

500 Arrested at Capitol as Jewish Activists Demand Gaza Ceasefire

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"If we don't get back to our shared humanity, I don't think we will ever come back from this," Rep. Rashida Tlaib told protesters. "And to our President: I want him to know, as a Palestinian-American and someone of Muslim faith, I'm not going to forget this. And I think a lot of people are not going to forget this."

Five hundred people, including two dozen Rabbis, were arrested in Washington, DC on Wednesday as Jewish activists led a protest inside and outside The Capitol. The protesters were demanding lawmakers back a ceasefire in Gaza.

Hundreds of protesters made their way into the rotunda of the Cannon House Office Building where they sang, chanted, and held signs calling for an immediate ceasefire. The activists wore shirts that said "Not in our name" on the front and "Jews say cease fire now."

The Capitol Police [announced](#) they were shutting down roads around the Capitol to ensure the safety of protestors outside.



Hundreds of Jewish activists demand Gaza ceasefire in Capitol (ifnotnow Twitter)

Earlier in the day, more than 5,000 Jewish Americans and their allies gathered on the National Mall. The crowd was addressed by Representatives Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) and Cori Bush (D-MO).

“We thank our Jewish community for being out here saying ‘Never Again,’” said Bush.

On October 16, Tlaib, Bush, and a number of other progressive House members [introduced a resolution](#) calling on the Biden administration to push for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

The legislative effort is backed by dozens of human rights groups, including the Adalah

Justice Project, American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), and the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR).

“If we don’t get back to our shared humanity, I don’t think we will ever come back from this,” said Tlaib. “And to our President: I want him to know, as a Palestinian-American and someone of Muslim faith, I’m not going to forget this. And I think a lot of people are not going to forget this.”



Thousands of Jewish activists gather in DC to demand Gaza ceasefire (Jewish Voice for Peace Twitter)

Jewish Voice for Peace highlighted the action in a [Twitter thread](#):

Today, 500 Jews were arrested and 10k took to the streets to support and to demand a ceasefire and an end to Palestinian genocide. We shut down congress to draw mass attention to the U.S. complicity in Israel’s ongoing oppression of Palestinians. But our work isn’t done

We can and will stop genocide in Gaza. But this horrific situation was only possible because of the groundwork laid by the Israeli state over 75 years ago. Since 1948, the Israeli government built a system of apartheid and illegal occupation.

Just as we demand an end to genocide in Gaza, we must put the same effort into dismantling the systems of Zionism, apartheid, and colonialism that brought us to this moment.

The only way to peace and safety — for everyone — is through ensuring justice and equality for everyone. That means standing in solidarity with Palestinians. It means building a world beyond Zionism. It means creating systems of safety through solidarity. Will you join us?



Jewish activists arrested in Capitol building (Jewish Voice for Peace Twitter)

Wednesday's protest came just two days after Jewish activists blocked every entrance to The White House, calling on Biden to back a ceasefire.

"Since we were children, so many of us have told ourselves that we would not stand by if we were ever witnesses to genocidal violence. We told ourselves that we would raise our voices. We told ourselves we would put our bodies on the line. We pledged that such horrors would never again happen on our watch," said author and activist Naomi Klein, who also addressed the protestors. "The 'never again' of our lifetimes is underway in Gaza right now. And we refuse to stand by and watch."



Protesters gather in Washington, DC (Jewish Voice for Peace Twitter)

The DC chapter of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) [smeared](#) the protesters in a statement and asserted that anti-Zionists are antisemitic. ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt compared the activists to white supremacists in a [tweet](#).

"The ADL is scared because they, like other Jewish establishment organizations, feel like they're losing the narrative for who gets to speak for American Jews," wrote Ben Lorber, a member of IfNotNow and JVP. "Frankly, they should be scared. Their bankrupt centrism is the past and groups like [IfNotNow] and JVP are the present and future."

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Featured image: Jewish activists call for Gaza ceasefire in DC. October 18, 2023 (JVP Twitter)

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