



# ENDING OUR SILENCE – STATE OF THE DEBATE OF ENDE GELÄNDE ON ISRAEL/PALESTINE

## INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

Summary .....	1
1. Why this statement? .....	1
a. Why only now? - An apology .....	1
b. Positions within EG.....	2
c. Why speak out? – Our approach .....	3
2. Suffering and Dehumanization .....	3
a. October 7th, Before and After.....	3
b. An end to genocide / The term "genocide" .....	5
c. A plea for humanity and dignity .....	6
d. Colonialism and Power Inequalities.....	7
a. Dialogue, repression and a lack of critical examination .....	8
b. On the (left-wing) discourse in Germany.....	9
Conclusion: Solidarity must become practice - a plea for getting involved! .....	10
Glossary .....	11
Anti-Semitism .....	11
Anti-Zionism.....	12
Colonialism .....	12
Ecocide .....	12
Ethnonationalism .....	12
Genocide.....	12
Imperialism .....	13
"State Reason" .....	13
Zionism.....	13



*[A glossary of terms can be found at the end of the text]*

## **SUMMARY**

As Ende Gelände, we have discussed the situation in Israel/Palestine a lot over the last year and went through an educational process. As a result, we were unable to act as a group on the issue in our public relations work and practice and showed little solidarity with those resisting war, systematic murder, racism and antisemitism and with those affected by repression. We want to apologize for this. We are ending this silence with this comprehensive statement. In it, we take a stand against suffering and dehumanization, against warmongering and arms deliveries. We name the colonial dynamics, the climate injustices and the necessity of resistance against them. We stand in solidarity with the protests from below against war, genocide, racism and antisemitism. We consider analyses that Israel has established an apartheid regime and is committing genocide against Palestinian society to be plausible and the struggles against this to be worthy of support. We naturally do not cooperate with groups that pursue inhumane ideologies or practices. These include, among others, fundamentalist Zionist and Islamist groups. We stand against the racist discussion and politics in Germany, the logic of its so-called "state reason" and the enormous repression. We criticize the interpretation and lessons that the German government draws from National Socialism and demand a consistent dealing with anti-Semitism, racism, the wealth from the Nazi era and other fascist continuities. We see many great initiatives in the left. We are impressed by the worldwide protests in solidarity with Palestine and we want to show our solidarity with them. We advocate an open and serious examination of the different positions and at the same time demand that critical voices contribute constructively. We urgently want to keep spaces for discussion open. We think that a broad common practice of the climate justice movement and the Palestine solidarity movement is possible as in other countries and we want to contribute to it. This statement is meant to be a starting point for further educational processes and aims to create space for discussion and organisation. No climate justice on occupied land!

## **1. WHY THIS STATEMENT?**

### **A. WHY ONLY NOW? – AN APOLOGY**

For a year now, we have been having intensive discussions within Ende Gelände about Israel and Palestine, the charge of genocide in Gaza and the structures of oppression in the West Bank. The images and reports of immense human suffering do not allow for silence and looking away. The repression against Palestine solidarity protests, the rising anti-Semitism and racism and the almost unconditional support of Israel by the German government run counter to the historical responsibility of people in post-war Germany. Many of us participate in protests in solidarity with the Palestinian population, in discussions or educational processes. Many of us are overwhelmed by the complexity of the conflict and the discussions around it. Some would like to see more discussion and political education, while others cannot and/or do not want to get involved specifically in these struggles alongside existing political projects. Many of us are observing with great concern how left-wing alliances or friendships are breaking down in the discussions about Israel/Palestine. So far, some local groups have publicly commented on the issue and EG was part of the Palestine solidarity camp of Geef Tegengas in Rotterdam against the fossil gas and arms deals in the region.



In the past, there have been several attempts to address the issue, but there have also been major differences of opinion about whether it is possible, useful or even necessary to take a position. The people who initiated these discussions have reported about blockades within the alliance. The failure of these processes has also meant that last fall we were far from a common analysis or practice. In order to counter the divisive force of the issue within the left, to seek bridges and to face up to our responsibility as an alliance with an intersectional and anti-colonial self-understanding [\[Q1\]](#)[\[Q2\]](#), we decided to go through a longer process with online discussions in eight themed evenings and moderated by a small working group. We dealt with the history of Palestine and Israel, with anti-Semitism, Zionism and anti-Zionism, across supposed lines of fracture, and opened spaces to engage in dialogue with Palestinian, Jewish and Israeli leftists. Most of the conversations were very enriching, but some were also difficult, exhausting or hurtful. As an alliance, we were therefore unable to act in our public relations work for a very long time, showing too little and too late solidarity with those affected by repression, racism and anti-Semitism. We ourselves have not publicly spoken out against murder, suffering, war and discrimination. We are part of a mostly white, German, non-Jewish, non-Muslim, non-Palestinian, and non-Israeli left that has shied away from public and internal discussions on the topic for far too long, while people affected by racism and antisemitism take to the streets and experience repression. We as Ende Gelände also needed time for the process, which was necessary and important to enable us to engage in a differentiated debate. We understand that this silence and inaction was both unconscionable and hurtful. We are sorry that it took us so long as a coalition to speak out for these various reasons. We would like to express our sincere apologies - also to the people who left Ende Gelände as a result of our silence. We end our silence and inaction with this statement.

