israeli citizens. And although there is disparity in wealth, there are many Jews who live below the poverty line. In fact, combating poverty is one of Israel's major challenges, just like the U.S. Regardless, like every other democracy, Israel faces challenges in ensuring fair and equitable treatment of minority citizens. Nevertheless, Israel's track record compares favorably with other pluralistic democracies.

Fellow Student: What about schools and inequality in social services?

You: Actually Arab-Israeli citizens have access to some of the best public services in the Middle East, maybe even the world. Like medical care—picture this: The Hadassah Medical Organization is one of the best medical centers in the world. There, Jewish and Arab physicians, nurses and staff work side by side treating Jewish and Arab patients as equals, even sharing hospital rooms!

Fellow Student: But what about all the other problems?

You: It's true—domestically, things could be better in Israel. Many Arab citizens of Israel are struggling. So are many Jewish citizens. But I think it's important that within Israeli society, there is a healthy debate over how to achieve greater levels of equality amongst all citizens.

Fellow Student: I guess that makes sense.

You: Sure. Everyone would be better off if we recognized that this healthy debate is part of Israel's democracy. It's important that we maintain it.

Fellow Student: So let's hope for peace . . .

SCENARIO #4

You attend an election forum at your local community college where panelists, representing the Democratic and Republican parties, face off on hot button election issues. The moderator of the forum asks the panelists to discuss their parties' views on a range of topics, including healthcare, the economy, gun control, and the Middle East—particularly U.S. policy toward Israel and U.S. involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the topic of U.S. policy toward Israel comes up, the panelists do not devote significant attention to it; quickly agreeing that both political parties support a strong U.S.-Israel relationship.

During the question and answer period, an audience member goes to the microphone and addresses the panelists. She says, "I have a problem with your responses to the issue of U.S. policy toward Israel. I don't think that it is in America's best interest to support Israel in the one-sided way that it does because that prevents the U.S. from being an honest broker between the Israelis and the Arabs. Furthermore, it is not in America's interest to support Israel."

Again, the panelists skirt the question and begin to debate U.S. policy in the Middle East, without mentioning Israel. As the forum ends, you are really upset; you are upset at the assertion—which you have heard many times before—that U.S. support for Israel is misguided. You consider your options. You decide to find the audience member to try to disavow her of this idea. You find the audience member and the following exchange takes place . . .

The scene opens here . . .

You: Hi, I'm [insert name]. I live in this area, and I wanted to talk to you a little about the question you asked this evening, especially the idea that U.S. support for Israel is misguided.

Audience Member: Sure no problem, it's something I feel very strongly about. You have to agree with me that America needs to be able to play a balanced role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Our support for Israel only harms our status in the international community and with the Palestinians.

You: But America's support for Israel and its ability to mediate between Israelis and Palestinians are not at odds. The U.S. supports Israel because it is in the interests of the American people. For example, Israelis face many of the same national security threats that we do, and through sharing intelligence, combating terrorism, participating in joint military drills, and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, America's support for Israel benefits us.

Audience Member: But I think the U.S. has to be more even-handed toward the Israelis and Palestinians. How can we expect to play an integral role in the peace process if we are perceived to only be supporting one side – Israel?

You: The U.S. sees its role as promoting stability in the Middle East, and one of the ways to accomplish that is by ensuring that Israelis and Palestinians achieve a two-state solution. The U.S. has actively advocated for a Palestinian state every time the parties have come together for negotiations. But the U.S. wants a Palestinian state that recognizes Israel and denounces terrorism—and we have not seen that.

Audience Member: Still, the U.S. is providing Israel with \$3 billion per year, which arms the Israelis against the Palestinians. How is that fair and even-handed?

You: The U.S. supports Israel as the only democracy in the Middle East. The military aid that Israel receives from the U.S. actually helps make a more stable Middle East. Israel's military strength deters potential aggressors in the region and helps to advance the goal of two states for two peoples. In addition, calling for an end to this aid isolates and demonizes Israel, and discourages Israel from entering peace negotiations. The U.S. makes decisions, as it should, strictly on what is in its best interest.

Audience Member: I will have to think about this some more . . . have a good evening.

You: You too.

