

# COMMUNITIES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

established 1978

## For immediate release

October 25, 2023

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### **RICHMOND OFFICIALLY STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE**

*Richmond city council passes vital resolution after overwhelming Palestine support from community members*

Last night, Richmond, CA, became the first city in the United States to pass a resolution in solidarity with Palestine. Communities for a Better Environment [CBE] Richmond organizers and members were on the frontline organizing efforts to pass this historic resolution. Together with our allies at the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, we helped to mobilize our community to send over 6,500 letters to council members in just 24 hours before the meeting. 350 people joined us at the city council meeting to vocalize their support, with hundreds more joining in solidarity on zoom.

We want to thank Richmond Mayor Eduardo Martinez and Councilmembers Soheila Bana, Gayle McLaughlin, Doria Robinson and Melvin Willis for their courageous support of this resolution and for unapologetically standing with the Palestinian people.

They expressed their support for what many of us with compassion and deep desire for sustained peace have been asking for all over the world: an end to the siege and caging of the 2.2 million residents trapped in Gaza — nearly half of which are children.

In fact, nearly 40% of the more than 6,500 Palestinian civilians who have been brutally murdered in the past two weeks by Israeli forces are children.<sup>1</sup> Sacred places of worship<sup>2</sup> hospitals,<sup>3</sup> schools,<sup>4</sup> evacuation routes,<sup>5</sup> and residential buildings<sup>6</sup> have all been decimated by Israel's constant bombardment of Gaza with over **6,000 bombs** since October 7th.<sup>7</sup> The Gaza

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/24/israel-hamas-war-live-fuel-shortfall-could-force-un-to-halt-work-in-gaza-2>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/20/we-were-baptised-here-and-we-will-die-here-gazas-oldest-church-bombed>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/16/israel-hamas-war-live-iran-warns-resistance-front-may-attack>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/10/why-bomb-schools-gaza-families-have-no-safe-space-amid-israeli-attacks>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/13/dozens-killed-while-fleeing-gaza-homes-as-israel-conducts-ground-raids>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2023/10/25/israeli-air-raids-flatten-homes-kill-dozens-at-a-time-in-south-gaza>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/12/israel-says-6000-bombs-dropped-on-gaza-as-war-with-hamas-nears-a-week>

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Strip is only a little over half the size of San Francisco and yet is home to over twice as many people.<sup>8</sup> **This is collective punishment – a war crime under international law.**<sup>9</sup>

As frontline environmental justice organizers and community members, we believe all people should have access to clean air and water and the ability to walk through their neighborhoods safely. As one of our CBE Richmond members reminded us last night at city council, **this includes the people of Gaza.**

**Our diverse Richmond community agrees** – on October 20th, over a hundred Richmond residents came together at a vigil co-organized by CBE Richmond youth to mourn Palestinian Martyrs and demand an immediate ceasefire and the end of the occupation of Palestine. We are standing up in Richmond because we refuse to fund and enable this genocide. The \$1.4 million in Richmond taxpayer dollars to Israel's weapons<sup>10</sup> could instead fund a Just Transition from the extractive fossil fuel economy to a renewable, regenerative economy in our heavily polluted community.

We thank Richmond leadership for listening to your community members and setting a bold precedent that we implore the rest of the country to follow. You can find the full text of the city's resolution [here](#).

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[Communities for a Better Environment \(CBE\)](#) is one of the preeminent environmental justice organizations in the nation. Founded in 1978, the mission of CBE is to build people's power in California's communities of color and low-income communities to achieve environmental health and justice by preventing and reducing pollution and building green, healthy, and sustainable communities and environments. CBE provides residents in heavily polluted urban communities in California with organizing skills, leadership training and legal, scientific, and technical assistance so that they can successfully confront threats to their health and well-being.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/17/gaza-size-population-comparison/>

<sup>9</sup> Convention 4, Article 33 of the Geneva

Conventions. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/18/israel-unlawful-gaza-blockade-deadly-children>.

<sup>10</sup><https://uscpr.org/>