## **B. POSITIONS WITHIN EG**

For some of us, it is very important that the interrelations between capitalism, imperialism and neocolonialism in the context of Israel/Palestine are always taken into account when analyzing the situation. Others think that not every group needs a fully developed analysis of Israel/Palestine, since this claim can, under certain circumstances, make groups unable to act and thus prevent solidary action or important work that needs to be done on this or other issues. Still others would like to see a (pragmatic) middle way in which an anti-capitalist and decolonial attitude can be assumed without always having to agree on all the analytical and substantive details.

However, we agree that we cannot rely on the German government to stop (its) warmongering and oppression. Worldwide pressure is needed. Therefore, we also see it as our task and responsibility to work side by side with all progressive forces towards an immediate ceasefire, the release of the remaining hostages, equal rights and self-determination for all local people, and an end to regional escalation. We stand in solidarity with struggles to end Israeli occupation policies in Gaza and the West Bank and the deadly (settler-)colonial and racist dynamics in Israel.

After almost a year of intensive discussions and processes in the small group and in the alliance, we do not agree on all issues. Certain disagreements remain and we will have to endure them, take on other perspectives and learn to understand them, and discuss them again and again. And yet we feel strengthened in our basic positions: we continue to stand firmly for climate justice, against anti-Semitism, racism and ethno-nationalism, against colonial continuities and capitalism. Even if we do not always live up to these standards in practice, we find it important to set them as a compass for our political work.



## C. WHY SPEAK OUT? – OUR APPROACH

We are an alliance that primarily fights fossil capitalism – and this has been intimately intertwined with colonialism and patriarchy from the very beginning. Within Ende Gelände there are varied analyses of the role of capitalism in global conflicts. It is clear to us that many factors are connected and involved - capitalism is one of them. Capitalist nation states enrich themselves at the expense of people and nature. There is a power imbalance from the Global South to the Global North. Transnational fossil corporations use and intensify existing systems of discrimination and exploitation such as racism and patriarchy to secure their profits and to gain access to cheap labor and non-human resources. To this end, wars are also financed. This fossil, colonial/imperialist and patriarchal capitalism and its geopolitical interests play a central role in many conflicts worldwide, including in Israel/Palestine. In particular, European fossil fuel companies are enriching themselves locally at the expense of people and the environment, thus contributing to an intensification of the conflict – whether, for example, by buying licenses to extract gas off the coast of Gaza or to mine raw materials for the production of cement in the occupied West Bank. [\[Q3\]\[Q4\]\[Q5\]\[Q6\]](#) We cannot close our eyes to this.

In addition, as an active group in Germany, we see it as our responsibility to stand up against genocide, anti-Semitism and racism. Since October 7th 2023, we have observed with great concern an increase in restrictions on fundamental rights, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of science and personal rights. People affected by racism and anti-Semitism have suffered and continue to suffer from these restrictions. We see this as a direct consequence of the logic of “German state reason”/public policy, which places the supposed “protection” and interests of a state above the protection of universal human rights. We consider this state reason to be a problematic conclusion from Germany's history of fascism and genocide and want to advocate for a sincere reckoning with the past.

## 2. SUFFERING AND DEHUMANIZATION

### A. OCTOBER 7TH, BEFORE AND AFTER

First of all, we want to acknowledge the enormous pain, suffering and injustices that countless people experience. We grieve together for the murdered, injured, imprisoned and oppressed, as well as with those who are worried about their relatives and/or have to relive fears (again). We recognize the historical and current traumas of the Jewish and Muslim communities, of Israeli and Palestinian societies alike. We empathize with all those affected. Our sympathy goes out to the people of Israel and Palestine who have experienced violence and fear, who have been abducted, displaced or injured, who have suffered and continue to suffer from hunger, thirst or the destruction of their homes. Our sympathy also goes out to the relatives who have mourned the dead and missing, and to the children who have been left behind without their families.