SCENARIO #5

You are involved in your local Parent Teacher Association (PTA). At a PTA meeting, you sit with a fellow parent that you recognize from your neighborhood, but don't know well. After chatting about your children, your neighbor asks if you have any fun plans for the upcoming weekend. You say that you are attending a Hadassah luncheon on Sunday, a fundraiser for Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel.

Scene opens here when your neighbor asks the following:

Neighbor: Yeah, I've heard of Hadassah. They organize that fundraising walk through town every year, right? What does it do?

You: Hadassah is the Women's Zionist Organization of America. We support two hospitals in Israel, and support other projects as well. In the U.S. we have chapters all over the country that plan educational and social programs, advocate for women's rights in the U.S. and around the world, and we fundraise for the hospitals in Israel. I know, a lot of people don't realize that Israel is one of the world's leaders in medical and scientific breakthroughs.

Neighbor: Really? No, I had no idea.

You: You would be surprised how many major inventions have come out of Israel. Intel Pentium chips in all our computers came out of Israel. Do you know the GPS app Waze? That was developed in Israel before it was bought by Google.

Neighbor: Interesting. Do you travel to Israel often?

You: I've been a few times. The last was in 2012 for Hadassah's Centennial Convention in Jerusalem. If you've never been, I strongly recommend a trip.

Neighbor: Honestly, from everything that you hear on the news about terrorism and all the politics, it was never at the top of my list.

You: Almost everyone will tell you the same thing, I've never felt unsafe while I was there. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is definitely complicated, but there are so many other aspects about Israel that I wish people heard more about. Like the U.S., Israel is a democracy that protects freedom for all Israelis—freedom for all religions, freedom of the press, women's rights, gay rights, and so much more.

It may sound like all Israelis and Arabs do is fight, but in reality they collaborate and cooperate on a daily basis in hundreds of arenas. At Hadassah Hospital (HMO has two locations) we have Jewish and Arab doctors working side by side, treating all patients regardless of nationality, religion or race. In 2005, we were even nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. I know it sounds corny, but that is why I'm so passionate about Hadassah. Our hospitals really do build bridges to peace.

Neighbor: It's nice to be so committed to something. I've been looking to get involved in something, other than PTA.

You: Come with me to the luncheon on Sunday! We're actually starting a new walking program for heart health aka Hadassah's Every Step Counts and you and I could walk around the block together!

ISRAEL: A THRIVING DEMOCRACY WITH MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ISRAEL IS THE ONLY DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

- **Israel safeguards freedom and civil liberty.** Israelis have freedom of speech, press, the right to vote, protection from sexual harassment and the right to a fair trial. As a healthy democracy, Israel encourages vigorous debate among its citizens.
- **Freedom of religion is a hallmark of Israeli society.** Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druze and Bahá'í are free to observe their religions without fear of persecution. Israel protects the holy sites of all religions.
- **Israel safeguards women's rights.** Although Israel struggles with certain aspects of women's rights as many Democracies do, including the U.S., Israel has had a woman prime minister and overall women have better access to quality health care, birth control, education, career opportunities and representation in all branches of government than in any other country in the Middle East. Israel's Knesset has more elected women officials than the U.S. has ever had in our Congress.
- **Israel is a leader in gay rights.** Israel recognizes same-sex unions and gays have openly served in the military for over a decade. Tel Aviv is well known for its gay pride festivals and the city has been ranked as one of the best LGBT travel destinations in the world.¹⁸
- **Israelis who are Arabs are engaged in the Israeli civic process.** Israelis who are Arabs have been able to vote for Prime Minister and Parliament since Israel's founding in 1948. Arab-Israelis serve in the Knesset, the Israeli Supreme Court, district courts, and military leadership. In 2007, disappointed by the scarcity of Arab ministers in high government positions, the Israeli government instituted a policy of affirmative action for Israelis who are Arabs and who are working in employment and education.¹⁹ Israel employs Arabs who serve in senior journalism positions including serving as reporters.
- **Israel respects the rule of law.** Israel's High Court of Justice has recognized women's right to pray and hold prayer services at the Kotel aka the Western Wall, despite strong ultra-orthodox opposition. The Court has also ruled that the Israeli government must reroute portions of the security fence so as not to cause undo hardship to Palestinian farmers in the area.
- Like American democracy, Israel's is constantly evolving and improving.

