



## WINNING COEXISTENCE: SIX NEW NONVIOLENT TACTICS FOR PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

Lisa Schirch

# About the Author

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## LISA SCHIRCH

**Dr. Lisa Schirch** is a research fellow at the Toda Peace Institute and professor of peace studies at the University of Notre Dame, where she teaches and writes about strategic nonviolent action. She has been part of the movement for coexistence with a just peace for more than 30 years, working in partnership with the region's Israeli and Palestinian peace movements.

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Toda Peace Institute  
Samon Eleven Bldg. 5F,  
3-1 Samon-cho, Shinjuku-ku  
Tokyo 160-0017, Japan

Tel. +81-3-3356-5481  
Fax. +81-3-3356-5482  
Email: [contact@toda.org](mailto:contact@toda.org)

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Activists around the world rightly celebrate that, at long last, Israel and Hamas announced a ceasefire. But more work is necessary to achieve a political settlement that could prevent the mass annexation of Palestinian land, address the dire humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and prevent further violence. This paper offers six tactics to shift power away from extremists and overcome barriers to forming coalitions that build on shared goals for safety, dignity, and justice.

Both Palestinians and Jewish Israelis report feeling less safe today than a year ago, signalling a "lose-lose outcome" after a year of brutal violence disproportionately affecting Palestinians.[1] People across the divides are trapped in systems and narratives that prevent them from seeing each other as allies. The 2024 US election and the subsequent Trump appointment of Mike Huckabee emboldens right-wing Israeli leaders who have repeatedly called for genocide in Gaza[2] and the mass annexation of Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanon territory to establish what they call a "Greater Israel." [3] This is a critical moment to take stock of what has and has not worked to help "win coexistence" where Jews and Palestinians have the right to exist peacefully and as equals.

Pro-Palestinian protests have taken place at over 500 U.S. public and private schools since October 7, 2023, demanding a ceasefire.[4] Since 2005, Palestinians and their allies have promoted the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which targets companies, institutions, and cultural entities complicit in the Israeli occupation of Palestine. BDS has broadened public support for Palestinians.[5] However, neither protests nor BDS tactics have slowed Israeli violence, home demolitions, or the annexation of Palestinian land in the ongoing Nakba.

Today, it takes a vivid imagination to visualize a political process to address the root causes of violence stemming back at least 130 years between Jews and Palestinians. More than a year ago, I proposed a broader peace plan to protect civilians, address trauma, invest in democracy, and dismantle both Hamas and the Israeli occupation of Palestine to stop the cycle of violence.[6] Israeli and US leaders did the exact opposite by escalating attacks on civilians, increasing mass trauma, undermining democracy, and expanding occupation.

A broader set of nonviolent strategies and coalitions is necessary for a movement that can offer a win-win solution for most Palestinians and Israelis. This paper asserts that the crisis requires building new coalitions and alliances between global protests in support of Palestinian liberation and mass protests by Israelis against their rogue leaders, who ignore international law and align with antisemites in Western countries.

Coalition building has been a cornerstone of successful movements in South Africa, Chile, and Northern Ireland, demonstrating the power of unity in addressing complex, entrenched conflicts. In South Africa, the anti-apartheid movement's success relied heavily on alliances between diverse groups, including the African National Congress (ANC), trade unions, and international partners, which together amplified resistance against systemic racial segregation and oppression. Similarly, Chile's transition from Pinochet's dictatorship was made possible by coalitions like the "Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia," which united a broad spectrum of political parties to demand democracy and institutional reform. In Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement emerged from inclusive coalition efforts involving political parties across the nationalist and unionist divides, with additional support from civil society groups and international mediators. These coalitions fostered dialogue, leveraged collective strength, and created frameworks for sustained progress, underscoring their critical role in achieving transformative change in diverse contexts.

Drawing on nonviolent strategic frameworks, the paper argues for a synergy of nonviolent coercive and persuasive tactics, using tools like the "spectrum of allies" to tailor specific tactics to distinct audiences. The paper proposes six tactics. The first three *coercive* tactics shift power away from the opposition which is driving violence. The second three *persuasive* tactics broaden coalitions by building trust. Each tactic targets specific stakeholders in a "spectrum of allies," with clear objectives for shifting power and broadening coalitions.



## COERCIVE TACTICS TO SHIFT POWER AWAY FROM OPPOSITION

1. Apply \$100 US Tax Resistance and a Tourist Boycott to press for tying US military aid to Israel to international human rights law
2. Hold public tribunals as teach-ins on international law and Palestinian sovereignty
3. Engage with Christian Zionists to counter theological justifications for harm to Palestinians

## PERSUASIVE TACTICS TO BROADEN COALITION

4. Form a "coexistence coalition" with explicit goals for a just peace by using deliberative technologies
5. Offer teach-ins on antisemitism tropes and different versions of Zionism to build trust
6. Use "virtual civilian peacekeeping" pairing Palestinian communities with international witnesses

## The case for a synergy of coercive and persuasive tactics

Activists press for change with protests and boycotts. Israeli leaders press for change with military force. People use various metaphors to describe how change happens. A hammer bends metal to force change. A dam diverts a river to a new course. The carrot-and-stick metaphor conjures the image of persuading and forcing a donkey to move. Aesop's tale of the *Sun and Wind* imagines the wind's power of coercion and the sun's power of persuasion to make a traveller shed his cloak. The Wind's aggressive approach only caused the traveller to hold on tighter, whereas the Sun's warmth led him to remove it voluntarily. A two-handed approach to social change imagines activists putting one hand up demanding an opponent "Stop abuses!" and one hand out to build coalitions with other groups.[7] This paper asserts that a synergy of coercive tactics to shift power and persuasive tactics to build coalitions helps spark social change.[8]

In their book *Why Civil Resistance Works*, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan found in their study of over 300 social change movements that they won or failed based on their ability to shift power *and* form coalitions to increase the number of protesters.[9] Gene Sharp, a prominent theorist of nonviolent resistance, views coercion and persuasion as complementary but distinct strategies. Nonviolent coercive tactics, such as strikes, boycotts, civil disobedience, and mass protests, force change by disrupting control and shifting power by undermining the economic, political, or social support necessary for waging violence and isolating the opponent. Persuasion can support coercion by building solidarity, garnering sympathy, or influencing external stakeholders.

