



## **MELA Affirms Solidarity with the Palestinian People**

May 19, 2021

The Middle East Librarians Association stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people in their continued struggle of resistance against ongoing settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing in the context of Israeli apartheid (a designation recently confirmed by both [international](#) and [Israeli](#) human rights organizations, after many years of use by Palestinian scholars and activists).

We strongly condemn Israeli attacks on historic Palestine, from the bombing of the Gaza Strip to the forced evictions in East Jerusalem. Violence against civilians is never justified and we mourn all lives lost, but we reject any narrative that equates one of the most militarily advanced countries in the world with oppressed, occupied, and stateless people.

On top of the horrifying loss of life, we also condemn Israeli attacks and raids on sites of importance for Palestinian identity, [cultural heritage](#), [primary education](#), [higher education](#), and [knowledge production](#). According to [UN Security Council Resolution 2347](#), these acts may constitute international war crimes.

As an American academic organization, we recognize our complicity in these crimes, which are enabled by the United States' continued, unconditional military funding given to Israel.

As custodians of books, documents and other manifestations of cultural memory in a field that has been historically more extractive than supportive of indigenous community heritage, we affirm the inherent significance of Palestinian cultural materials in their own emergent contexts and the importance of ensuring their lasting preservation and access. Further, we recognize the significance of archival and collection work for interrupting cycles of oppression and for disrupting the colonial violence and extraction that have inflected the collecting practices of our institutions and professional spaces. We extend our support to our Palestinian colleagues laboring in libraries, archives, museums, universities and other cultural spaces to preserve, flourish and protect from erasure this cultural property and memory -- including the [Palestinian Museum](#), [Khazaaen](#), and [many many others](#).

We affirm that supporting the Palestinian struggle is crucial to the fight against all forms of oppression, racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Blackness, and we reaffirm our commitment to equity, social justice, and decolonization in our professional practice.

We call upon colleagues in our community to invest in learning and sharing resources, amplifying Palestinian voices and perspectives, and where possible to commit to the further actions outlined in the [Palestine & Praxis](#) effort and principles and campaigns of the [Librarians and Archivists with Palestine \(LAP\)](#) network to counter oppression and normalization.

--Prepared on behalf of the Middle East Librarians' Association by the MELA Social Justice Committee and the MELA Endangered Libraries and Archives Committee

**Selected statements from other academic colleagues:**

[Statement by the Faculty in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration on Palestine \(Yale University\)](#)

[Gender Studies Departments In Solidarity With Palestinian Feminist Collective](#)

[The Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association : Statement on Palestine](#)

[AGITATE! Journal: Statement In Solidarity With The People Of Palestine](#)

[The Mosaic Rooms: Call to cultural organisations, artists, and writers for solidarity with Palestine](#)