On October 7th 2023, the important Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, Hamas killed approximately 1,200 people in its terrorist attack [\[Q7\]](#). There were thousands of injuries, disturbing sexual violence, a massacre at a music festival and other extremely traumatizing events. 251 people from a wide range of backgrounds were taken hostage in Gaza, many of whom were killed. As of November



2024, around 100 of the hostages are still in the hands of Hamas, and the deaths of 35 have been confirmed[Q8]. Entire Israeli villages along the border with the Gaza Strip have been destroyed. Others were evacuated for fear of further escalation and remain deserted to this day. The trauma in Israeli society runs deep. Because the bloodbath of Hamas hit a society with a long history of anti-Semitic persecution, pogroms and genocide, a society that is constantly at war. The founding of the state of Israel stems from a history of anti-Semitic persecution, especially in Europe, which reached its cruel climax in the Shoah – but did not stop after that. Anti-Semitism was also widespread in the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and Arab states[Q9][Q10]. After the founding of the state of Israel, the Nakba and the declaration of war by Arab states, approximately 900,000 Jews left Arab countries through flight, emigration or were expelled until the early 1970s. Many of them went to Israel in the hope of leading a safe life there[Q11][Q12]. The massacres by Hamas have shaken the faith of many that the State of Israel could, in a post-Shoah world, at least provide a safe space for Jewish people[Q13]. Nothing justifies these massacres. We have been shocked and strongly opposed to the dehumanization and antisemitism expressed in this attack, as well as the lack of compassion for its victims.

The Israeli government responded to Hamas' attack with an area bombing that was deeply reckless and destructive to the civilian population, a blockade of Gaza and a devastating ground offensive that followed[Q14]. Today, Gaza is a wasteland.

Between October 2023 and April 2024, more than 70,000 tons of bombs and explosives have been dropped or fired on Gaza, mostly over densely populated areas - today, this number will be much higher [Q15]. As early as April 2024, between 60 and 70% of all buildings had been destroyed, as had 80% of schools[Q16]. Estimates of the number of deaths range from 41,000[Q17] to 186,000[Q18]. Almost every day, tent accommodations for people on the run and schools where refugees seek shelter are bombed or attacked.[Q19] Even places designated as "safe zones" are deliberately attacked[Q20]. Over 67% of all arable land in the Gaza Strip was largely and deliberately destroyed, along with over 52% of all agricultural wells and around 45% of all agricultural greenhouses[Q21][Q22]. The WHO has recorded over 1000 attacks on clinics and health care facilities[Q23][Q24]. Hardly any of the 36 clinics are still fully operational[Q25][Q26]. The water supply is also being attacked, over 700 wells and desalination plants have been destroyed, as have the existing 6 sewage treatment plants[Q27]. In July, 10% of Gaza's population was already dead, injured or missing. Electricity, medicine and pharmaceuticals, food, drinking water and fuel are completely or almost completely denied and epidemics are spreading[Q28][Q29]. Almost the entire population of Gaza is acutely affected by famine, whilst more than 3500 children are under an acute threat of death by starvation[Q30][Q31][Q32]. 30 mass graves with approximately 3,000 dead have already been documented. As of November, at least 137 journalists and media workers had been murdered, many of them targeted[Q33][Q34]. Due to limited reporting, the extent of the suffering and destruction can only be guessed at. Israel's offensive is already being extended to the West Bank, which is being systematically settled/populated by the Israeli government on a massive scale[Q35][Q36][Q37][Q38]. In addition, several places have been created in Israel where around 9,500 Palestinians are arbitrarily detained without charge (as so-called administrative detainees), with no prospect of human rights being upheld, and subjected to arbitrary detention conditions, humiliation, dehumanization, sexualized violence and torture[Q39][Q40].

To justify this, ministers of the Israeli government's far-right coalition used inhuman language and genocidal statements[Q41]. They announced an intentional humanitarian catastrophe and the



obliteration of Gaza. War and human rights crimes are demonstrably being used deliberately against the Palestinian population [\[Q42\]\[Q43\]\[Q44\]\[Q45\]](#).

For years, both Hamas and the IDF have been accused of abusing civilians as human shields, an act that is illegal under the Geneva Refugee Convention [\[Q46\]\[Q47\]](#). It is documented that the IDF uses (captured) Palestinians as shields in military operations, for example to search tunnels or homes [\[Q48\]\[Q49\]](#). At the same time, the Israeli military is accused of misusing the excuse of Hamas or other armed Palestinian groups using human shields as a strategy to legitimise their own attacks on civilian targets [\[Q50\]](#). Hamas, on the other hand, builds military structures in civilian areas such as schools, hospitals or residential buildings to fire rockets at Israel or exerts pressure on civilians not to comply with Israeli evacuation orders, thus deliberately endangering the Palestinian civilian population. Given the dense population of the Gaza Strip and the closure of the borders by Israel, human rights organisations and legal experts questioned whether this action could be qualified as the use of human shields under international law [\[Q51\]\[Q52\(p.219\)\]](#). Regardless of whether Hamas uses human shields in a deliberated manner/by purpose or not, it is clear to us that both Hamas and the Israeli government benefit from war and escalation to maintain their own power and civilian casualties are an integral part of their respective political and military actions.