Quaker peace theorist Adam Curle echoes Sharp by insisting that social change occurs through a combination of shifting power and building awareness and relationships across the lines of conflict.[10] Coercive efforts to force change are not enough. Social change movements are most effective with a synergy of coercive strategies to shift power and persuasive strategies that build awareness and relationships. This diagram illustrates how Curle understood the interaction between these two forces of social change. One axis represents movements that shift power by organizing and protesting, while the other axis denotes movements that foster relationships and awareness. Neither strategy succeeds independently; the synergy between both creates opportunities for enduring political solutions.

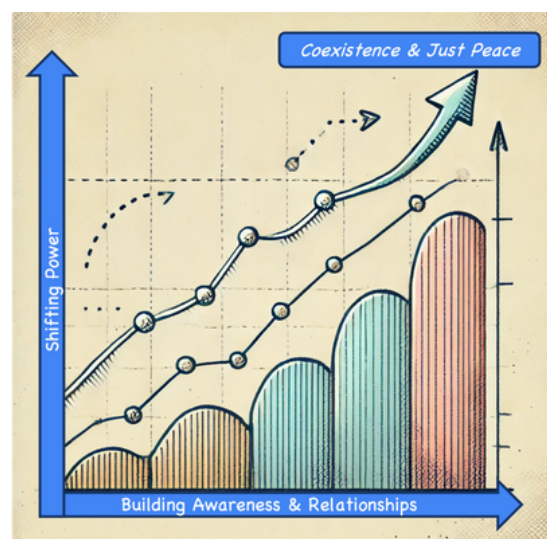


Figure 1. Curle Diagram

Past peace processes have failed to bring safety to Jewish Israelis and have severely worsened the daily lives of Palestinians because they have not shifted power. Balanced power is essential to negotiations because it ensures all parties can engage on equal footing, fostering fair and mutually beneficial outcomes. When one side dominates, negotiations risk forcing the weaker party to accept terms that fail to address its core needs or rights. Without power parity, negotiations often reinforce existing inequalities and undermine the legitimacy and sustainability of any agreement.

US foreign policy in Israel and Palestine has been contradictory. The Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA) allocates up to \$250 million over five years, starting with \$50 million in fiscal year 2021, to promote economic cooperation and peacebuilding programs between Israelis and Palestinians.[11] Simultaneously, the United States provided billions of military aid. Historically, this aid averaged around \$3.8 billion annually, as outlined in a memorandum of understanding established during the Obama administration, which extends through 2028.[12] US military aid exacerbates the imbalance of power between Israelis and Palestinians and emboldens Israeli government violence toward Palestinians, removing its motivation for negotiations or political settlement. While US diplomats pushed for a ceasefire, they ironically did not cease their arming of the side inflicting most of the violence.

The "pro-Israel" movement relies on violent coercion and war as a theory of change. However, only 10 and 20% of wars end with military victory. The other 80-90% of wars ended through negotiations. Even when groups reach a ceasefire, they rarely last if power is unequal, and fighting usually returns.[13] After more than a year of war, polls suggest most Israelis perceive that they are worse off today and want the war in Gaza to end.[14] Pro-Israel political leaders successfully used coercive propaganda to paint all protesters trying to end the war as antisemitic supporters of Hamas and terrorism, shaping negative public opinion of all protests.[15] Institutions used this public opposition to justify coercive crackdowns on protests.

The "pro-Palestinian" movements rely primarily on nonviolent coercion in the form of public protest and boycott, divestment, and sanctions. Polls of Gazans over the last year show that a declining majority continue to support Hamas.[16] Palestinian pollster Khalil Shikaki explains that this does not mean they support violent opposition to Israel but that they share Hamas' values in strict religious observance and Islamic identity.[17] But in the US, 34% of Americans under 30 supported Hamas' use of force for resistance to Israel, with 9% supporting Hamas' massacres of civilians on October 7.[18] ACLED research found that 99% of these protests used nonviolent tactics, including vigils, encampments, and graffiti.[19] Yet some protests did involve offensive chants against Jewish students, threats to "kill Zionists," and claims that the movement aimed to dismantle the Israeli state, implying the removal of Jews from 'the river to the sea.'[20] Some protestors condemned such comments, asserting they did not reflect the movement's views.[21]

Expanding the types of nonviolent tactics and building broader coalitions might enable more effective strategies. The movement to get a ceasefire is strong but also contains internal divisions and does not yet aim to build broader coalitions with Jews critical of Israeli policies and other allies. A broader strategic approach is necessary to shift power and build coalitions.



## Seeing beyond the binary

Binary thinking creates a false impression that for Jews to be safe, Palestinians must be unfree, or for Palestinians to be free, Israel must collapse, and Jews must leave. Binary thinking advantages extremists. Activists who prefer a simple "us vs them" frame for their tactics miss out on persuasive tactics that move beyond this binary. Some observers note that the use of the terms "pro-Palestinian" and "pro-Israeli" sets up binary thinking that undermines the reality that the safety and security of Palestinians and Jews are interdependent.[22] Binary thinking creates a sense of "us against them" and "we win, they lose." Posters and chants at many protests rightly denounced Israeli actions in Gaza, but few mentioned the safety of Jews.

Binary thinking is pervasive in the use of flags, symbols, and naming of the movements as "pro-Israel" or "pro-Palestine." Binary propaganda on all sides means that, for many Jews and other observers, a protest in support of Palestinians is, by definition, against Jews. However, many protesters are not against Jews or Jewish safety. They voice support only for Palestinians because of the power disparity, as they see Israel dominating Palestinians and see many governments supporting Israel and a few supporting Palestinians. When asked why they do not include protest signs about the release of hostages or Jewish safety, protesters say they do not want to engage in "both-sides-ism" to pretend that the suffering between Israelis and Palestinians is equal when the devastation in Gaza and the home demolitions and violence in the West Bank is not equal to Hamas' attack on October 7.

