



# SAY IT LIKE IT IS

**GUIDELINES FOR  
RESPONDING TO  
MISCONCEPTIONS &  
UNTRUTHS ABOUT THE  
ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR**



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WHAT TO DO

## WHEN I HEAR THIS:

- “Israel is fighting a war against the Palestinian people.”
- “Israel is deliberately killing innocent Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.”
- “Israelis are committing genocide against the Palestinians.”
- “ Hamas had a right to attack Israel and its people as a response to the Israeli occupation.”
- “Israelis are opposed to a two-state solution.”
- “Israel brought it on itself.”
- “ Hamas is a legitimate organization of freedom fighters.”
- “Jews hate Arabs.”
- “Israel is an apartheid state.”
- “Israel has illegitimately occupied Palestine for the past 75 years.”



### STEP ONE

select an  
opener  
pg. 2

### STEP TWO

select an  
argument  
pg. 3

### STEP THREE

select  
rhetoric  
pg. 8

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## SELECT AN OPENER:

**Prime Directive:** Stand up for the truth; speak clearly, respectfully, and in a dignified, non-violent manner. Don't shout, but speak loudly enough that you can be heard. There is no common ground with someone who can ever justify rape, murder and torture.

### Sympathetic

- Israel mourns the loss of innocent Palestinian lives and is doing its utmost to prevent this from occurring.
- No people deserve to be massacred, murdered, raped, burned alive and tortured - NO ONE.

### Factual

- Israel is fighting Hamas, an internationally-designated terror organization. Israel is not fighting the Palestinians, the Gazans, the Arabs or Islam.
- This is not about colonialism or occupation, but about a genocidal antisemitic radical Islamist terror organization.
- The international community accepted both the Jews' and Arabs' right to self-determination. The UN accepted Israel as a member in 1949.

### Contextualizing

- There is more to the picture.
- If you'll allow me to, I'd like to expand the context.
- Social media posts are often tools for propaganda.

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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

Human  
Rights

**Israel is a democracy like the US, UK, or France which respects human rights.**

- Israel's Declaration of Independence enshrines complete equality of all its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race or gender.
- Arab/Palestinian citizens of the State of Israel (2 million) are equal before the law and have representatives in the government, including the legislature and the judiciary.
- Israel has no logical interest in harming innocent Palestinian civilians or in conquering the Gaza Strip. It is trying to free Israeli citizens who have been kidnapped and to prevent Hamas from continuing its terrorist activity against Israel.

**Hamas has been responsible for the suffering of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.**

- Hamas is an authoritarian theocracy that ruthlessly suppresses any Palestinian opposition to its policies and does not allow freedom of speech, protest or the press.
- Hamas has used international aid to assemble rockets, attack tunnels, and other offensive capabilities, instead of building schools, clinics, and community resources.
- Hamas continues to use Palestinian civilians as human shields.

Genocide

Occupation

Apartheid

Settler  
ColonialismFreedom  
Fighters

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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

**Israel is not committing and has not committed genocide; Hamas has.**

- The UN Convention on Genocide (1948) defines a genocide as based on intent; to destroy in “whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”
- Intent to commit genocide can be evaluated with the following criteria:
  - A declared genocidal ideology;
  - Genocidal indoctrination/societal conditioning;
  - Strategic planning and the procurement of weapons; and
  - Killing, rape, abduction, incarceration, physical and mental torture of the target civilian population, and destruction of religious sites and property.
- Civilian body count is not a determinant of genocide, but rather the intention to commit it.
- **The Hamas manifesto declares the necessity of the removal of Jews living in the State of Israel. It is by definition a genocidal charter.**
- Hamas’ atrocities meet the definition of genocide by the following actions:
  - The use of indoctrination and social conditioning to implement its genocidal manifesto;
  - Its acquisition of weaponry to target civilians and its directive to its members to murder Jews; and
  - Its October 7th attack, which intentionally targeted Israeli civilians and included the massacre, torture, rape and abduction of over 1,600 unarmed civilians.

Human Rights

Genocide

Occupation

Apartheid

Settler Colonialism

Freedom Fighters





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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

Human  
Rights

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Fighters

### This is not about the occupation.

- Israel completely withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, handing “the keys” over to the Palestinian Authority.
- Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in 2007, killing many Palestinian leaders.
- Since Israel left the Gaza Strip, thousands of rockets and other projectiles have been shot into Israeli communities.
- The Palestinians have rejected every Israeli offer for a peaceful two-state solution in the past 25 years.
  - The phrase “From the River to the Sea” refers to the destruction of the State of Israel, not to peace and not to a two-state solution.
- Gaza and West Bank-based terrorists have responded to Israeli peace offers with more violence.
- Israel is fighting and targeting Hamas terrorists, not waging war against the Palestinian people.