ISRAEL IS A LEADER IN WORLD HEALTH:

- **Israel is on the cutting-edge of breakthroughs in medicine, scientific research and technology.** From stem cell research to vaccines to nanotechnology, Israeli researchers have pioneered the development and use of countless lifesaving medicines and technologies.²⁰

¹⁸ "Welcome to Gay Tel Aviv." *Gay Tel Aviv Guide*. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.gaytlvguide.com>)

¹⁹ Darawshe, Mohammad. "Affirming Affirmative Action." *Haaretz*. 2 Apr. 2010. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/affirming-affirmative-action-1.283819>)

²⁰ "Did You Know?" *ISRAEL21c*. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.israel21c.org/did-you-know-israel-facts>)

- **Israel is a leader in disaster management—providing help and humanitarian aid around the world.** When tragedy strikes, Israel sends rescue workers, doctors, and equipment to assist victims around the globe. Israel has aided tsunami victims in Southeast Asia, victims of civil strife in Kosovo and Darfur, earthquake survivors in Turkey and Haiti, and AIDS victims in Africa.
- **In Israel, everyone has the right to access quality health care.** Under its system of national healthcare, all of Israel’s residents are automatically insured regardless of age, financial status or religion.
- **Israel’s health care system ranks among the best in the world.** Israel’s ratio of physicians to patients is among the highest worldwide²¹ and its infant mortality rate is among the lowest.²² Israel’s comprehensive national health basket of services includes full hospitalization, medical testing and treatment.
- Israel’s Hadassah Medical Organization is at the forefront of medical care and research. **Widely respected as one of the most advanced hospitals in the Middle East, HMO is a world leader in medical breakthroughs providing equal treatment to all patients regardless of nationality or religious faith.**

ISRAEL HAS AN EXPANDING AND PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY:

- **Like the U.S., Israel’s economy is based on free enterprise.** While Israel’s economy is subject to the same fluctuations as the rest of the world, free enterprise produces a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Indeed, Israel is ranked third in entrepreneurship worldwide, and boasts the highest rate among women and people age 55 plus.²⁰
- **Israel is the “Start-Up Nation.”** Israel has the largest number of biotech start-ups per person of any country in the world. Israeli start-ups receive the second highest level of venture capital funds worldwide, behind only the U.S.²⁰
- **Israeli inventions fill the global marketplace.** The cell phone, voice mail technology, much of the Windows NT operating system, AOL Instant Messenger, Intel’s Pentium MMX Chip, the first PC Anti-virus software, ReWalk paraplegic walking assistance machine, and the Waze GPS mobile application were all invented in Israel.²⁰
- **Israel produces a highly skilled workforce.** Israel is an international leader in publishing scientific papers and filing patents, with some of the highest percentages of scientists and technicians per capita. Israel has won many Nobel Prizes for its cutting edge research and ingenuity.²⁰
- **Israel’s agriculture continues to thrive.** Israel produces almost 70 percent of its food requirements—despite the fact that it is almost half desert. A combination of cutting-edge science, government support, advanced irrigation techniques and raw determination have all contributed to Israel’s agricultural success. Israel has shared many of its innovative approaches with other nations thus contributing to the welfare of the world.²⁰

²¹ "Physicians (per 1,000 People)." The World Bank. 2011. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MED.PHYS.ZS>)

²² "Country Comparison: Infant Mortality Rate." *The World Fact Book*. Central Intelligence Agency, 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2091rank.html>)

Building Bridges to Peace through Medicine

Op-Ed by Marcie E. Natan, Hadassah National President, 2014, Published on the Hadassah Website

The rationale for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel is based on generalities—many of them uninformed—about how different populations live, work, study, and co-exist in the region. In reality, Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, collaborate and cooperate on a daily basis in a hundred arenas.

Medicine is one of those arenas.

At Hadassah Medical Organization's two hospitals in Jerusalem, Jews and Arabs work side by side—doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators—in a life-and-death struggle with sick and broken bodies. Over one million patients a year are treated there, without regard to race, religion, or nationality. This is not new. It's been the case since Hadassah opened its first hospital in Jerusalem in 1918.

Partnerships between Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO), Hebrew University Hadassah Medical School, and Palestinian hospitals and health organizations are too numerous to detail here. They include extensive training programs for Palestinian midwives, paramedics, emergency medicine and trauma physicians and nurses, both at HMO and in the Palestinian territories.

