

Letter to Prime Minister Albanese

Jewish Voices of Inner Sydney. Posted publicly 30 July 2025.

Dear Prime Minister Albanese,

We, Jewish residents of Sydney's Inner West and your local constituents, call on you to sanction Israel as a concrete step to help end the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

Our group, Jewish Voices of Inner Sydney (JVOIS), was formed last year by those of us who felt that the traditional leaderships of the Jewish community in Australia were not reflecting our views, especially with regard to Israel's conduct in its war against Hamas, and on questions of antisemitism.

We feel that our tightly held Jewish values of justice, compassion, bearing witness, and the sanctity of life are not being represented by our peak communal bodies. We have met with local representatives to express our views, and given evidence at the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism.

We have watched in horror as Israel's retaliatory campaign against Hamas has been used to justify killing tens of thousands of civilians, flattening neighbourhoods and destroying communities, and metastasised into a program of intentional starvation of the Gazan population. We have hung our heads in shame as scholar after scholar has declared that Israel's actions amount to genocide – that gravest of atrocities, whose dark legacy scars many of our own family stories.

We therefore welcome your recent strong statements calling out Israel's conduct, and reaffirming Israel's moral and legal obligations to ensure sufficient humanitarian aid reaches Gazan civilians.

As you recently put it, "Israel's denial of aid and the killing of civilians, including children, seeking access to water and food, cannot be defended or ignored", and so we ask that the Australian government no longer ignore it. This means more than noble words, it requires concrete action to be sincerely meant.

We call upon your government to immediately enact sanctions against Israeli officials, leaders, and any businesses who supply the IDF or operate from occupied territory.

We also strongly object to the way the struggle against antisemitism has been weaponised against those who criticise Israel, and condemn the exploitation of Jewish fears to silence advocacy for Palestinians' human rights. This mendacious and cynical tactic was employed against Labor during the last election, and we sadly have experienced it ourselves.

Antisemitism, like all forms of bigotry, is too important an issue to let be abused as a tool of right-wing Zionist politics. We utterly reject the specious conclusions of Special Envoy Jillian Segal's report, her conflation of Jews and Israel, and her transparent anti-democratic agenda.

We call upon your government to respond with clarity and integrity to defend the civil rights to protest and critique, and recognise that singling out the Jewish community for special, partisan treatment doesn't make us safer, it just makes us a target.

As the local Federal member for the majority of the JVOIS community, we ask that you meet with us so that we can share our perspectives, and help you represent our voices. We believe we share your vision of a multicultural Australia based on values of fairness, inclusion, and human dignity.

In the meantime we ask you to consider the following actions that we expect Australia to take, as a nation committed to the rule of law and human rights, in the face of the current, dire crisis:

- Immediately enact sanctions on Israeli political and military leaders and companies arming the IDF. These sanctions should remain until the blockade on aid is entirely lifted, and Israel agrees to a ceasefire.
- Enact immediate sanctions on all Israeli businesses and products originating in the occupied Palestinian territories, which the ICJ has recently reaffirmed are illegal settlements.
- Commit ADF and AusAID support and logistics resources to assist UN organisations in distributing aid to the people of Gaza, where those resources are needed and can be deployed.
- Reconsider your position on symbolic recognition of Palestinian statehood, to increase diplomatic pressure on Israel.
- Investigate the actions of Australian residents who have served in the IDF during the current conflict for potential war crimes, to ensure that justice is served and none are above the law.
- Reject Special Envoy Jillian Segal's severely flawed antisemitism report. Beyond her unacceptable, counter-productive, and anti-democratic proposals to silence dissent, her integrity and impartiality has been completely undermined by her revealed relationship to hate group Advance Australia. Instead, the careful and non-partisan National Anti-Racism Framework developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission should be supported in full.

We look forward to meeting you to discuss these issues further, and to Australia stepping up to protect the rights of civilians and humanitarian law by taking concrete, meaningful actions.

Sincerely,

Jewish Voices of Inner Sydney