Even before October 7, 2023, human rights organizations warned of an uninhabitable Gaza Strip and a humanitarian catastrophe there [\[Q53\]\[Q54\]](#). The Israeli military tightly controlled Gaza's borders. Palestinians in the West Bank and Jerusalem also lived and continue to live under structural discrimination. Human rights organizations and United Nations experts use the term apartheid to describe the legally enshrined unequal treatment of Jewish and non-Jewish Israelis and Palestinians [\[Q55\]\[Q56\]\[Q57\]](#). According to a report by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, as of mid-March, three acts had already been committed by Israel, any one of which is enough to constitute genocide by definition [\[Q58\]](#). The trauma of Palestinian society runs deep. The current events must be placed in the context of a history of continuous land grabs and displacement, structural and racial discrimination, arbitrary arrests and killings which started before the Shoah [\[Q59\]](#). Many people see the current events as part of an ongoing Nakba (=catastrophe) [\[Q60\]\[Q61\]](#), as comments by Israeli politicians also suggest [\[Q62\]](#). Nothing legitimizes these war crimes, this killing, this oppression. The dehumanization and (anti-Muslim/anti-Palestinian) racisms that are expressed in the actions of the Israeli state and in the lack of compassion in Israeli mainstream society, and especially in Western societies [\[Q63\]\[Q64\]](#), shock us - we also firmly oppose this.

## **B. AN END TO GENOCIDE / THE TERM "GENOCIDE"**

We have been grappling intensively with the question of whether we want to use the terms "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing" for what Palestinians are currently experiencing. The accusation is often that the terms are used as battle cries, that they polarize and are anti-Semitic. The accusation is that anti-Semites fundamentally understand Israel, as a Jewish state, as ultimately evil and omnipotent, and abuse the genocide accusation to attach the greatest possible crime to the state and thus "demonize" it. In particular, since Israel also offered refuge from the Shoah, it is sometimes suspected that the genocide accusation serves to delegitimize Israel, i.e. also to potentially question the identity and justification of the state. We believe that the genocide accusation is not an attempt at demonization. We understand that the analysis that a genocide is currently taking place in Gaza is correct. That is why we consider it so important to comment on it. Since October 2023, the





suspicion of genocide has been in the air and over the last year, the assessments that the Israeli government is committing genocide in Palestine have been growing, including from the UN, human rights organizations and numerous experts[Q65][Q66][Q67]. The International Court of Justice also considers the genocide accusation to be so plausible that it has initiated an investigation[Q68]. The final legal assessment will take years. As a left-wing alliance, we do not have to and must not wait for this assessment. Some of the statements by Israeli politicians have clearly called for and justified genocide; in our view, these clearly demonstrate a genocidal intention[Q69][Q70]. It is not only known that the Israeli government is committing war crimes, that it is using starvation as a strategic weapon[Q71], and that in Gaza and the West Bank, settlers are to be settled and the Palestinian population is to be expelled or killed[Q72][Q73]. Furthermore, some organizations document the systematic and widespread destruction of the environment and agricultural livelihoods, also known as ecocide[Q74][Q75]. It therefore seems plausible to us to assume that there is a "specific intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such". We therefore agree with the Jewish-Israeli Holocaust and genocide researcher Omer Bartov when he reports: "I had become convinced that at least since the attack by the IDF on Rafah on May 6, 2024, it was no longer possible to deny that Israel was engaged in systematic war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocidal actions"[Q76]. We think it is justified to boycott and blockade institutions and corporations that promote or profit from the genocide.

Although we agree in our analysis that Israel is currently committing genocide against Palestinians, some people within Ende Gelaende have expressed strategic concerns about using this term, as it is also used by groups whose motivations we do not share and with whom we explicitly do not want to associate ourselves. In the end, a large majority of us decided to use the term carefully but consciously. We are not afraid to name what we believe to be the truth. On the contrary, we believe it is an important task for white-German groups to use the word genocide, especially while witnessing the current debate in Germany, in which the voices of those affected are given far too little space.

### **C. A PLEA FOR HUMANITY AND DIGNITY**

Human dignity is universal and indivisible. There must be no differences in the value of human life, because dehumanization is a core right-wing policy. Worldwide, but also especially in Germany, we have observed an increase in racism, Islamophobia and anti-semitism since last fall. People report increasing experiences of discrimination. There have been attacks on synagogues and mosques and massive racist repression at protests in solidarity with Palestine. As an alliance, we are committed to the dismantling of anti-semitism, racism, Islamophobia and other forms of oppression and stand in solidarity with those affected.

At the same time, we oppose the cold, dehumanizing logic of war, which functions according to colonial and imperialist ideologies. These ways of thinking have been shaped mainly by racist and patriarchal capitalism. Imperial states and their ruling classes calculate and use human lives, see nature only as a resource or commodity, and thus repeatedly create a world in which profit for a few takes precedence over a good life for all.

A permanent ceasefire is the first step towards ending the killing. The murder and deliberate starvation of the Palestinian civilian population, the threats against and shelling of the Israeli civilian



population, all war crimes, the occupation, the siege and the expulsion must stop. Hostages and so-called civilian prisoners must be released by both sides and be able to return home immediately. In the long run, not only a long-term, sustainable ceasefire is needed, but a just peace. Arms exports must be stopped immediately. Germany, as Israel's second largest arms supplier, is partly responsible for all the dying, not only in Gaza, but also in the West Bank and Lebanon. German arms exports in 2023 were ten times higher than in the previous year, due to the sharp increase after October 7. To this day, Germany continues to supply arms to Israel almost unconditionally[Q77][Q78].