All sides have serious doubts about whether they have "a partner for peace" on the other side. Many activists group all Zionists together as opponents. Some who share goals with protestors hesitate to join the movement because propaganda portrays the movement as antisemitic but also the real presence of openly antisemitic chants at protests, even if these are only a minority of those protesters. Some also see protests as anti-Jewish because of the lack of visible support for the safety of Jews in protest signs and chants.

Polls show most Palestinians and most Israelis reject the extremist view that their opponents should be killed or leave the region.[23] Within Palestine, some favour violent revolution and expulsion of all Jews. However, most favour some form of coexistence with Jews. Within Israel and Jewish settlements, some favour the use of extreme violence and the expulsion of all Palestinians. While support declined for coexistence after October 7, historically, most Israelis supported some form of coexistence with Palestinians.[24]

There are not just two groups. As illustrated, there are at least three groups, with those wanting coexistence forming a majority. Building new coalitions requires understanding how binary thinking oversimplifies and ignores important distinctions in stakeholder interests.

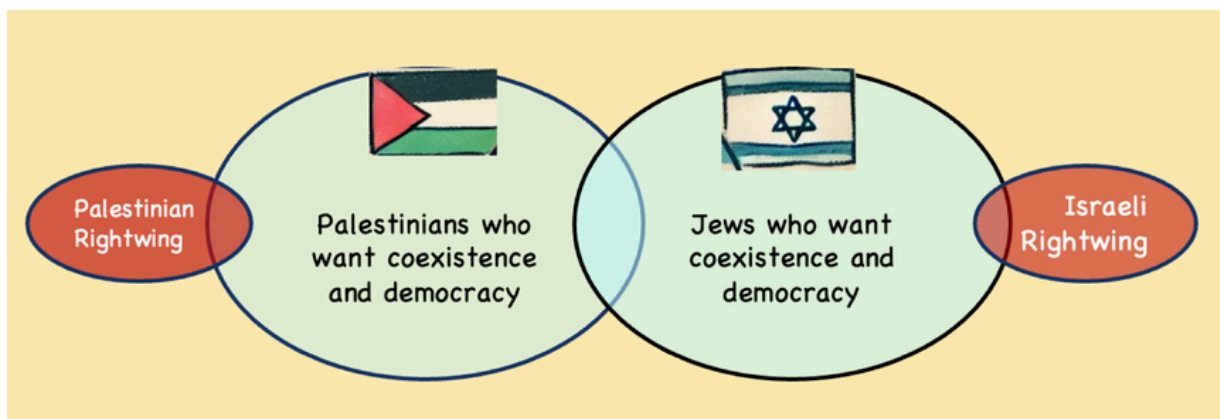


Figure 2. Shared Coexistence Goals

# A landscape analysis of the "Lose-Lose" outcomes for Palestinians and Israelis

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Nonviolent strategic planning begins with a landscape analysis of who is winning and who is losing from the status quo. Palestinians and Israeli Jews do not suffer equally or in the same way and have distinct interests. However, most have a shared interest in resisting the current right-wing Israeli government and in supporting a democratic political framework that enables coexistence, justice, and safety. This landscape analysis summarizes the distinct experiences, which then informs the six strategies proposed later in this paper.

## ESCALATING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

In early 2024, the International Criminal Court ruled that Israel is committing "plausible genocide"[25] based on evidence indicating the intentional targeting of Palestinians to destroy them partially or completely, aligning with the 1948 UN Convention's definition of genocide. In December 2024, Amnesty International also found wide evidence of genocide, noting, "Israel has repeatedly argued that its actions in Gaza are lawful and can be justified by its military goal to eradicate Hamas. But genocidal intent can co-exist alongside military goals and does not need to be Israel's sole intent." [26]

The Israeli government and its allies insist that they are not committing genocide and that this charge is offensive to Jews, given their experience in the Holocaust. But there are over 500 instances of Israeli leaders inciting genocide by justifying extreme violence and using dehumanizing rhetoric.[27] Some Israelis report that the official Israeli strategy in Gaza rewards rather than punishes civilian deaths.[28] Even before the current war in Gaza, the US government accused some Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) units of openly carrying out deliberate attacks on civilians.[29] Israeli veterans report a widespread "disregard among Israeli soldiers for Palestinian lives." [30] *The Washington Post's* investigation into IDF posts on social media with vengeful bragging on their intent to hurt and humiliate Gazans with retaliatory strikes and "conquer, expel and settle" indicates that many soldiers are not in Gaza only to defeat Hamas, but to get revenge on Palestinians, and annex Gaza for Jewish settlement.[31] For Gazans, this means:

- **A high civilian death toll** from bombing in densely populated civilian areas, even those designated as safe zones, including documented allegations of deliberate targeting of non-combatants, including disproportionate numbers of women, children, and elderly individuals. Surveys of 65 American healthcare workers serving in Gaza since October 7, 2023, found that 44 workers reported seeing multiple children daily with single gunshot wounds to the head, indicating direct targeting.[32]
- **Blockades restrict food, medical supplies, electricity, and clean water**, leading to severe humanitarian crises and allegations of collective punishment and death by starvation for more than 60,000 Gazans. [33]The U.N. warns that "the entire Palestinian population in North Gaza, especially children, is at imminent risk of dying." [34]
- **Domicide and mass destruction** from the destruction of entire neighbourhoods and the deliberate destruction of homes, hospitals, schools, cultural centres, water supplies, and energy infrastructure. This created unliveable conditions for the population of two million Gazans trapped within closed borders.
- **Suppression of accountability and documentation** via attacks on journalists, humanitarian workers, and media offices, with documented cases of targeted strikes on marked press vehicles, media offices, and humanitarian facilities, coupled with restricted access to the region, which critics say obstructs efforts to document and hold perpetrators accountable.[35]

