

COMMENTARY ON THE PANEL PRESENTATIONS

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The state of Israel seems to want the land, but it doesn't want the people. This is a theme that our panelists have explored. The politics of exclusion is asserted by some as a necessity for the Jewish population worldwide; we at the *USA-Palestine Mental Health Network* respect as human beings those who defend this idea, but we cannot respect the idea itself.

The politics of exclusion, we would maintain, has generated a historical arc embracing 70 years of human rights violations. Relevant to us here today is the application of the politics of exclusion to scholarly and professional life.

We have in the Riverside Room of this hotel a liberated zone, where all are welcome to speak their minds. But a state which maintains checkpoints controlling the daily movement of Palestinian professionals and which deports international academics at the airport cannot be the platform for a free exchange of ideas. Many of us present have already been interrogated at Israeli checkpoints and detained at the airport, and many more, on this panel and in this audience, would be vulnerable to these violations through making an attempt to travel to an *International Association of Relational Psychoanalysts and Psychotherapists* conference in Israel.

We the excluded therefore respectfully invite conversation on this issue—an issue deeply symbolic of the exclusion of those who cannot be with us today.

Thank you.