#### **D. COLONIALISM AND POWER INEQUALITIES**

This commitment to humanity and against dehumanization is fundamental. At the same time, we are aware of the clear power inequalities and hierarchies in the so-called "Israeli-Palestinian conflict". Many social scientists speak of colonial or settler-colonial dynamics. We see these dynamics in the fact that the Israeli state, with the broad support of Western states, has been taking land in Palestine for decades, and that Palestinians are often arbitrarily murdered, imprisoned or expelled by settlers. We see colonialism in the racist devaluation of Palestinians, their systematic separation from Jewish-Israeli society[Q79][Q80(p.14/15)] and in the stories the state of Israel tells about itself, as for example in Netanyahu's recent description of the war as a "struggle between barbarism and civilization"[Q81][Q82]. Also very common orientalist narratives, such as that Israel has made the desert bloom, are examples of colonial ideas with a green veneer[Q83][Q84]. Furthermore, the Israeli government is currently justifying its actions with the idea of a "war on terror". In this context, the concept of terror is also used in German discussions in a very one-sided and racist way, and the Israeli state's terror tactics are often not referred to as such.

The blatant power asymmetries, not least of a military nature, have also translated into many infrastructural injustices for decades – whether in the unequal distribution of energy, water, waste disposal or access to agriculturally usable land. While the Israeli state creates these environmental injustices, it presents itself as a green pioneer. One example of the greenwashing of colonial land grabs are the activities of the "Jewish National Fund". This so-called environmental organization uses donations, which come mainly from the Global North, to plant hundreds of thousands of trees over destroyed Palestinian settlements. This makes past injustices more invisible and makes a return more difficult. As an anti-colonial alliance, we oppose all of this.

Palestinian resistance against such oppression is justified, also according to international law, and we stand in solidarity with them. However, the world view, ideas and methods of Hamas, but also of other reactionary forces such as the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, are completely opposed to our values and ideas. Hamas is an autocratic, fundamentalist, patriarchal and violently ruling organization that cannot be a partner in an emancipatory struggle for us. However, we are aware that Hamas is a ruling party that includes not only military wings such as the Al-Qassam Brigades but also bureaucratic structures and those that provide social assistance. We also see that Hamas benefits from the increasing desperation and lack of alternatives of Palestinians who have been living and suffering under occupation for decades with no prospects. Hamas suppresses criticism with brutal authoritarianism, including imprisonment, torture and death, and yet there are voices articulating criticism[Q85][Q86]. To prevent a unified Palestinian negotiating partner, the Israeli government has allowed payments from Qatar to Hamas since 2018, along with its billions in assets[Q87][Q88][Q89]. Hamas is also supported by states such as Iran and Qatar, two deeply patriarchal absolute monarchies that trample on human rights[Q90][Q91].





Our solidarity is with the resistance from below, the left-wing, emancipatory forces in Palestine, Israel and worldwide. Israeli and Palestinian people both have a right to self-determination, peace and security. We do not presume to be able to make judgements about how peaceful coexistence should be structured. In whatever political constellation, one thing is clear/essential: From the river to the sea, justice, peace, equality.

3. For international solidarity and against authoritarianism

### **A. DIALOGUE, REPRESSION AND A LACK OF CRITICAL EXAMINATION**

We look with great concern and anger at the policies of the German government and the mainstream debate in Germany. Unconditional support for a state whose in large parts fascist government [\[Q92\]\[Q93\]\[Q94\]\[Q94.2\]](#) openly calls for genocide [\[Q95\]\[Q96\]](#) does not create security - quite the opposite. The reductionist narratives of German politics and media debates are equally the basis for anti-Muslim racism and for an anti-semitism that makes unconditional pro-Israelism the core of the fight against hostility towards Jews. They create speechlessness and a climate of fear. It is cynical how German anti-semitism is concealed in this way. And it is cynical how in Germany a distinction is once again being made between good and bad Jews, with Jewish people who are critical of Israel or anti-Zionist being silenced and labeled anti-semites [\[Q97\]\[Q98\]\[Q99\]\[Q100\]](#). Neither criticism of Israeli policy nor concern for the people in the war and crisis zone in Gaza should be equated with antisemitism [\[Q101\]](#). The attempts by German conservatives and right-wingers to delegitimize any criticism of Israel as antisemitic is itself antisemitic due to an equation of the Israeli government with Jews. It is often put forward by parties with antisemitic parliamentarians and traditions such as the CSU, CDU and AfD. The highly criticized Bundestag resolution "for the protection of Jewish life" from October 2024 is an example of a restrictive and authoritarian discourse climate that equates any form of criticism of Israel with antisemitism [\[Q102\]\[Q103\]](#). The IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) definition is being used by the Bundestag and other institutions to suppress dissenting opinions, including those of Jewish people. This is even stated by authors of the IHRA definition themselves [\[Q104\]](#). Therefore, we reject the IHRA definition as inadequate and the Bundestag resolution as an attack on freedom of expression.

