



Council on American-Islamic Relations

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In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Dec. 22, 2023

Dear friends and partners:

I write on behalf of the National Board of Directors of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Over the past two weeks, our National Board has communicated with staff leaders, organizational partners, and government officials to address recent concern and confusion about remarks made by CAIR's National Executive Director at a conference on Palestinian human rights on Nov. 24, 2023.

As the National Board of CAIR, we want to be very clear about our organization's stance: we oppose all forms of bigoted hate, including antisemitism, and we oppose all forms of unjust violence against any community, including the Jewish community. This has been our [clear and consistent position in the 30 years](#) since our founding. That's why we [repeatedly](#) and [unequivocally](#) condemned the Oct. 7th attacks on Israeli civilians, and why we reaffirm our condemnation of that violence today without reservation.

CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad also has a long record of opposing bigotry and violence. In fact, his condemnations of terrorism once made him a target of ISIS. He also began his recent remarks at the Palestinian rights conference [by explicitly condemning](#) the scourge of antisemitism.

At the same time, Mr. Awad recognizes and agrees that some of the other remarks he made at that conference should have been explained and expressed more clearly. When anti-Muslim groups and far-right media outlets used the ambiguity in Mr. Awad's remarks to frame his intent in the worst way possible, he [released a statement clarifying his remarks](#) and reiterating his alignment with CAIR's longstanding positions.

It is important for CAIR leaders and all human rights advocates to be clear and precise in our advocacy, especially as bad-faith actors try to single out, smear and silence Americans who speak up for Palestinian human rights. CAIR remains committed to consistently—and clearly—speaking out against all forms of bigotry and injustice. We are confident that all CAIR leaders and staff members will do so as we continue to oppose U.S. support for the Israeli government's human rights abuses in Gaza.

We thank those community partners and elected officials who have addressed this issue with us in good faith over the past two weeks. We also thank the over 160 national, state, and local Muslim American civil society organizations and houses of worship that have issued a statement in solidarity with us.

Our national board is available to answer questions or address outstanding concerns about this matter.

Sincerely,

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