In one such collaboration, HMO is part of the Peace in Sight program, which trains doctors and nurses in ophthalmology to serve at the St. John Eye Hospital in East Jerusalem—the primary center for specialized eye care in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. This partnership is critical, since Palestinians suffer unusually high rates of blindness. Some of the funding for this initiative comes from the U.S. State Department.

Additional programs in neonatology, dental medicine, pediatric cardiology and more bring together Israelis and Palestinians in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. Medicine is a common denominator among peoples. It sees past ethnicity, past religion, to our shared humanity.

Medicine is a path to peace.

Kameill Hussein, Palestinian writer and founder of the first Palestinian communications firm, took his mother to Hadassah for cancer treatment over a period of a dozen years. In an article in the widely read Tel Aviv newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth*, he says, "At Hadassah, it doesn't matter who you are; they encourage you to fight the disease and other dangers that are much more important than all our wars. ... In the treatment rooms, Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs unite in searching for a cure, in praying to their God. They all rise above the conflict and hate, and become humans."

Last spring, the Palestinian Authority's Minister of Health, Dr. Hani Abdeen, visited patients in the pediatric hemato-oncology department at HMO, where 30 percent of the children are Palestinian. Learning that about 60 Palestinian doctors are doing their residencies at Hadassah's hospitals at any given time, Dr. Abdeen noted the importance of developing specialties that are lacking in the Palestinian Authority, including anesthesiology, interventional radiology, cardiac care and pediatrics. "I understand that I am the first Palestinian Minister of Health to visit our patients in an Israeli hospital," he said. "We're here to find ways to further collaborate." We hope that those advocating for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions take stock of what is working in Israel, and realize there are better ways to bring people together. There are more effective paths to peace.

EXAMPLES: LETTER TO THE EDITOR & OP-EDS

What follows below are sample letters to the editor and op-eds which employ effective messaging in combating printed assaults on Israel's legitimacy, as well as Israel's legitimate right to defend herself in times of war. You should incorporate your own personal anecdotes and use updated examples and facts in your letters. **These example letters are simply provided for reference.**

AN EXAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR: ISRAEL UNDER ATTACK

Dear Editor:

There is a free iPhone app called "Red Alert," which sounds a siren every time a rocket from Gaza is about to hit an Israeli city. During Operation Protective Edge when hundreds of rockets were indiscriminately fired over Israel resulting in Red Alerts which interrupted me constantly—while I was asleep, in the shower, at work or with my family. Millions of Israelis have had to run to the nearest bomb shelter, from children playing in a kindergarten to a bride at her wedding. They have only about 15 seconds to reach safety—about the time it will take you to read this letter.

Unlike them, I never had to move an inch and, frankly, I wouldn't know what to do if I had to find safety. If Hamas, labeled a terrorist organization by both the U.S. and the European Union, was launching rockets at Sderot, I couldn't even tell you where our nearest bomb shelter is. Could you? The steps the Israeli government is taking are understandable and Americans would expect no less from our government if missiles were falling on vulnerable U.S. population centers.

At this challenging time it is also important to remember that the only way to resolve this terrible conflict is a negotiated solution that allows both Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace. We must all work together to empower those peace-seeking parties on both sides, while condemning groups like Hamas that make Red Alert a sad necessity.

EXAMPLE #1 OF AN OP-ED LETTER: CORRECTING THE RECORD

The accusation that Israel is "a state that operates Apartheid within its own borders it has occupied and colonized since 1967" is factually and morally incorrect. Apartheid is a state-sanctioned system of racial separation and discrimination. This is not the case in Israel, where there is one law for all people and minorities have full political rights.

Yes, every liberal democracy faces challenges in ensuring fair and equitable treatment of its minority citizens, but Israel's track record compares favorably with other pluralistic democracies. Freedoms we all cherish, such as freedom of press, speech and religion, are centerpieces of Israeli law for all its citizens.

The troubling situation concerning Israeli treatment of Palestinians in the West Bank is not comparable to Apartheid and must be viewed within the context of the ongoing conflict. While the Palestinians may be viewed as a minority, they could one day become the majority. I grew up reading newspapers with photos of the latest suicide bombing in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem which

indiscriminately murdered Israeli men, women, and children of Jewish, Muslim, Christian and other backgrounds on their way to work and school. Close friends of mine have been injured in terrorist attacks and others have bravely volunteered as members of medical teams assisting injured terror victims immediately after the attacks.

