



APAN
Australia Palestine
Advocacy Network

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In two weeks' time the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Netanyahu will be in Australia on an official visit. Given the policies of his Government are directly contravening international law, we believe this is grossly inappropriate.

The Australia Palestine Advocacy Network is coordinating a statement for prominent Australians to sign that will be released to the media on the eve of his visit. We would ask whether you'd be willing to sign this statement?

If so, please email jessica@apan.org.au with your full name (including title), and preferred by-line.

And do you know others who might be willing to also sign this statement?

Yours sincerely

Bishop George Browning
APAN President

Australia should not welcome the Prime Minister of Israel

We strongly oppose the official visit to Australia of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel continues to defy all United Nations calls for it to comply with international law in respect of its illegal settlement building, and its treatment of the indigenous Palestinian population.

Instead, over the last 50 years, Israel has held the people of Palestine under military occupation and:

- continues to illegally build settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank and East Jerusalem;
- continues to confiscate Palestinian land and;
- continues to demolish Palestinian homes
- continues its policy of imprisonment of Palestinians without trial even of children as young as 12, and
- continues its blockade of the 1.8 million civilian inhabitants of Gaza.

Those actions are not symbolic of a nation desirous of building peace with its neighbours. Those policies build understandable resentment, anger and desperation amongst Palestinians.

We want all Israelis and Palestinians to have peace and freedom; we oppose all forms of terrorism and criminal violence by either side. We recognise when there is a gross imbalance of power, conflict will never be resolved. Mr Netanyahu's policies consistently aim to provoke, intimidate and oppress the Palestinian population which increase that imbalance, thus taking Israel irretrievably further from peace. These policies are inconsistent with Australian values and beliefs and we should not welcome him here.

The Australian Government needs to rethink its one-sided support for the Israeli Government. We are appalled that our Government opposes the recent UN Security Council resolution supporting the application of international law to Israel and Palestine, when most nations, including the United Kingdom, Germany, France and New Zealand, support it. Even the USA did not oppose it. It is time for the suffering of the Palestinian people to stop and for Australia to take a more balanced role in supporting the application of international law and not supporting Mr Netanyahu and his policies.