



MEDIA RESOURCE GUIDE: PALESTINE / ISRAEL

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The Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association (AMEJA) is issuing guidance to help newsrooms more accurately and critically cover issues related to Israel and Palestine.

This undertaking is in response to requests from industry reporters, editors and producers, many of whom are AMEJA members, for resources to better understand the historical context and nuance.

This guidance was created with input from member journalists across all types of media platforms and around the globe. **This is not an exhaustive list of guidelines and resources, and AMEJA expects these recommendations to evolve as events unfold.**

AMEJA urges anyone covering this issue to:

- **Remember the broader context of Palestinian-Israeli relations and how they tie into the events you're currently covering.** All reporting should take into consideration that, [according to international law](#) and consensus, Israel occupies Palestinian territory, and that Palestinians — whether they live in the West Bank, Gaza or inside the internationally recognized borders of Israel — are subject to an unjust and unequal system, as documented by international organizations like Human Rights Watch and the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem.
- **Be aware, also, of the current context.** For example, in the months leading up to the October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel, the Israeli military routinely raided Palestinian cities in the West Bank such as Jenin, Tulkarem, Nablus, Hebron, and others, killing and arresting Palestinian fighters and civilians alike, and confiscating lands. Israeli colonists from settlements deemed illegal under international law have harassed and attacked Palestinian farmers and their families with impunity. Terms such as “unprovoked attack” often ignore prior events.
- **Avoid “both sides” framing. Recognize the power imbalance between Israel and the Palestinian people.** This is not a conflict between states, but rather between Israel, which has one of the most advanced militaries in the world, and the Palestinians, who have no formal army and largely utilize improvised, relatively basic armaments.
- **Be precise in your reporting of casualties.** Avoid reporting headlines or ledes such as, “More than 30 dead in Gaza and Israel as fighting quickly escalates,” if for instance you know that the

majority of those killed were Palestinians in Gaza. Tell readers who was killed or injured, where and by whom, using active, rather than passive language.

- **Be mindful of Israel's continued blockade of Gaza.** While Hamas is the governing political party in the territory, Israel still controls Gaza's boundaries and the movement of people and goods through an [ongoing land, air and sea blockade](#), with Egypt controlling the Rafah crossing.
- **Replace "eviction" and "real-estate dispute" with "expulsion."** The terms "eviction" and "real-estate dispute" suggest a disagreement between a landlord and tenant, obscuring the Israeli government's efforts to forcibly displace Jerusalem's Palestinian population. In the case of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and other occupied Palestinian territory, the United Nations has said such expulsions would "violate Israel's obligations under international law."
- **Avoid the word "clashes" in favor of a more precise description.** Think twice before describing confrontations between Palestinian protesters and heavily-armed Israeli police reflexively as "clashes." Confrontations often begin with police dispersing demonstrations using tear gas and rubber bullets.
- **Double check "official" sources,** whether from governments or the military. If no evidence is provided for a claim, tell that to your readers, high up in your story. Also, be careful in how attributions of statements or claims are made. Consider the difference between: "Two Palestinian gunmen planning to ambush a minivan filled with Israeli citizens died when confronted by Israeli border police, said an Israeli government spokesperson" and "Palestinian officials claim that Israeli soldiers routinely help settlers retake homes they assert are legally theirs." The first instance reads as a statement of fact with a qualification at the end. The second instance reads as a claim that is up for debate.
- **Interview Palestinians.** Your story is always incomplete without them. Former U.S. diplomats, Israeli military analysts and non-Palestinian Middle East commentators are not replacements for Palestinian voices.
- **Be cognizant of how you're identifying Palestinians.** Ask the people you're interviewing how they want to be described. Inside Israel, potential responses could include Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Arab, Palestinian citizen of Israel, or simply Palestinian. Also recognize Palestinians represent multiple faith backgrounds, including Muslims, Christians and others. Ignoring this diversity perpetuates the misleading notion that the conflict is at its core a religious one between Jews and Muslims rather than political in nature.

- **Check in on your staffers of Arab and Middle Eastern descent, especially those who may be personally impacted by the situation.** Be receptive to their feedback on your news organization's coverage of the conflict without placing undue burdens on them. Recognize that their knowledge of the region and cultural fluency can be an asset to your organization's coverage.