When Israel was forced to protect its civilians to prevent such dreadful bloodshed, a system of check points, security roads, identification cards and security barriers were established to separate Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel's citizens, providing physical security from the threat of attacks. Many people view these security systems as a source of racism, segregation, and humiliation.

I have great sympathy for Palestinians who are forced to cope with these systems on a daily basis, but I also see that these security systems are protecting my friends and my family members who live there. A balance is required to ensure security for Israelis while working to ease the great pressure on Palestinians while simultaneously moving toward a final peace agreement. This issue is constantly debated in Israel, and the High Court has heard many Palestinian submissions. Rather than misusing the term 'apartheid', I highly encourage you to look for means to work with people of goodwill on both sides to advance toward a negotiated two-state solution.

I would also like to suggest that your open support for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel is not helpful in providing a lasting peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and, as you so gracefully put it, "can only impede progress towards peace and understanding between people." While I understand the great imbalance of power between Israelis and Palestinians, and I have great sympathy, as mentioned above, for Palestinians who are forced to undergo humiliations at Israeli checkpoints each day, the BDS movement consistently fails to offer a viable solution to the conflict, and those who advocate for a one-state solution ignore the right of self-determination for both peoples to live side-by side in peace and security. By singling out and assigning one-sided blame to one party over the other, we fail together as advocates for peace, to find ways to foster the harmonious atmosphere that would enable Israelis and Palestinians to achieve a real lasting peace.

If we truly seek to foster peace, I believe we should support programs and initiatives that promote reconciliation and coexistence, rather than those that attempt to punish and divide peoples. We need to support projects that help the parties move toward a "two states for two peoples" solution that would create a Jewish and democratic state of Israel, alongside an independent nation-state of Palestine.

EXAMPLE #2 OF AN OP-ED LETTER: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

What would you do if a rocket could land on your house at any time? If a siren could force you out of bed with just 15 seconds to find shelter? What if your loved ones, who are elderly or disabled, were faced with this reality – could you sleep knowing their mobility issues might spell disaster?

That depiction is a reflection of life right now in Israel. It's a threat none of us would tolerate. And ever since Hamas rejected an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire supported by their own allies in the Palestinian Authority and Arab League, as well as the U.S. and the Mideast Quartet, it not only continues to place both Israeli and Palestinian lives in danger, but pushes prospects for peace further away.

As a result, Israelis have been forced to make unimaginable decisions. After discovering that numerous Hamas commandos infiltrated Israel from a Gaza-based tunnel, on their way to carry out a large-scale attack on the Israeli Kibbutz Sufa, Israel made the difficult decision to expand Operation Protective Edge into a ground offensive.

And it's a necessary one - Hamas has dug an extensive network of tunnels over many years to smuggle weapons into Gaza, largely from Iran, in an attempt to gain access to Israeli civilian populations for terrorist attacks. In order to protect Israel's citizens and restore calm, these tunnels have to be dismantled. While carefully targeted air strikes can destroy some weapons caches or launching sites, they cannot counter the valid threats posed by tunnel infiltration.

Since the ground operation commenced, tunnels and entry points were uncovered in Gaza by the IDF. Hamas dedicated millions of dollars and used hundreds of tons of cement to build this extensive system; if only they invested as many resources into the well-being of their own people.

Instead, they deliberately chose to place their own citizens, schools, mosques and hospitals at risk by storing missiles in those facilities, turning them into legitimate military targets and using their own innocent residents as human shields.

The people of Gaza are suffering, and dying, though not solely by the hand of Israel as many headlines would lead you to believe. Context is key; while we mourn the injuries and lives lost in both Israel and Gaza, death tolls continue to climb significantly higher in Gaza because Hamas perpetuates fighting in civilian neighborhoods.