## THREATS OF MASS ANNEXATION

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu opposes a two-state solution and argues for a "Greater Israel," with mass annexation of territory in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.[36] While Israelis have moved to the right, there is still less than 35% support for annexing Gaza[37] and less than 50% support within Israel for annexation in the West Bank.[38] The US has supported a two-state solution. Still, both Netanyahu and many progressive activists reject this idea. Recent Congressional reports on Israel fail to even mention the Greater Israel plan for mass annexation.[39] Right-wing plans for mass annexation bring the following threats to Palestinians:

- **Arbitrary arrest, home demolitions, land seizures, and violent pogroms** from Jewish settlers and Israeli Defense Forces.
- **The expansion of Jewish settlements and settler violence against Palestinians** continues to encroach on Palestinian land, displacing local communities.[40]
- **Israeli laws and policies that favour settlements** continue to be integrated into Israel's legal framework, such as the "Regularization Law," which retroactively legalizes settlement outposts built on private Palestinian land. Israeli authorities have declared large swathes of the West Bank as "state land," confiscating it from Palestinian ownership for settlement expansion or other Israeli uses. Israel is reclassifying areas under Palestinian control (Areas A or B) to Israeli control (Area C).
- **An increase in the demolitions of Palestinian homes, schools, olive trees, farms, and infrastructure** under the pretext of lacking Israeli-issued permits that are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain.
- **An increase in Israeli roadblocks, checkpoints, and military zones** severely restricts Palestinian movement. Development of Israeli-only roads and infrastructure connecting settlements directly to Israel, effectively bypassing Palestinian areas and fragmenting the West Bank.

## LESS SAFETY, DEMOCRACY, AND SUPPORT FOR ISRAELIS

While many Israelis have been supportive of the goal of destroying Hamas since October 7, only 30% prefer mass violence, while far more support diplomacy when given the option for a robust political approach.[41] Some analysts believe that few Israelis are even aware of what is happening in Gaza or the West Bank since Israeli government propaganda and the banning of media reports on civilian casualties means there is comparatively less coverage than in other countries. *Haaretz* is the only Israeli newspaper featuring Palestinian news. *Haaretz* columnist and former Israeli Ambassador Alon Pinkas told Al Jazeera "The public is mostly UNAWARE of what happened in Gaza in the last year plus." [42] Israeli propaganda enables most Israelis to deny genocide based on media reports that justify and minimize IDF violence to civilians and deny reports of mass famine in Gaza. Still, evidence suggests many Israelis are well aware of the dangers and drawbacks of Israeli policy.

- **Loss of global support** as Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) abandons even the appearance of abiding by international law or caring about Israel's international reputation.[43] Strained relations with allies, including the US, may potentially increase the economic and political challenges for Israelis. In the US, historically Israel's strongest ally, half of Americans, including nearly 30% of Jewish Americans, believe that Israel has "gone too far", with more significant majorities fearing a wider regional war.[44]
- **Increased security threats** with increases in the frequency of rocket attacks, violent clashes, and concerns over domestic terrorism directly impact Israeli's personal safety. IDF incursions in the region escalate calls for vengeance against Israel and contribute to cycles of violence, thus increasing the likelihood of retaliatory attacks.
- **Mainstreaming of extremist groups** [45] over the last thirty years as followers of far-right leader Meir Kahane, once labeled as a terrorist group by both the Israeli and US governments due to its extreme nationalism, expression of Jewish supremacy, and calls for ethnic cleansing.[46]
- **The erosion of democratic institutions** as the Israeli public moved to the right after the Hamas attacks, the rightwing leadership consolidated power, and judicial reforms centralized power in the executive branch, weakening the checks and balances essential for a robust democracy.
- **Increasing polarization within Israel** between secular and religious groups left- and right-wing factions and Jewish and Arab citizens have fueled internal conflicts, leading to large-scale protests and strikes, and creating instability and mistrust in governance.
- **Restrictions on civil liberties** from increased surveillance and crackdowns on dissent, particularly against human rights organizations and activists critical of government policies, with new laws or policies targeting minority groups.



# Tailor tactics to specific audiences in your sphere of influence

This landscape analysis illustrates that there are more losers than winners in the war between Israel and Hamas. Nonviolent strategies emphasize the need for SMART goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, enabling activists to maintain momentum, assess progress, and adapt strategies effectively, thus maximizing their potential for transformative change.[47] An "achievable" goal starts with analyzing diverse stakeholders and an ability to influence them based on your positionality or identities.

The "Spectrum of Allies" is a tool to help develop SMART goals for different stakeholders, depending on how much they support the overall goal of a just peace. This tool helps activists develop strategies for each segment to energize active allies, move passive allies and the "moveable middle" to join the movement and take action, and to pacify or defuse the power of active opponents.

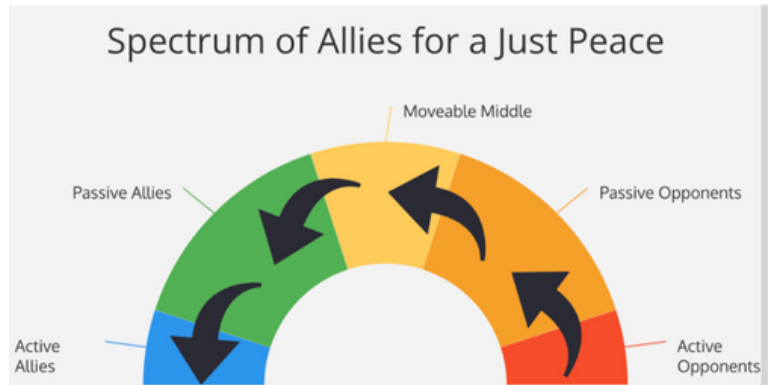


Figure 3. Spectrum of Allies for a Just Peace

The table below identifies different tactics to realistically move each segment just one step to the left using coercive and persuasive tactics can help defuse opponents' sources of power and narratives, and strengthen a movement's popular support.