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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

### This is not about apartheid.

- The definition of apartheid under the 1998 Rome Statute: “Inhumane acts . . . committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.”
- Neither Jews nor Arabs are racial groups, but nations.
- The Arab citizens of Israel vote and have representation in the parliament and the Supreme Court. They receive identical medical care in hospitals and clinics, as well as identical social benefits.
- There is no legal segregation between the Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel.
- Since Israel has agreed, in concept, to the existence of a state in Gaza (until Hamas’ massacre) and has been willing to negotiate with the Palestinians for their independence in the West Bank, one cannot claim “systematic oppression and domination with the intention of maintaining their (Israeli) regime.”

Human Rights

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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

### This is not about “settler colonialism.”

- Jewish Israelis are as indigenous to the Land of Israel as the Palestinians are to Palestine. The proof can be found through historical records, archaeological finds and scientific (genetic) proof.
- Colonialism is when a home country settles its people in a foreign land while uprooting and dispossessing the natives. The Jews were not sent to Palestine and they did not dispossess anyone. They purchased land legally and have legal title to it.

Human  
Rights

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## SELECT AN ARGUMENT:

### Hamas are not freedom fighters protecting their homeland; they are ISIS-like terrorists.

- Hamas unabashedly uses terror in their war against Israel, including suicide bombing of civilian transportation, entertainment venues, restaurants, etc.
- Hamas is an anti-Israeli, antisemitic, terrorist organization committed to the destruction of the Jewish state and people.
- In its brutality, Hamas has shown itself to be in the same category as groups like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.
- Videos, released mostly by Hamas and posted on social media, document acts of torture, sexual violence, violence towards children, and molestation of bodies.
- **From Hamas's Charter: "The Day of Judgement will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say 'O Muslims, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.'"**
- Hamas has used donor money to create a highly sophisticated terrorist infrastructure aimed at the destruction of Israel.
- Hamas endangers Palestinian civilians they are supposedly protecting by using them as human shields, building military bases beneath schools and hospitals, and blocking civilians from trying to move south to safer areas.

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## SELECT YOUR RHETORIC:

Sympathetic

### Acceptable human behavior

Is it possible to imagine any scenario where rape, murdering of babies in front of their parents, and torture of unarmed civilians is defensible behavior? What is a proportional response for such atrocities? This is pure terrorism and nothing can ever justify this kind of behavior.

### Israel's right to defend itself

Every and any country has both a right and obligation to its citizens regarding their physical safety. It is part of the "social contract" and as a member country of the UN, Israel has a legal right to defend itself from Hamas terror.

Double Standards

Factual





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# SELECT YOUR RHETORIC:

## Compared to the United States

Any and every country anywhere has a right and obligation to ensure the security of its citizens and to fight against unrestrained terrorists. The United States was attacked by al-Qaeda terrorists on 9/11 and, as a result, invaded Afghanistan and Iraq (many civilian deaths ensued); the Allies' military efforts killed hundreds of thousands of German civilians during World War II. On October 7th, Hamas murdered 1400 Israelis (and foreign nationals) and kidnapped 240 people, mostly Israeli civilians.

## Who is to blame?

Israel left the Gaza Strip in 2005 and handed the Palestinian Authority (PA) "the keys." Hamas took over Gaza violently in 2007, killing hundreds of PA officials. Hamas has caused the ongoing suffering of the Palestinians of Gaza from 2007 until today. Israel takes care of the Palestinians more than Hamas does.

## Progressive?

Those who care about minority rights, women's rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, and animal rights should take a close look at how Hamas treats all of the above.

Sympathetic

Double Standards

Factual



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## SELECT YOUR RHETORIC:

Sympathetic

### Genocide

Hamas has declared (and tried to implement) genocide against Israel through its actions on Oct 7th. The Israeli Defense Forces' code of ethics obligates the military to do its utmost to mitigate collateral damage, including civilian deaths, in Gaza. Even after this attack, Israel is informing the civilian population ahead of time that they will be attacking, giving them time to flee. Israel's Defense Forces engage only terror targets and has for three weeks tried to convince the Gazans to physically distance themselves from Hamas targets so that the terrorists won't use them as human shields.

### Worldwide Threat

Hamas' barbaric terror attack is a threat to the world. It is an unprecedented, incomparable terror attack on Western values. This is not about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; this is about a terror organization using ISIS tactics. For all of these reasons, the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Austria and the EU have backed Israel's right to defend itself and to fight back.

### Israeli Medical Aid

Israeli policies allow for civil society to provide humanitarian aid for Gazans. Israel's economy provides 100,000 jobs for Gazans. The Israel-based *Save a Child's Heart* organization creates opportunities for Israeli surgeons to offer life-saving care to Gazan children with congenital heart disease. Israel's public hospitals provide the space for these procedures, as well as free weekly clinics to screen Palestinian children for cardiac disorders.

Double Standards

Factual

For related articles and readings go to  
<https://cwbpgh.org/resources/>