The Gaza Strip, which has been governed entirely by Hamas ever since Israel unilaterally withdrew in 2005, is led by terrorists. Indeed, Hamas is an internationally-recognized terror organization that engages in war crimes, smuggles thousands of rockets and missiles in from Iran, and deplorably hopes to increase the number of casualties in Gaza so that they can be leveraged against Israel in a propaganda war. Because, for Hamas, painting Israel as the aggressor and targeting Israelis is more important than protecting their own citizens

Even the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian Refugees released two statements condemning Hamas' actions after discovering rockets hidden in Gaza schools, calling it a "flagrant violation of the inviolability of its premises under international law."²³

²³ "UNRWA Strongly Condemns Placement of Rockets in School." UNRWA. 17 July 2014. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-strongly-condemns-placement-rockets-school>)

And while the Israel Defense Forces seek to minimize casualties by repeatedly delivering warnings to civilians in Gaza to vacate targeted areas, and uses pinpoint technologies to only hit terror infrastructures, Hamas victimizes Palestinians, calling on citizens to ignore these warnings, or in some cases, even prevents them from leaving.

What warning does Hamas offer Israelis? None, aside from the thousands of rockets and mortars fired at Israel since the start of Operation Protective Edge. Six million Israelis — approximately 70 percent of the country's population — are now at risk, in tandem with the civilian population of Gaza. That's the equivalent of 250 million North Americans.²⁴

Since Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, rockets and mortars were indiscriminately fired at Israel's towns and cities. Thankfully, Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system, developed with critical assistance from the U.S., has intercepted many of those, which is why there are fewer Israeli civilian deaths. But while Iron Dome has a 90 percent success rate, it is not deployed for every attack, and won't prevent every rocket from hitting its intended target.²⁵ This utterly abnormal life has now become the norm for millions of our brothers and sisters in Israel. Yet, inexplicably, some still question Israel's decision to exercise self-defense.

That's why I supported Operation Protective Edge, Israel's effort to restore peace and security to the region, and halt terrorism by Hamas. I implore the global community to follow the lead of the U.S. in recognizing Israel's right to self-defense, and to stand in opposition to terror.

The only long-term solution to this conflict is a negotiated, two-state solution that will allow Israel to live side-by-side in peace and security alongside an independent nation state of Palestine. Both peoples deserve peace and normalcy, but neither will be possible until Hamas halts their attacks and its terrorist infrastructure is defeated.

²⁴ "Rocket Attacks On Israel From Gaza." Web log post. *The Official Blog of the Israel Defense Forces*. Israel Defense Forces, 06 Oct. 2010. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.idfblog.com/facts-figures/rocket-attacks-toward-israel>)

²⁵ Bokor, Daniella, and Idan Sonsino. "Iron Dome Anti-rocket System Surpasses Expectations." Web log post. *The Official Blog of the Israel Defense Forces*. Israel Defense Forces, 3 Nov. 2012. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.idf.il/1283-15210-en/Dover.aspx>)

ISRAEL ADVOCACY

Talking about Israel with our political leaders is a key component of the Israel conversation. Elected officials—at the local, state, and national levels—must understand the realities and needs of Israel as a modern democracy, indispensable ally, and strategic partner of the United States.

Recently, Congress passed the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (S. 2673), which codifies Israel's status as a major strategic partner of the United States. The act will strengthen U.S.-Israel cooperation in the areas of security, intelligence, technology, and commerce.²⁶ In August 2014, Congress also passed an additional \$225 million of funding for the Iron Dome missile defense system.²⁷ We must thank our legislators for the continued support for Israel and a strong U.S.-Israel relationship.

In addition to national relationships, many American states maintain economic and strategic relationships with Israel. The Jewish Virtual Library's State-to-State Cooperation Archive²⁸ serves as a wonderful resource when speaking with state-level officials.

ISRAEL ADVOCACY WITHIN HADASSAH

Hadassah currently promotes the following advocacy programs in which Hadassah members can attend in-person lobby programs with their elected officials or staff.

- **Day on the Hill:** Hadassah's one or two-day advocacy program in Washington, D.C. featuring policy briefings, meetings with legislators, and visits to historical sites.
- **Day in the District:** A local opportunity to meet with federal legislators in their home district offices during Congressional recess.
- **Date with the State:** Local program featuring meetings with state legislators and governors in the state capitol.

The Hadassah National Action Center provides elected official profiles, legislative alerts, and direct contact to policy leaders all at your fingertips. Register for Hadassah's Email Action Network and receive Action Alerts and Backgrounders with up-to-the-minute public policy updates. An archive of old alerts can be found on the Hadassah Advocacy website.

www.hadassah.org/advocate

Below is an example of a letter available on the **Hadassah National Action Center** page. You may also use this sample to send your own messages directly to Congress. Given the lengthy screening process for Capitol mail, email or fax messages are recommended.

