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We the undersigned, scholars of the Middle East and other academics, strongly condemn the continued Israeli presence in the areas of the Palestinian Authority and the brutal oppression of the civilian population there. We are appalled by the systematic and comprehensive abuses of human and civil rights and horrified by the destruction of the civil infrastructure of the West Bank by the Israeli army during and after its April 2002 operation.

We call upon the international community to fulfill its obligations to compel Israel to abide by the United Nations Charter, the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Accord, and other relevant international law and to dismantle its illegal settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The right of the Palestinian and Israeli civilian populations to pursue their normal lives, free of threat, is sacrosanct and must be upheld by all parties to the conflict. Moreover, we fear that continued Israeli settlement activity and denial of Palestinian statehood may ultimately lead to the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians.

The government of the United States has declared as its policy the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel. UN General Assembly Resolution 194 and UN Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 1397 were taken with the utmost regard for the rights of the Palestinians wherever they are and the security and welfare of the people of Israel. An independent Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem, alongside the state of Israel, and a fair solution to the refugee problem are the only means for bringing about a comprehensive peace.

To implement this vision, we call upon the United States to employ all means at its disposal, including suspension of aid to ensure that Israel ceases its destructive military operations, extra-judicial killings, and abuses of human rights.

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