

## **A Balanced View of the Divestment Resolution Somerville, Mass**

The Israel Divestment Resolution before the Somerville Board of Aldermen is one-sided and unfair.

Supporting this resolution is a counterproductive way to move towards peace in the Middle East.

The most effective way to achieve a lasting peace is to encourage both sides to implement bilateral plans such as the U.S.-sponsored Road Map and the Geneva Peace Initiative.

- The Israel Divestment Resolution ignores the complexities of the situation in the Middle East, and does so in a way that makes Israel alone responsible for the tragic conflict that has resulted in so much hatred and bloodshed on both sides.
- To single out Israel - among all the nations in the world - taps into the historic fears of the Jewish people. For centuries Jews have been unfairly targeted and discriminated against. Given that there are dozens of countries in the world that have committed far worse violations of human rights than Israel, the Jewish community in Somerville is deeply concerned by the anti-Semitic implications of this one-sided resolution.
- It is indeed true that the current government in Israel is pursuing policies that are both unjust and unwise. The continuation of the occupation of Palestinian territories has resulted in terrible injustices which we strongly oppose.
- However, instead of issuing one-sided anti-Israel resolutions, the Board of Aldermen of the City of Somerville should go on record in support of such bilateral steps toward peace as the U.S.-sponsored Road Map and the Geneva Peace Initiative.
- Nowhere in the text of the Israel Divestment Resolution nor on the website of the group that is sponsoring it is there any clear affirmation of Israel's right to exist as a democratic Jewish state. This omission reflects an extreme political position that the City of Somerville should not associate itself with.
- This Resolution divides people rather than bringing them together. Jews and Palestinians need support to understand each other. We need allies who will learn about this issue and take a stand in favor of both peoples. Only when both Israelis and Palestinians feel safe and secure will they conclude a just and lasting peace.
- Divestment campaigns divert focus and energy from the shared American, Israeli, and Palestinian goal of achieving a peaceful resolution to the conflict. There are many ways to support the Palestinian people that contribute to the goal of a negotiated solution

to the conflict. We support investment in economic support and development projects that have the potential to bring people together.

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