	Stance	Stakeholder	Strategies to Influence
1	Active Opponents	Right-wing Israelis and Americans who want a "Greater Israel"	Tactics such as applying the <b>Leahy Law or tax resistance</b> to stop US weapons sent to Israel that are used against Palestinian civilians
2	Active Opponents	Americans who support arming Israel because they see it as a "democracy" in a region of autocracy	Tactics such as <b>accountability tribunals</b> that bring attention to autocratic right-wing Israeli leaders aiming to annex more Palestinian land and undermine Israeli democracy
3	Active Opponents	Christian Zionists who want a "Greater Israel"	Tactics that address the <b>contradiction between Christian ethics and anti-Palestinian violence</b> inherent in Christian Zionism
4	Passive Opponents	People who think the movement is anti-Jewish and/or participate in other social justice causes	Tactics that <b>clarify the goal of the movement</b> will bring safety for Palestinians and Jews.
	Passive Allies		
	Moveable Middle		
5	Active Allies	Activists who want a ceasefire but use antisemitic tropes or chants	Tactics that <b>address antisemitism and dialogue on versions of Zionism</b>
6	Active Allies	Activists who have already participated in some way	Tactics that are new, fun, easy to do, engaging, and meaningful - such as <b>virtual civilian peacekeeping</b> by checking on social media to Palestinian areas under threat

Figure 4. Stakeholder Stance and Tactics

This approach also helps activists reach the groups closest to their sphere of influence. Only Israeli right-wing leaders and Hamas can give activists the ceasefire they want. Activists have almost no direct influence over Hamas or Israel. Western governments also wanted a ceasefire, so protests asking for a ceasefire may not have been as directed or as effective as possible. The rest of this paper explores the six strategies tailored for each stakeholder segment.

## 1. Apply \$100 US tax resistance and a tourist boycott to US arms used against Palestinians

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The first tactic focuses on right-wing Israelis and Americans who favour expanding the state of Israel. The tactic seeks to stop the US flow of weapons necessary for the land grabs from Palestinians and neighboring countries.

Since October 7, 2023, the United States has significantly increased its military aid to Israel from a pre-October 7 annual level of \$3.4 billion to at least \$17.9 billion in direct military assistance in 2024.[48] Biden promised an additional \$8 billion in military aid in January 2025.[49] Both Hamas and Israeli forces have violated international law, which requires armed groups to protect civilians and ensure humanitarian access. [50] The US Leahy Law restricts U.S. aid to any nation that violates human rights. Currently, the US exempts Israel from this law through various loopholes. The law would not restrict US military aid to Israel to defend against attacks from Iran, Hezbollah, or Hamas. It would, however, ensure that Israel follows the laws of war that apply equally to all countries.

Tying billions in US military aid to Israel's compliance with international law could shift power away from right-wing Israeli leaders and help to empower leadership capable of making a political agreement to end the war. The US has traditionally refrained from using aid as leverage. Strong domestic support for Israel poses significant political risks for any administration challenging the aid structure. US policymakers view Israel as a crucial ally in the Middle East, counterbalancing regional adversaries such as Iran. These factors have led to consistent and unconditional support for Israel, even amid escalating violence. For decades, US policymakers overlooked indications that right-wing Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Netanyahu, sought a "Greater Israel, " excluding a Palestinian state. Only recently have some US officials privately acknowledged that unconditional aid helped turn Israel into a rogue state, disregarding ceasefire calls and international law.

With approximately 164 million US taxpayers, approximately \$100 for U.S. weapons and military aid to Israel was spent per taxpayer in 2024. If the US continues to arm Israel and violate the Leahy Law, individual US taxpayers could apply tax resistance to signal their protest and raise public awareness. Those funds withheld could be donated to organizations supporting humanitarian assistance to Palestinians or organizations working for a just peace in Palestine and Israel. Since tax resistance can lead to fines or legal action, allies could pool resources for legal defense funds and provide clear information on potential consequences. Allies in other countries could boycott travel to and tourism in the US until US military aid targeting Palestinians ends. A hashtag and swag with "#NotInMyNameUSA" could unite the global movement.

## 2. Hold public tribunals as teach-ins on international law and Palestinian sovereignty

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The second tactic focuses on defusing US public and political support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine and future annexation by those who see Israel as a bastion of democracy in an autocratic region. Organizations supporting coexistence could organize public tribunals to raise awareness of international law violations by Hamas, Israel, and the US regarding civilian protection.

Public tribunals on international law and Palestinian sovereignty could feature victim testimonies, giving a platform to hear directly from affected civilians. Experts could present evidence, assess treaty compliance, and assign responsibility for breaches of laws like the Geneva Conventions. Public tribunals can expose patterns of law violations, such as targeting civilians, destroying infrastructure, settlement expansion, and complicity through military aid or weapons supplies. Activists can collaborate with legal and advocacy groups to amplify their message via public declarations and media. Tribunals could challenge officials and arms manufacturers publicly and advance accountability and justice while deterring future violations. Communities, universities, and religious institutions could host livestream coverage of public tribunals and also host local speakers.

Tribunals could also provide evidence of the need for Palestinian sovereignty and urge more countries to recognize a Palestinian state formally. This would enhance Palestinians' diplomatic leverage in international negotiations and demonstrate a commitment to coexistence. Recognition affirms the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. Recognizing Palestinian statehood would foster goodwill among Arab and Muslim-majority countries while addressing a longstanding grievance that fuels regional instability. Acknowledging a Palestinian state would send a powerful message that many countries commit to the rights and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians.[51] The Biden administration has already drawn up plans for such an action.[52] Activists can build public awareness, advocate for Palestine's full membership in the United Nations, and boost international support for Palestinian civil society and institutions, especially in governance, education, and human rights. This step is crucial for achieving a negotiated settlement.