We strongly criticize the widespread exclusion of artists and scientists, often Jewish or Palestinian, in this context [\[Q105\]](#). The same applies to the banning of solidarity demonstrations for Palestinians, repression such as racist police violence, arbitrary detentions, controls in migrant neighborhoods and meeting places, the closure of political shops, cafés and cultural venues, as well as the completely disproportionate repression of protests at universities [\[Q106\]](#). While Hubert Aiwanger, as Bavarian minister, repeatedly proves how socially acceptable anti-semitism is in Germany, the federal government wants to deport more people to counter the supposedly "imported anti-semitism". Politicians "worry" about anti-semitism in left-wing, anti-colonial and often non-white circles. This portrayal is massively distorted and we strongly criticize it. Anti-semitism does exist in left-wing and non-white circles and must be combated. Nevertheless, studies locate anti-semitic attitudes and actions primarily on the far-right fringes and in the bourgeois center of German society [\[Q107\]\[Q108\]](#). Under the guise of a supposed fight against anti-semitism, an authoritarian practice of rule is emerging here that undermines and abolishes central human rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of art, and freedom of science. We are also firmly opposed to this.



In the debates about Zionism and anti-Zionism, these two ideologies are diametrically opposed as polemic terms, whereby many different things are meant by the terms. This prevents a discourse based on solidarity. Zionism has many forms (see glossary)[Q109][Q110]. Left-wing forms of Zionism are currently extremely marginalized[Q111][Q112]. In particular, we see bourgeois Zionism as part of a new right that legitimizes and promotes nationalism and militarism[Q113]. For a dialogue, it can be important not to demand that people distance themselves from Zionism first, but to discuss what values and realities of people are[Q114]. We therefore consider it problematic to reject all forms of Zionism per se. We also reject uncritically endorsing all forms. One can be both anti-semitic and Zionist, for example by seeing the state of Israel as the solution to an alleged "Jewish question". Accordingly, anti-Zionism also has many forms and a long history and can be antisemitic under certain circumstances. For many left-wing anti-Zionists, the criticism of (ethno-)nationalism, the dominance of revisionist Zionism and right-wing extremist developments of the government, as well as the oppression of Palestinian society, are at the forefront[Q115][Q116]. It is justified to reject revisionist Zionism and the inhuman national ideology behind it. We therefore consider it problematic to reject all forms of anti-Zionism. We also reject uncritically endorsing all forms. It depends on the content, not the terms.

What is crucial is that the current debates conceal the deep-seated anti-semitism in Germany and the lack of critical examination of National Socialism[Q117][Q118]. Many wealthy German families – such as Quandt, Diehl, Piëch, Porsche and Klatten – have become rich through "Aryanization" and war profits, and compensation payments to those who suffered as a result of their profit from the Holocaust are still pending[Q119][Q120][Q121][Q122]. We observe that over-identification with Israel and unconditional support for its government by Germany is taking place as a form of reparation. We consider this to be reductive. We demand a consistent reappraisal of continuities between National Socialism, colonialism and imperialism in Germany.

We agree that many of the conflicts and the suffering in West Asia originate, among other things, from European imperialism, racism and anti-semitism, nationalism and colonial ideologies. We acknowledge this responsibility for the suffering of Jews, Palestinians and many more.

We acknowledge our own positioning as mostly Germans. Most of us are descendants of Nazis, followers, perpetrators or murderers. We live in a country whose wealth still comes from forced labor, slave labor, wars of extermination and imperial economic control. We live in a country where, 79 years after the end of the war, right-wing populist and radical groups are once again gaining massive popularity. This alone is testament to the failure of the supposed process of coming to terms with the past. For us, all this means: Never again! Never again state-sponsored mass murder, never again fascism, never again a war of extermination or a war of aggression. Our "Never Again" applies to anarchists, so-called "asocials", Armenians, disabled people, bi- and multiracial people, Herero, homosexuals, Jews, communists, Naama, for Palestinians, Pol\*innen, Queers and FLINTA\*, Rom\*nja, Russ\*innen, Serb\*innen, for Sinti\*zze, Ukrainian\*innen - our solidarity goes out to all those affected. Never again fascism, wars of aggression and genocide! We see Germany as having a responsibility to deal with fascist structures and legacies much more consistently.

## **B. ON THE (LEFT-WING) DISCOURSE IN GERMANY**

We see many important and successful left-wing initiatives, workshops and actions worldwide as well as in Germany. The Palestine movement in Germany, which is mainly supported by migrants



and Jewish people, is impressive and important. Nevertheless, we experience that approaches to the Israel/Palestine debate, even within left-wing discursive and political spaces, are sometimes very different. Not rarely two polarized sides are being imagined, making differentiated and undecided positions impossible. There is unfounded agitation against the other side, labeling people, belittling them, or even excluding them – up to and including violent threats and physical attacks. Burdened as well by the stifling power of discourse of a one-sidedly conducted bourgeois debate in Germany, an emotionally charged dispute over the interpretive sovereignty of history and language is not least at the forefront, superimposing itself over the actual events on the ground, obscuring them and in some cases distracting from them.

