

March 16, 2026

## Our Support for Israel and our Jewish Values are at a Crossroads

Dear Colleagues

***J-Link is an International Network of Progressive Jewish organizations*** with global representatives. Most of our representatives live in the Diaspora with strong ties to Israel. We are strongly committed to Israel's existence and security. Our goal is to advocate for human rights, equality and democracy, and a just, negotiated 2 State resolution of the conflict that assures the rights of both Jewish and Palestinian peoples.

We understand that the experiences and perspectives of those living in the conflict zone are different from those living in the safety of Diaspora countries. We believe it is important to share our potentially different perspectives, with the goal of finding a path to a just PEACE in keeping with our Jewish values.

October 7<sup>th</sup> was a historic turning point in Israel-Palestine relations. It shattered any belief by Jewish Israelis in their security and power of deterrence. It aroused fears of annihilation by an enemy whose express goal over decades was the destruction of Israel.

Far right Jewish settlers took advantage of the focus on Gaza to increase violence and intimidation of Palestinians living in the West Bank pushing for their expulsion from the land. Also, the Israeli government passed legislation to expand control of territory in the West Bank, further undermining the possibility of a 2 State negotiated Peace Plan.

The brief hope of implementing a Peace Plan was dashed by an Israeli-US attack on Iran on February 28, 2026. While there have been long standing concerns about the potential for Iran becoming a nuclear power, its ballistic missile capability, its arming Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis which aim at Israel's destruction and the well recognized abuses by the Iranian dictatorship, there was no international consultation, no approval by the UN, or reliable evidence that Iran posed an imminent threat calling for war. Most concerning, there was no clear plan as to the goals, scope or what would constitute a successful end to hostilities. Military strikes of this sort can produce at best short-term gains. They cannot dismantle Iran's nuclear strategy, eliminate its missile capabilities or fully change the regime.

The current Iran war quickly ignited conflicts across most Middle East countries, with fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon and Iran's attacks at Israel and Arab States that aid American forces or have cooperative relations with Israel. International shipping is disrupted, gas prices are fluctuating widely, and tremendous economic instability is likely. As the focus has shifted to the Iran War, the plight of the Palestinians, especially those suffering in Gaza and the West Bank has almost disappeared from public view.

The absence of a political horizon and reliance on military action alone make for further rounds of escalation, insecurity and despair. Only a political initiative aiming at an agreement with the Palestinians and other countries of the region can create a future of real security for all peoples.

Signed by the J-Link Coordinating Committee: Alon Liel, Barbara Landau, Basil Dubb, David Solomon, Giorgio Gomel, Kenneth Bob, and Shlomo Slutzky