

Questions and Answers on Palestine

Q. What has the IGU said about this important issue?

A. The IGU Executive Committee issued a statement at its April, 2025 meeting in Cairo, Egypt, affirming the important role of geographers in advancing peace and shared prosperity among all peoples and nations. This commitment is rooted in respect for human dignity and equality, regardless of religion, race, language, gender, or cultural background, and in the belief that mutual understanding across borders is vital for a stable and just world. The full statement was not able to be published until the draft minutes of the meeting were confirmed, and is now available at <https://igu-online.org/statement-by-igu-executive-committee/>

Q. Will the IGU continue to work with the Israeli National Committee of Geography and individual geographers?

Yes. the IGU values the work of individual Israeli geographers and desires to work with Israeli geographers, among all other academic scholars, to find a solution to the current situation and in promoting peace. This aligns with our intention to not discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic group, nationality, religion, sex or political opinion and our intention to adopt an inclusive approach to international engagement around challenging issues.

Q. Given that Russia's membership was expelled from the IGU, is the same process now being applied to suspend Israel's membership? Is there a particular process for considering such an action and what would that be?

A. The Russian invasion of Ukraine differs from the situation in Palestine, not in the death and suffering of innocent people, but in the relationship of the national geographical committee to the people who are responsible for such actions. A full explanation of the decision by IGU full member countries to expel Russia, following a decision by the Executive Committee to suspend Russia's membership, can be found at <https://igu-online.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Expulsion-of-IGU-Russian-National-Committee-Annexure-III.pdf>. While we recognise that individual geographers may not share the perspectives of the national geographical organisation on important issues such as the invasion of Ukraine, this process and decision was based on the connection between the IGU adhering body for Russia and the Russian Geographical Society, whose senior leadership has direct involvement in the actions of the government and military.

Q. Will the IGU make a strong statement that both identifies what is occurring in Palestine as genocide and that names Israel as the perpetrator.

A. The IGU EC has made a strong general statement about human rights (see above) and is in the process of making a statement that identifies what is happening in Palestine as genocide based on the assessment of respected organisations with expertise in these matters. The statement names the current Israel government and the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) as being responsible. The IGU recognises

that not all Israeli people and organisations support the actions of the current government and therefore should not be held responsible for the actions of the government.

Q. Will the IGU adopt a Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) approach particularly for the Congress in Melbourne and ensure that the IGU Congress in 2028 will not be complicit with Israeli institutions?

A. At his time the IGU does not support a BDS approach that excludes people who are not necessarily complicit with the Israeli institutions that are responsible for what is happening in Palestine. The IGU is inclusive and will work to foster an inclusive culture within our organisation and to extend this approach to promote peace, understanding and cooperation everywhere that conflicts exist.