However, we cannot solve the problems if we on the left do not at least talk to each other. Closing spaces for exchange will definitely not help us and will massively weaken us as a movement.

Although some people from our structures have participated and contributed in one form or another in protests in solidarity with Palestine, we often hear voices in our discussions and conversations that express doubts in principle about joining the protests or feeling uncomfortable there, for example because there is no clear distancing from Hamas or the crimes of October 7. We see also that justified criticism of the Palestinian movement, such as the sometimes occurring solidarity with Hamas or the influence of authoritarian groups, has often been misused in the past to defame any solidarity with Palestine. However, the consequence of criticizing parts of the Palestinian movement must not be to no longer show solidarity with Palestine. Anyone who talks about criticism of the protests must also talk about the enormous violence and brutality with which the German state is cracking down on pro-Palestinian protests. According to Amnesty, besides climate activists in Germany, activists and demonstrators in solidarity with Palestine are currently being massively defamed and framed as “criminals” or “terrorists” in order to further justify restricting the right to freedom of expression and assembly, while at the same time legitimizing racist migration policies, far-reaching austerity measures in the social sector and debates on rearmament[[Q123](#)]. And although the repression against the Palestine solidarity movement is so enormous, demonstrations against mass murder, against letting people die and against the ignorance of the international community and German majority society are organized every day - mostly carried by migrants, women and queers - and numerous left-wing educational events and discussion initiatives are set up. While constructive criticism of the protests must of course be possible, we are currently seeing that the perspectives and positions of those directly and indirectly affected are hardly being given a hearing. These perspectives are also being neglected due to the massive repression as well as the one-sided German discourse. We continue to need solidary criticism within our movements, including on the part of Palestinian protesters, but we must also actively engage ourselves in the first place, especially as mostly white German leftist groups, and stand shoulder to shoulder against all state repression. Those who take the side of state repression are not, in our view, left allies[[Q124](#)]. Let us get involved and actively shape solidarity locally and internationally, instead of remaining silent for fear of doing something wrong.

Of course, in this context we recognise and share the need for justified criticism of any form of anti-Semitism. Room for anti-Semitism cannot be allowed to stand.

**CONCLUSION: SOLIDARITY MUST BECOME PRACTICE – A PLEA FOR GETTING INVOLVED!**



We as Ende Gelände want to stand up to dehumanization and the devaluation of people - no matter who it affects, no matter who initiates it and no matter in what form it appears. We want a good life for all.

We see our political practice side by side with left-wing, emancipatory groups in Germany, Palestine, Israel, and worldwide that follow a similar political compass. For us, this clearly includes opposing dehumanization and standing up for human rights, as well as opposing double standards and simplistic, undercomplex analyzes in political discourse. It is clear that we must end the silence and the inability to act together. With this statement, we hope to have developed a framework for action for us as an alliance, on the basis of which our alliance structures can become active on the issue and we can find clear words in our public relations work. For us, this also includes continuing to keep spaces open for conversation and discussion in the future, to listen, to admit ignorance, and to recognize and endure complexity and different perspectives.

We know that movements are never perfect. But it is unquestionably wrong to remain silent about war crimes, massacres and discrimination, and not to get involved in organizing emancipatory alliances against war and genocide, in solidarity with the people of Palestine and Israel. We also do not forget the other deadly conflicts in the world, the military conflicts in Congo and Sudan - the currently largest and yet barely noticed humanitarian crisis in the world - the ongoing attacks by Turkey on Kurdish areas in violation of international law, Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine, and genocides, such as those against the Armenians, the Rohingya in Myanmar/Burma, the Yazidis in Iraq, the Kurds in Syria and Turkey, the Uyghurs in China, the indigenous groups in the Amazon, to name just a few.

This statement is intended to change our practice. We see it as a starting point and basis for further work and processes. How can we build on this to show solidarity with those affected by anti-Semitism and racism? How can Jews, Israelis and Palestinians feel more comfortable and safer in our groups? We want to initiate further educational processes in our alliance, for example on topics such as anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim/Palestinian racism and a critical reflection of white-Christian German feelings about Israel/Palestine. We want to continue and intensify our involvement in protests and demonstrations. Israel/Palestine will not be the main focus of Ende Gelaende, but it is a subject for us to work on and get involved in the future.

For a climate of justice: An end to genocides! Ceasefire now! No climate justice on occupied land!