²⁶ "S.2673 - United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014, 113th Congress (2013-2014)." S.2673. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/2673>)

²⁷ "H.J.Res.76 - Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Resolution, 2014, 113th Congress (2013-2014)." H.J.Res.76. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-joint-resolution/76>)

²⁸ "U.S.-Israel Relations: States-to-State Cooperation." *Jewish Virtual Library*. American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. Web. 1 Jan. 2015. (<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/statestoc.html>)

DRAFT LETTER TO CONGRESS

Dear Senator/Representative _____,

I applaud the passage of the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014, which will strengthen U.S.-Israel cooperation in the areas of security, intelligence, technology, and commerce. This crucial legislation reaffirms America's commitment to provide support for the Iron Dome short-range rocket defense system, promotes energy cooperation, and codifies Israel's status as a major strategic partner of the United States.

I also thank Congress for approving the additional \$225 million of funding for the Iron Dome in August, which was essential to support Israel during its time of crisis.

American support and strategic partnerships are instrumental to securing Israel's safety and U.S. interests in the region. I urge you to continue Congress' unwavering support for Israel and a strong U.S.-Israel relationship.

Sincerely,

TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

DEFINING ZIONISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY: AN ONLINE MONTHLY SPEAKER SERIES:

In 2014, Hadassah created a monthly online speaker series that welcomes ideas from a broad range of perspectives about Zionism. The goal is to create a “safe space” online where everyone is invited to respectfully share their thoughts. This free of charge, monthly, 1 hour speaker series exploring Zionism in the 21st Century is also captioned during the live session and is recorded. Check out recorded sessions on our website at www.hadassah.org/definingzionism.

Use this program, either the live sessions or the recorded ones, to engage members of your community or *hevra* in a respectful discussion about Zionism. Both on college campuses and in synagogue high school programs, these recorded Hadassah sessions are the basis of fruitful discussions and important dialogues about Israel.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES DEVELOPED FOR HADASSAH'S DEFINING ZIONISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

- Many of us are passionate when we talk about Israel and are deeply committed to our own ideas for how best to support and defend the Jewish homeland. However, in order to ensure that there is room for all members of the Jewish community to join the discussion, we must listen and respect those who share opinions that differ from our own. Commentaries on the Torah are filled with lots of Jewish opinions on every matter!
- What unites us as a Jewish community is much more than what divides us. When having a conversation about Israel within the Jewish community, remind participants of their shared identity, love of Israel, and commitment to Jewish traditions and values.
- Core tenets of Jewish values are *B'tzelem Elohim* and *Pikuah Nefesh*. We are all created in G-d's image and therefore we must respect and value the lives of all people. Hadassah is a bridge to peace in the Middle East, treating over one million patients a year without regard to race, religion, or nationality. We are all created in G-d's image and therefore we must respect and value the lives of all people. Just as we spill wine at the Passover Seder to acknowledge Egyptian lives lost in our quest for freedom, so too we must value the lives of both Israelis and Palestinians while pursuing a future of peace.
- During the course of any conversation about Israel, share the pride you feel about Hadassah's work. Describe the diverse population at Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO), where Jews and Arabs work side by side treating patients regardless of where they live or what they believe for which HMO was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. Share your experience as an active Hadassah member here in the U.S. Don't be shy about telling others what excites you about being part of the Hadassah Family!

RESOURCES

Hadassah
PRAZE Division

Phone: 212-303-8169

E-mail: PRAZE@hadassah.org.

Hadassah Online: Hadassah.org | facebook.com/hadassah | @Hadassah

Hadassah Missions to Israel, contact Missions Department at 212-303-8031 or missions@hadassah.org.