## 3. Engage Christian Zionists to counter theological justifications for harms to Palestinians

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The third tactic aims to defuse the power and influence of Christian Zionists, who are the backbone of US political support for Israeli annexation of Palestinian land. Christian Zionism is a theological and political movement among some evangelical Christians that considers the establishment and maintenance of a Jewish state in the Holy Land essential for the Second Coming of Jesus. Despite seemingly supporting Jews and Israel, it is often based on supersessionist theology, viewing Jews as tools for fulfilling biblical prophecy. This ideology positions Jews as a means to an apocalyptic end and undesirable in Christian-majority societies, creating a paradoxical relationship that supports Israeli genocide and annexation against Palestinians. Historically aligned with antisemitic views, Christian Zionism aims to address the "Jewish question" by encouraging Jewish migration to Israel (and onto Palestinian land) thereby reducing the Jewish presence in mainly Christian countries.

Christian Zionism is widespread in the US and affects US policy. [Christian Zionist organizations](#) like Christians United for Israel (CUFI) in the United States financially support the growth and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank as well as military force in Gaza. [HaYovel](#), a Christian Zionist group, donated over \$3.7 million in nonlethal tactical gear to Israeli settlers on October 7, 2023. Trump's base is often pro-Israel and

antisemitic, a combination that only makes sense if you hate Jews and want them all to live in some other place. Trump supporters often promote the anti-Jewish conspiracy theory known as the “Great Replacement”[53] that asserts that Jews are plotting to flood the US with migrants to displace and outnumber white people. While some organizations, such as the National Council of Churches (NCC) in the United States, have issued statements criticizing Christian Zionism,[54] few activists have begun dialogues between churches embracing and opposed to Christian Zionism. Tactics for shifting power away from Christian Zionist policies and persuading the public to abandon this ideology could include the following:

- **Hosting theological debates** at universities between Christian Zionists and Christians supportive of Israeli-Palestinian coexistence
- **Hosting Palestinian speakers** at community events, inviting Christian Zionist churches,
- **Protesting outside of churches** sending money to expand Israeli settlements,
- **Writing letters to the editors** of local papers about the negative impact on Palestinians of Christian Zionism's support of Jewish settlements.

## 4. Form a "coexistence coalition" with explicit goals for a just peace by using deliberative technologies

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The fourth tactic aims to broaden coalitions, a condition for the success of any nonviolent movement, by persuading the "moveable middle" and passive allies who share protestors' concern for Palestinian lives and critique the negative impact of Israeli policy on their own lives. Inviting the "moveable middle" into a more inclusive movement is necessary to shift power away from far-right Israeli and US leaders.

Currently, there is widespread confusion over what protestors want.[55] Right-wing propagandists and many Jews denounce protestors as antisemitic. Many presume the movement aims to remove all Jews from the region, displacing millions of Jews. While Jewish peace groups such as [If Not Now](#), [Standing Together](#), and [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) use inclusive narratives of safety and coexistence for both Palestinians and Israelis, many non-Jewish groups—including many Christian groups in support of Palestinians—rarely mention Jewish safety or coexistence in their goals

This confusion over movement goals undermines the movement's ability to grow and achieve its goals. While there are real differences and distinctions in levels of power and motivations, both Jews and Palestinians will benefit from a movement in support of coexistence. Centring messaging on coalitions for coexistence might offer a frame that can provide more support.

Activist encampments and actions across the US and other Western countries have focused on the anti-war goal of achieving a ceasefire. However, many have a longer list of goals that include rights and care for Jews, including the following:

- **Commit to mutual safety and coexistence for all people** - including Jews and Palestinians, as well as Druze and Bedouins, living from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Withdraw Israeli forces and settlements** from Palestinian territory beyond the 1967 Green Line.
- **Recognize the equal rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel** and end discriminatory laws and practices against Palestinians living within Israel's 1948 borders.
- **Respect the right of return and/or reparations for Palestinian refugees** displaced during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and subsequent Israeli occupations to return or receive compensation.
- **Enable all Israelis and Palestinians to have a voice in decisions that affect their lives** and enable them to practice their religion and culture free from persecution and safety in a confederated state, shared state, or two-state solution.

For the purposes of this paper, this set of goals will be called "*Coexistence with a Just Peace*." A political agreement based on sharing the land with equal rights for all is possible and is the only sustainable solution.



Various polls reveal that 10-20% of Palestinians and far fewer Jewish Israelis want to live in a shared, democratic state. In comparison, somewhere between 20-40% of Palestinians and 10% of Israelis prefer a two-state solution,[56] with that number increasing to up to over 70% if "serious negotiations" take place.[57] Some view a two-state solution as a necessary step in building trust and that eventually, the two states could merge into some version of pluralistic democracy. Confederation options include the "*Land for All*" movement[58] or Palestinian lawyer Jonathan Kuttab's ideas for a shared state.[59] These frameworks aim to move beyond a zero-sum view of the conflict so Palestinians and Israelis can live together with dignity and security.

New deliberative technologies could help to build a "coexistence coalition." Deliberative platforms enable large-scale public input to identify shared goals, values, and principles.[60] The Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP), a coalition of over 160 organizations working to build peace between Israelis and Palestinians, used AI-assisted dialogues on a platform called Remesh to better understand the perspectives of peacebuilders in the region and found a strong foundation of common ground with a shared prioritization of peace and human life.[61] ALLMEP's AI Pulse initiative ALLMEP plans to expand the study to the broader public to help develop new peacebuilding interventions and messaging.[62] These platforms could also help develop a "Coexistence Coalition" between the hundreds of activist organizations working toward a ceasefire. A shared platform would heighten their collective voice and media attention.

