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San Francisco, USA, (International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network):

A group of nine activists – Palestinian, anti-Zionist Jewish, and immigrant rights activists – blocked the entrance of the Israeli Consulate [San Francisco] beginning at 8:30am today, in nonviolent protest of Israeli apartheid and its current attacks on Gaza.

The activists chained themselves together using handcuffs and locks, locked the doors to the building, and were joined by a diverse rally of over 40 supporters. The action was organized jointly by local Palestinians and Jews in support of: an immediate ceasefire; the opening of land, sea, and air borders to allow in emergency supplies; and an end to US financial and political support for Israel.

“For the past sixty years, Israel has tried to eliminate the Palestinian people by forcing them out of their homes and off their lands, starving them, and killing them,” said Maria Poblet, an immigrants’ rights organizer. “The recent blockades and attacks in Gaza are not an exception, but a brutal reminder that killing civilians is a regular part of Israeli strategy.”

Linked arm in arm, Bay Area Jews, Palestinians and social-justice activists aim to increase pressure on Israel and its supporters in the face of the 21-day siege on Gaza and the growing humanitarian crisis. All nine activists were arrested after about two hours, charged with trespassing, and allowed to leave. This action is one in a series that has moved from Toronto, to New York, to Los Angeles.

Organizers assert that the current situation in Gaza is not a conflict between two peoples of equivalent capacities, nor is Israel’s motive self-defense. “For the past year and a half, Israel has enacted strangling sanctions under the guise of targeting Hamas, collectively starving the entire population of food, water, medicine, and other vital resources,” stated Monadel Herzallah of the United States Palestinian Community Network. “The recent air and ground strikes are another brutal blow to Gazans who are already trapped in a concentration camp of despair and growing poverty.”

Activists also spoke out against the US pledge of more than \$3 billion each year in unrestricted aid to Israel. “Israel’s use of US aid and military equipment violates our own laws. We can choose to uphold US and international laws, or ignore them as we are now doing at the peril of our conscience and our place among all of humanity,” said Nadeen Elshorafa of the General Union of Palestinian Students.

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Organizer Sara Kershner of the International Jewish anti-Zionist Network summed up the sentiment: "Today, as Palestinians, Jews, and our united allies, we make our position clear: we are on one side, the side of justice; Israel, an apartheid state, is on the other."

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