Books:

Why I am a Zionist, Gil Troy

My Promised Land, Ari Shavit

The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel, Cary Nelson & Gabriel Noah Brahm

Zionism The Sequel, Carol Diamant (published by Hadassah)

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Middle East Conflict, Mitchell Bard

The Case For Israel, Alan Dershowitz

Israel, the Conflict and Peace: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Israel-Arab Conflict, Mitchell Bard

For more information, please visit any of the following Web sites:

- Israel Action Network: israelactionnetwork.org
- Israel Defense Forces: idf.il/english
- Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: mfa.gov.il
- Jewish Agency jewishagency.org
- Israel's parliament: knesset.gov.il
- Israel and the United Nations: israel-un.org
- Israeli news in English: Haaretz: haaretz.com
The Jerusalem Post: jpost.com
Yedioth Ahronoth: ynetnews.com
- The American Israel Public Affairs Committee: aipac.org
- Buy Israeli Goods, buyisraeligoods.org
- Information about Israel beyond the conflict: Israel21c.org

As additional resources, the text of Hadassah's Mission Statement and The New Jerusalem Program are included on the following page. **Hadassah encourages all Hadassah members and supporters to be familiar with these resources.**

HADASSAH'S MISSION STATEMENT

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is a volunteer organization that inspires a passion for and commitment to its partnership with the land and people of Israel. It enhances the health of people worldwide through its support of medical care and research at the Hadassah Medical Organization in Jerusalem. Hadassah empowers its members and supporters, as well as youth in Israel and America through opportunities for personal growth, education, advocacy and Jewish continuity.

THE NEW JERUSALEM PROGRAM

The original Jerusalem Program was adopted in 1951 at the 23rd World Zionist Congress and revised by the 27th Zionist Congress in 1968. The New Jerusalem Program was adopted in June 2004 by the Zionist General Council of the World Zionist Organization

Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, brought about the establishment of the State of Israel, and views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future.

The foundations of Zionism are:

- The unity of the Jewish people, its bond to its historic homeland Eretz Yisrael, and the centrality of the State of Israel and Jerusalem, its capital, in the life of the nation;
- Aliyah to Israel from all countries and the effective integration of all immigrants into Israeli Society.
- Strengthening Israel as a Jewish, Zionist and democratic state and shaping it as an exemplary society with a unique moral and spiritual character, marked by mutual respect for the multi-faceted Jewish people, rooted in the vision of the prophets, striving for peace and contributing to the betterment of the world.
- Ensuring the future and the distinctiveness of the Jewish people by furthering Jewish, Hebrew and Zionist education, fostering spiritual and cultural values and teaching Hebrew as the national language;
- Nurturing mutual Jewish responsibility, defending the rights of Jews as individuals and as a nation, representing the national Zionist interests of the Jewish people, and struggling against all manifestations of anti-Semitism;
- Settling the country as an expression of practical Zionism.

MOST IMPORTANT TIPS TO REMEMBER

- If we are to be effective in our outreach and communication about Israel, our advocacy needs to address concerns directly and we should explore altering our messages accordingly.
- While examples of Israel's accomplishments may be an effective advocacy tool for some audiences, acknowledgment of Israel's own imperfections and sympathy for the Palestinian people may be a necessary conversation starter in other contexts.
- The most important part of Israel advocacy is to understand and acknowledge your audience's ideas.
- When talking about Israel, we must recognize that the end goal is NOT to change the minds of those who do not support Israel's right to exist. Instead, we must create an open and safe space to dialogue about the democratic values we share.
- Since the goal of BDS messaging is to delegitimize Israel's right to exist, it is especially important to emphasize that BDS is counterproductive to achieving peace. The goal of peace depends on both Israelis and Palestinians working together with international support toward a negotiated two-state solution which benefits both sides. Effective arguments should focus on the importance of creating an environment for economic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Acknowledging Israel's role in the conflict increases the credibility of those making pro-Israel arguments by showing even-handedness towards both parties and an open-mindedness to the diversity of opinions.
- We must encourage constructive efforts to bring Israeli and Palestinian academics together on joint projects, including those that foster reconciliation and promote understanding and trust.
- We are all created in G-d's image and therefore we must respect and value the lives of all people. Just as we spill wine at the Passover Seder to acknowledge Egyptian lives lost in our quest for freedom, so too we must value the lives of both Israelis and Palestinians while pursuing a future of peace.
- Even in the Jewish community, in order to ensure that there is room for everyone to join the discussion, we must listen and respect those who share opinions that differ from our own.

DISCLAIMER

Please note that all information provided herein is for educational purposes only and is not intended to be used only as a guide. Neither Hadassah nor the Israel Action Network makes any representations as to the accuracy, completeness, timeliness or suitability of any information in this guide with respect to any particular situation and disclaims any liability that may result from use of this guide.

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