## 5. Offer teach-ins on antisemitism tropes and versions of Zionism to broaden coalitions

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The fifth tactic aims to persuade active allies that attention to antisemitism and different versions of Zionism is helpful to their cause. This tactic can also recruit more of the "moveable middle" and passive allies to participate in the movement for coexistence with a just peace. Every serious study of nonviolent strategy, peacebuilding, and war insists that understanding opponents' views is essential to success. Movement success requires addressing antisemitism and understanding different versions of Zionism, given its importance to most Jews.[63]

Both the weaponization of antisemitism and the left's dismissal of antisemitism disrupt solidarity and coalition building. Yet few activists have seen this as important to building a successful movement. Many see antisemitism or concern for Jewish safety or attention to versions of Zionism as a distraction from the cause of Palestinian liberation, arguing that including concern for Jews smacks of "both sides-ism" and ignores the power dynamics between Israelis and Palestinians. Many activists for Palestinian liberation dismiss antisemitism because of the weaponization or instrumentalization of antisemitism. Jewish peace activist Atalia Omer explains how the blanket labeling of anyone concerned with Palestinian lives or critical of Israeli policies as antisemitic undermines a just peace.[64] This weaponization seeks to frame the Palestinian resistance to occupation as a threat to Jewish safety. While pro-Palestinian activists often scoff at the idea that they are anti-Jewish, they rarely take the time to make it explicit that they want Jews to stay in the region and be safe. They rarely weigh in on Jewish safety at all. Many have a knee-jerk reaction to any mention of Jews, instinctively reject expressing concern for Jewish people, deem the history of Christian antisemitism irrelevant to Palestinian suffering, unlinking the historically adjacent histories of the Holocaust and the Nakba.[65]

Before October 7, many Jews living in Western countries perceived antisemitism to be a right-wing issue. Since then, progressive Jews have expressed abandonment and hostility from progressive activists.[66] Few activists consoled Jews after the October 7 massacre. Even fewer denounced Hamas' violence toward civilians, and some justified Hamas's violence. Some Palestinian supporters use antisemitic tropes about Jewish power and have unfairly held all Jews responsible for Israeli violence against Palestinians. Too often, antisemitic rhetoric or tropes are tolerated or justified as part of broader critiques of Zionism or Israel.

Jewish peace activists emphasize the need for Jewish-Palestinian solidarity, understand that their safety and survival are interdependent, and see the need to broaden coalitions as key to success. For example, Jewish peace activist Norman Finkelstein explained to protestors at Columbia University why they should avoid using slogans like "from the river to the sea" because many Jews perceive this as an antisemitic genocidal threat, making it unlikely for them to join the movement.[67] However, after he finished explaining the strategic

rationale for not using this slogan, protestors immediately began chanting, "From the river to the sea" as a rebuttal to his plea.[68] Other influential Jewish advocates like Peter Beinart assert that addressing antisemitism is critical for a movement strategy of broadening coalitions.[69] Ben Lorber and Shane Burley's book *Safety through Solidarity* describes how antisemitism erodes trust within Jewish communities and disrupts the solidarity necessary for developing strategic movements.[70]

Many critics of Israeli policies identify as anti-Zionist. Understanding the evolution and different forms of Zionism helps to clarify the diversity of thought within the Zionist movement and the different ways Jewish people have envisioned their collective future. It can also help advocates of Palestinian rights determine how best to work with a spectrum of potential allies, including outreach to conditional, pluralistic, and cultural Zionists. In her article "The Right Will Seize on Anti-Semitism. We Can't Give Them the Chance," Naomi Klein argues that antisemitism serves as a potent political tool.[71] After October 7, she warned activists again that antisemitism is the "jet fuel" for militant Zionism that justifies anti-Palestinian violence.[72]

Many carry assumptions that antisemitism is similar to racism, and because they don't see persecution of Jewish people, they dismiss antisemitism. Antisemitism is often overlooked or downplayed on the left despite its persistence and connection to white nationalism.[73] Antisemitism is distinct from anti-Black racism. White supremacy relies on the antisemitic myth of "Jewish control," which deflects blame for societal problems away from the structures of white supremacy, such as capitalism, and onto a fabricated Jewish cabal. By scapegoating Jewish people, white supremacists divert their attention from the systemic inequalities and injustices that they perpetuate. This scapegoating undermines solidarity among marginalized groups and reinforces the hierarchical frameworks and divisions among marginalized groups central to white supremacy. When progressive movements ignore and belittle antisemitism, they unwittingly aid the white supremacist narratives.[74]

Many, if not most, Jews have a strong identity tied to the state of Israel and consider themselves to be Zionists. When activists say they are "anti-Zionists", it is not clear to most Jews what this means for the seven million Jews living in Israel. Most Jews simply define Zionism as the belief that Jews constitute a nation and have the right to their own state for safety, culture, and religious practice. Many are unaware of how Zionism hurts Palestinians or they believe propaganda attempts to deny this link. One myth asserts the land of Palestine was empty. Other propaganda asserts Palestinians are migrants from other regions. Zionism promoted the idea of a Jewish return to Palestine, viewed as their ancestral homeland.

This stands in stark contrast to how Palestinians and their allies view Zionism as a militant force that uses mass violence to kill Palestinians and take their land.[75] Some left-wing activists want all Jews to leave and foment violence against all "Zionists" and support Hamas' attack on Israelis. Other activists label themselves as anti-Zionists because they support a single Palestinian state in which Jews could live as equals to Palestinians. People that define themselves as anti-Zionists do not necessarily oppose Jewish people living together with Palestinians or having some form of self-determination and sovereignty. Anti-Zionism is a critique of Jewish supremacy, where Jewish Israelis rule over and use violence against Palestinians. Hamas's original constitution called for "dismantling" the state of Israel, which referred to ending a government based on Jewish supremacy over Palestinians. However, most Jews hear a genocidal threat at any mention of "dismantling" a state that they view as protecting them. The 2017 Hamas Constitution changed the group's goals and agreed to a two-state solution based on the 1967 Green Line borders between Israel and Palestine, in essence recognizing the state of Israel. However, partly because of Hamas' attacks, few Jews trust Hamas not to be an existential threat.

Increasing the understanding of the different forms of Zionism might help clarify the possibilities for coexistence. The problem activists have with Zionism is its long history of justifying and carrying out mass violence against Palestinians. But other forms of Zionism exist.