## GLOSSARY

### ANTI-SEMITISM

There are various definitions of anti-Semitism. The oldest is the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Association) working definition [\[Q125\]](#), which is the officially operative definition in Germany. The JDA (Jerusalem Declaration on Anti-Semitism) [\[Q126\]](#) was developed in response to the criticism of the IHRA definition by anti-Semitism researchers. Another attempt to define anti-Semitism is made by the Nexus Document, a project of the Biden administration [\[Q127\]](#). The present work is based on the JDA and the Nexus Document, since both offer a more differentiated examination of the connections between anti-Semitism, criticism of Israel and (anti-/)Zionism than



the IHRA definition, which is neither intended nor suitable as the sole definition of anti-Semitism [\[Q128\]](#)[\[Q129\]](#).

## **ANTI-ZIONISM**

Anti-Zionism is a rejection of Zionism (see below). It has various forms, such as liberal and religious anti-Zionism, which is represented by liberal and orthodox Jews, but also by non-Jews. For them, being Jewish is a religious and not a political-nationalist issue. Socialist anti-Zionism stands for the collective emancipation of Jews in their respective countries and internationalist anti-Zionism strives for an end to all oppression worldwide. Some forms of anti-Zionism are anti-Semitic. A shortened criticism of capitalism may also be potentially based on anti-Semitic stereotypes. A national anti-Zionism sees the 'Jewish world conspiracy' as a threat both inside and outside the nation.

## **COLONIALISM**

Colonialism refers, on the one hand, to the process of appropriation and subjugation of other countries and territories and their resources, as well as the inhabitants living there (by military and colonialists). On the other hand, colonialism also refers to a historical period of the same name that began at the end of the 15th century with the European plundering and appropriation of what is now America. Colonialism has never ended, but continues to exist in different forms, for example in patterns of political, military, economic and financial control and the exploitation of resources. These are justified by dehumanisation and racism and by the idea that certain 'civilisations' are superior to others.

## **ECOCIDE**

Ecocide is the large-scale and long-term destruction of the environment that threatens the existence of people, ways of life or cultures and is therefore genocidal. Indigenous groups in particular, whose way of life is linked to land and the environment, are threatened by ecocide. Examples of ecocide are the current extinction of species and the destruction of nature through the use of the plant poison 'Agent Orange' in the Vietnam War.

## **ETHNONATIONALISM**

Ethnonationalism is a current of nationalism characterized by the desire of members of an "ethnic" group for absolute sovereignty over their political, social and economic affairs. Ethnonationalism thus refers to the striving for statehood of an ethnic group that sees itself as a nation. Just as nationalism includes the exclusion of "foreign" nationalities at various levels, ethnonationalism entails the exclusion of foreign "ethnic groups" from national privileges.

## **GENOCIDE**

The term "genocide" was coined in 1943 in the context of the Armenian genocide and was officially adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Genocides are repeatedly asserted with retroactive effect, the majority of which were committed by European colonial powers and in European colonial settlements. Examples include the genocide of the Herero and Nama in Namibia or of the Sinti\*ze and Rom\*nja under the Nazi regime [\[Q130\]](#)[\[Q131\]](#). In today's international criminal law, it refers to a criminal offense that includes "the deliberate



intention to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such". Genocidal acts include:

- a) the killing of a member of the group
- b) the infliction of serious bodily or mental harm on members of the group
- c) the deliberate subjection to conditions of life calculated to bring about the physical destruction in whole or in part of the group
- d) the imposition of measures intended to prevent births
- e) the forcible transfer of children of the group to another group

## **IMPERIALISM**

Imperialism refers to a form of domination of one nation over other countries, which are exploited in the process. Imperialism also refers to the pursuit of "great power" by states in order to achieve global interpretive sovereignty in matters of violence and economics. Domination over other states is enforced by military, economic, political and/or cultural methods. States vary in openly admitting that they are pursuing this great power ambition and sometimes hide it behind pretence. While in the last century many states publicly strived for larger empires, today this is more likely to be disguised behind a humanitarian language.

## **"STATE REASON"**

The reason of state denotes a principle that defines the preservation and security of a functioning state as a significant value and derives from this that the use of any means, regardless of morality and law, to secure this value is justified. This also means that human rights and international law can be suspended in favor of reasons of state. In the context of Israel, the statement "Israel's security is part of Germany's reasons of state" usually means that Germany's historical responsibility for the Shoah means that the right of the State of Israel to exist and its supposed security are non-negotiable.

## **ZIONISM**

There are different currents of Zionism. It is a political movement that emerged in Europe in the 19th century and seeks to establish a Jewish nation state. As the Jewish diaspora movement was seen as a failure due to anti-Semitic persecution and pogroms, the nation state was seen as a safe home for Jews. "Zion", the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, became the symbol for the city and for Israel as the area claimed within the Zionist movement as the original homeland of Jews, where a Jewish state was to be established. Various currents of Zionism include the socialist and utopian kibbutzim movement, as well as cultural, bourgeois-liberal, revisionist and religious forms of Zionism, some of which are in stark contradiction to each other. Criticism of Zionism is mostly directed against revisionist Zionism, as represented by the Israeli government.