

Support Human Rights for Palestinians

Human Rights Concerns Must Become More Central in U.S.-Israel Policy

- Israel is historically by far the [largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid](#)¹, with \$3.8 billion a year currently going to military aid for Israel. U.S. foreign military financing (FMF) grants to Israel total more than those to every other country in the world combined.
- President Biden's [national security strategy](#)² calls for the United States to prioritize human rights as part of his effort to restore a multilateral foreign policy that respects international law. Given ongoing violations of human rights, other nations are looking to see if the President lives up to his pledge.
- For the past 25 years, Congress has focused on providing Israel security funding while passing resolutions supporting a two-state solution. During this time, Israel has been strategically expanding settlements, committing flagrant violations of human rights against Palestinian children and families, and aggressively undermining any prospects for a Palestinian state.
- U.S. assistance intended for Israel's security should foster peace and must never be used to violate the human rights of children, demolish the homes of Palestinian families, or to permanently annex Palestinian lands.

H.R.3103 Looks to Protect the Rights of Palestinian Children and Families

- Israeli security forces detain around [500-700 Palestinian children every year](#).³ They are placed into a military court system that fails to protect their fundamental rights. Abusive physical violence, including [chokeholds and beatings](#),⁴ is experienced by three out of four of these children. These violations have been documented by the UN, the State Department, as well as by human rights organizations.
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) [reported in March 2023](#)⁵ that 58 schools in the West Bank, which are attended by 6,500 children, are subject to demolition orders issued by Israeli authorities.
- **The Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act** prohibits U.S. taxpayer funding to the Government of Israel from being used for 1) the military detention, abuse, or ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention; 2) supporting the seizure and destruction of Palestinian property and homes in violation of international humanitarian law; and, 3) any support or assistance for Israel's unilateral annexation of Palestinian territory in violation of international humanitarian law.
- The bill states that it is the sense of Congress that these actions undermine efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis; that promoting human rights, dignity, and democracy for all Palestinians and Israelis is a foreign policy priority for the U.S.; and that the U.S. rejects undemocratic systems and acts of aggression in which Israeli unilaterally exercises permanent rule over Palestinians denied self-determination and human rights.
- H.R.3103 is endorsed by a coalition of over [75 organizations](#)⁶ including Justice Democrats, Working Families Party, Oxfam, The Episcopal Church, and J Street.

Steps Members of Congress Can Take

- **Cosponsor [H.R.3103](#)**, introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN), to protect the human rights of Palestinian children and families.

1 *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel*, Congressional Research Service, November 16, 2020

2 President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*, The White House, March 2021

3 *Number of Palestinian Children (12-17) in Israeli Military Detention*, Defense for Children International, April 14, 2023

4 *Israel: Security Forces Abuse Palestinian Children: Chokeholds, Beatings, Coercive Interrogations*, Human Rights Watch, July 19, 2015

5 *Humanitarian Alert: Schools at risk of demolition*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, March 9, 2023

6 *McCollum Reintroduces the Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act*, McCollum.house.gov, May 5, 2023