**Militant or Political Zionism** emphasizes military power and armed conflict in establishing and defending a Jewish homeland in Israel. This dominant form of Zionism advocates the use of aggressive military tactics as essential for achieving the Zionist political goals of removing Palestinians from their homes and lands, using repressive occupation or siege against Palestinians, and, for some, expanding the borders of the state of Israel through annexation or war. The militant Zionist narrative insists that Jews are not safe in other countries. Militant Zionism relies on religious justification (God gave the land to Jews), ethnic justification (Jews originate from the region), and security justification (they will kill us if we don't kill them).

**Conditional Zionism** endorses a Jewish state under specific ethical, political, or religious conditions, hinging on factors such as international approval, peaceful coexistence, and adherence to Jewish religious principles. It emphasizes moral and practical considerations, including the rights of non-Jewish residents and securing international legitimacy, and often critiques Zionist practices that conflict with advocated conditions, such as settlement policies or military actions. Some supporters advocate only for a Jewish state that aligns with religious prophecies or principles, democratic values, human rights, and coexistence with Palestinians.

**Cultural Zionism** emphasizes reviving Jewish culture, language, and identity in Israel, prioritizing a cultural centre over political sovereignty. It promotes Hebrew as a unifying language and the development of Jewish arts, education, and intellectual life. This ideology emerged in opposition to political Zionism, advocating that Jewish survival requires a cultural renaissance and not just a physical homeland.

**Pluralistic Zionism** imagines an inclusive, "post-national" vision of Israel that recognizes the rights of Palestinians and reimagines Jewish identity, coexistence, and moral accountability beyond the constraints of territorial sovereignty.[76]

Messaging that rejects all forms of Zionism without understanding its different versions loses an opportunity for broader coalitions. Pluralistic and cultural Zionism may offer a way forward. Several specific tactics might enable activists to build a coalition with the "moveable middle, concerned with antisemitism and confused activists' stance as anti-Zionists. Activist leaders could commit all members to participating in a one-hour training on the history of antisemitism, the seven most widespread antisemitic tropes, and how antisemitism animates white supremacy.[77] Next, activists could host conversations with Jewish organizations to broaden the awareness of different forms of Zionism, urging the rejection of militant Zionism and embracing cultural, pluralistic, and conditional Zionism. These two actions could help activists be better prepared for and deflect criticisms that they are antisemitic and build coalitions that might involve people who care about Israel but share a critique of versions of Zionism that are anti-democratic, militant, and based on the ideas of Jewish supremacy.

## 6. Use Virtual Civilian Peacekeeping

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The sixth tactic gives active allies a new way to strengthen their power and enables international allies to operationalize coalitions with Palestinian organizations and communities. For activists already actively engaged in the movement, virtual civilian peacekeeping is an easy tactic to do and accessible for most people. This tactic can keep people engaged in meaningful actions.

In October 2023, the Palestinian organization #SaveMasafarYatta urged its supporters to remotely and virtually "check-in" to this community in the West Bank experiencing annexation of Israelis bulldozing of Bedouin and Palestinian homes and land seizures. The tactic sent a message that the world was watching and offered digital solidarity with Palestinians. This type of tactic could be dramatically scaled.

For decades, activists have used in-person unarmed civilian peacekeeping to deter violence with their presence.[78] Social media check-ins now allow many more people to participate through digital platforms by being virtual witnesses, helping to deter aggression through international presence and garnering public attention to land grabs. By tagging specific villages or towns and using relevant hashtags, activists can help

counter narratives that attempt to silence or minimize the experiences of Palestinians. Additionally, sharing updates, stories, and visuals from trusted sources in these communities can foster a greater understanding and empathy among international audiences.

Outside activists should work closely with Palestinian organizations, prioritizing their needs and following their lead. Virtual observers can deter abuses by making it harder for violations to go unnoticed, while real-time alerts can demand immediate action from international organizations and governments. A global "coexistence coalition" could organize a mass online movement with this tactic, and mapping tools could track and share the locations of incidents, such as demolitions or forced displacements. Crowdsourced information gathering from verified Palestinian accounts, local NGOs, and on-ground reporters could allow for real-time tracking of developments and threats.

## Conclusion

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This paper began with an analysis of the landscape of winners and losers in the current crisis in Palestine and Israel, including the possibility that 2025 will bring escalating violence and humanitarian crises, mass annexation of Palestinian land, and further mainstreaming of extremism and autocracy in Israeli politics. This paper has outlined the rationale, strategy, and six new tactics that could broaden and strengthen the movement for the safety of Palestinians and Jews to enable coexistence with equity, justice, and peace. The proposed strategies and tactics aim to move beyond binary thinking, address the root causes of conflict, and broaden coalitions to help the movement achieve its goals.

This paper outlined the following coercive and persuasive tactics:

### **Coercive tactics to shift power away from opposition**

1. Apply \$100 US Tax Resistance and a Tourist Boycott to press for tying US military aid to Israel to international human rights law
2. Hold public tribunals as teach-ins on international law and Palestinian sovereignty
3. Engage with Christian Zionists to counter theological justifications for harm to Palestinians

### **Persuasive tactics to broaden coalition**

4. Form a "coexistence coalition" with explicit goals for a just peace by using deliberative technologies
5. Offer teach-ins on antisemitism tropes and different versions of Zionism to build trust
6. Use "virtual civilian peacekeeping" pairing Palestinian communities with international witnesses

The path forward will undoubtedly be challenging. These tactics could work synergistically by combining coercive and persuasive tactics to create a more effective movement for change. By tailoring approaches to specific audiences and leveraging tools like the "Spectrum of Allies," activists can expand their sphere of influence and move key stakeholders toward supporting coexistence and a just peace.



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## **CONTACT US**

### **Toda Peace Institute**

Samon Eleven Bldg. 5 th Floor  
3-1 Samon-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0017, Japan

### **Email**

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