

STATEMENT FROM SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE EXPULSION OF ISRAELI DIPLOMAT

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South African Civil Society Applauds Expulsion of Israeli Diplomat, Calls for Further Action

As a coalition of South African civil society organisations, we unequivocally welcome the Government's principled and long overdue decision to declare Israeli Deputy Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires, Mr Ariel Seidman, *persona non grata* and to require his departure from South Africa within 72 hours. We stand in full solidarity with the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and commend this long-overdue assertion of South Africa's sovereignty.

DIRCO has formally informed the Government of the State of Israel of its decision to declare Mr Seidman *persona non grata* following a sustained pattern of conduct that constitutes a flagrant violation of diplomatic norms and an affront to South Africa's constitutional order. These violations include the repeated use of official Israeli state platforms to launch insulting and inflammatory attacks against President Cyril Ramaphosa, as well as the deliberate failure to notify DIRCO of visits by senior Israeli officials.

This behaviour, among others, represents a gross abuse of diplomatic privilege and a fundamental breach of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Israel uses diplomacy as a licence for contempt, intimidation, spying

and political interference. South Africa is not a colony, protectorate, or client state and we will not be treated as such.

Israel's conduct in South Africa mirrors its broader posture on the world stage: a pattern of routine violations of international law, contempt for multilateral institutions, and impunity sustained by powerful allies. From its illegal occupation, apartheid policies, and ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people, to its disregard for the rulings of the International Court of Justice and the authority of the United Nations, Israel has demonstrated systematic disdain for the very legal order it claims to respect.

South Africa's sovereignty and the dignity of its democratic institutions are inviolable. No foreign state, particularly one currently standing accused before international courts, has the right to insult our President, undermine our foreign policy, or abuse diplomatic status to advance arrogance and impunity.

This decision sends a clear message: South Africa will defend international law, uphold diplomatic integrity, and stand firm against bullying, intimidation, and double standards, wherever they originate.

Seidman is a genocide denier and has only come here to cause havoc. He entered South Africa in August 2025 and was immediately embroiled in media controversies by October, leading to a current case before the BCCSA which we support. In that case, Seidman [stated on the SABC](#) that "there is no genocide in Gaza," describing the situation as a war where "people suffer." This he said with careless indifference to the deaths of thousands, the starvation of two million Gazans, the destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, university and all means of life. Not to mention the targeted killing of children,

medics and over three hundred journalists. For him and many like him, they live in a racist realm where black and brown lives just don't matter.

Seidman further insulted the Global Sumud Flotilla's campaign to break the 18-year blockade on Gaza, dismissing it as ["a PR stunt"](#) rather than a humanitarian solidarity effort in support of the starving people of Gaza and a campaign that has been on-going for over a decade, long before October 2023.

We further condemn Mr Seidman's blatant and unlawful interference in South Africa's internal political affairs. He has actively inserted himself into domestic factional politics, obnoxious tweets, including in the Eastern Cape, where he used official platforms to praise and legitimise political factions opposed to the democratically elected provincial government. Masquerading as commentary on "development," these interventions are in fact the promotion of Zionist political projects and ideological agendas within South Africa. This conduct is reckless, divisive, and deliberately designed to inflame factionalism, undermine democratic governance, and interfere in our internal political processes. Such actions constitute a serious breach of the Vienna Convention and confirm a pattern of arrogance, impunity, and contempt for South Africa's sovereignty.

Given that Seidman's mission to sow discord has been exposed, we appreciate the principled leadership from DIRCO who have consistently shown moral steadfastness and commitment to preserving the values of our revolution and our people for justice and equality. In November 2023, it summoned the then-Israeli Ambassador, H.E. Mr. E. Belotsercovsky, to address his conduct regarding the war on Gaza—which had, at that time, killed

over 10,500 civilians, including more than 4,300 children. DIRCO also informed the Ambassador of South Africa's decision to recall its diplomatic staff from Tel Aviv. These actions preceded South Africa's historic case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing Israel of genocide.

This action of declaring Seidman *persona non grata* needs to be followed with a complete break in all diplomatic and trade relations with Israel.

"These steps, though small, are noble. However, our campaign is centred on breaking all diplomatic and trade relations with Israel, a serial violator of human rights widely recognised as a genocidal state. We must break all ties with this pariah nation,"

Support the Anti-Apartheid Movement Campaign

Furthermore, we reiterate our support for the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) and the call for President Cyril Ramaphosa to reject the credentials of the incoming U.S. ambassador, Leo Brent Bozell IV. "Bozell is a white supremacist who opposes the South African-led case against Israel at the ICJ. He must not set foot in our country," the groups stated. Bozell is scheduled to present his credentials in Pretoria in early March. Like Siedman, they have an open agenda to destabilise and undermine our state.

"Expelling Seidman is a step in the right direction to isolate apartheid Israel as was done to apartheid South Africa. It is about time that we hold Israel and its accomplices accountable for the horrendous crimes that they commit daily with impunity. Israel and its friends must own the consequences for their

promotion and execution of occupation, apartheid and genocide. We thus salute the South African government for this bold and vigilant step against the sedition that we know Israel thrives on.”

We, as civil society organisations, welcome South Africa’s principled and moral stand against injustice and the move towards ending relations with persons and groups that show callous indifference to the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Furthermore, we call for the immediate shutting down of the Israeli Embassy in South Africa in line with the South African resolution in Parliament and reiterate our demand for full BDS on Israel including the immediate stop to shipping of coal from South Africa to the apartheid regime.

Issued by:

On behalf of allied South African civil society organisations.

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