

Appeal to Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, May 12, 2025

Dear Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of German-Israeli relations, you are planning a state visit to Israel from May 12 to 13, 2025. Your program includes, among other items, a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a dinner hosted by President Isaac Herzog. In light of the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people, we consider it inappropriate to celebrate German-Israeli relations in this manner. We therefore urge you to cancel your planned state visit to Israel. More than 52,000 people have already been killed in Gaza by the Israeli army, including over 17,000 children. For more than 60 days, the Israeli government has blocked all humanitarian aid. Thousands of people are facing starvation. In the current situation, your visit can only be perceived as support for Israel's unlawful violence in Gaza and the West Bank.

An arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the use of starvation as a method of warfare. In addition, a case is pending before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) accusing Israel of violating the Genocide Convention. The precautionary measures ordered by the ICJ in 2024 to prevent genocide have so far not been implemented by Israel. Leading Israeli politicians, including Benjamin Netanyahu and Isaac Herzog, have repeatedly made genocidal statements. At the same time, Israel continues displacing the Palestinian population in Gaza as well as the occupation of and displacement in the West Bank—both in blatant violation of international law. As a signatory to the UN Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute, Germany is legally obligated to prevent crimes under international law—including those committed by Israel. Engaging in festivities with those primarily responsible for the unlawful violence in Gaza and the West Bank would normalize these violations, send the wrong signal, and undermine the authority of international law.

Germany's history and its Basic Law commit us to upholding human rights and international law. These values must form the basis of any partnership. We therefore urge you: Use the anniversary as an opportunity to send a clear message in support of ending violence, achieving justice, and upholding humanity. Invite Israeli peace activists, human rights defenders, critical journalists and intellectuals, Holocaust survivors, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and committed civil society organizations such as Standing Together, Israelis for Peace, Breaking the Silence, and B'Tselem. Strengthening these voices would send an important signal—both to the people in the region and to the international community—that Germany's commitment to human rights and international law is consistent and not selective.

With kind regards,

Alliance for Critical Scholarship in Solidarity (KriSol)

Association of Palestinian and Jewish Academics (PJA)

Arbeitskreis Palästina Brühl-Battir

Forum Friedensethik in der Evangelischen Landeskirche in Baden (FFE)

Frauen wagen Frieden

Freiburger Diözesanvorstand der Internationalen Katholischen Friedensbewegung PAX
CHRISTI

Freunde von Sabeel Deutschland

Humanistische Union

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions - Germany

Israelis for Peace

Kairos Palästina Solidaritätsnetz Deutschland (KPS)

Palästina Initiative Region Hannover

pax christi Deutsche Sektion

SALAM SHALOM Arbeitskreis Palästina-Israel e.V. München

Uni(te) for Pali