



## **JSPACECANADA STATEMENT ON 2018 GAZA BORDER PROTESTS**

April 15, 2018

We join the many Canadians shocked and saddened over the situation in Gaza these past two weeks.

At JSpaceCanada, we sympathize deeply with the Gazan people, who live under both an oppressive regime led by Hamas and a blockade that in combination make life extremely difficult for residents.

As a progressive Zionist organization, we believe it is important to hold Israel accountable to the principles of a just and equitable society. To this end, we are deeply saddened to hear that many of the injured have been unarmed protestors, and even more upset by the news that a local journalist was killed. The Israeli military has launched an investigation into several of these incidents; we will be following these closely, and hope that disciplinary action will be taken where necessary.

While many of the demonstrators were peaceful in exercising their right to protest, others were engaging in violence, including members of Hamas' military wing. This is why we believe it is ultimately unwise and unhelpful to assume that the Israeli military had malicious intent when responding to these demonstrations.

It is possible to criticize the actions of Israel without ignoring the role that Hamas plays in the cyclical nature of violence in the region. It is also possible to criticize Israel's actions while recognizing the right it has under international law to defend its borders. We hope that Canadians assessing this situation will take these nuances into consideration.

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***JSpaceCanada** provides Canadians with a safe space to have crucial conversations about Israel's future. We support a two-state solution to the conflict, with safety and security for Israel and her neighbours. We provide an alternative to both the vehemently anti-Israel left and the rigidly pro-Israel right, with room for everyone to engage in civil and informed discussion. We offer a balanced perspective on Israel, with commitment to human rights and social justice for Jews, Palestinians, and all other citizens and residents of Israel.*