

# BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

Today, the busiest shopping day of the year, we ask you to take a moment from "business as usual" to consider those places in the world where suffering and fear rather than the joys of the holidays dominate the lives of mothers and children and families.

As BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK, we focus on one of those places, standing in solidarity with Women in Black in Israel who have held vigils since 1988 to protest the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem and to mourn the Israeli and Palestinian lives that have been lost.

## Support The Geneva Accord, A New Israeli/Palestinian Peace Initiative

We vigil today to support the spirit of the Geneva Accord, a proposed comprehensive solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict recently drafted by moderate Palestinian and Israeli leaders, and being committed to by them this Monday, December 1st in Geneva, Switzerland. Former president, Jimmy Carter has also urged support for this initiative. Negotiated over the past two years, this agreement demonstrates that there truly are partners for peace on both sides. We encourage all U.S. taxpayers to join us in urging the U.S. government to visibly support the implementation of this initiative. Although it is not perfect, we believe it is the best and most just agreement to date.

The Geneva Accord, as this initiative will be known, calls for full recognition between Israel and a new Palestinian state and for both states to acknowledge each other as the rightful homelands of their respective peoples. (This would be the first time since the founding of the state of Israel for such acknowledgement to occur.) The agreement also addresses the following critical issues:

- Israel withdrawing to the 1967 borders, ending the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.
- The future of Jerusalem and its holy places.
- The Palestinian refugees.

To read the full Geneva Accord please check the web at:  
<http://americantaskforce.org/geneva.htm>

Most Israelis and Palestinians want to see a peaceful resolution of this conflict, a conflict that has cost the lives of 900 Israelis and 2700 Palestinians in the last three years alone. A draft agreement is being distributed to every Israeli household, and to date 40% of Israelis support it. Where made public, Palestinian reactions have been mixed. We believe, however, that this agreement offers hope and can re-energize the movements for a just peace on both sides.

We also vigil today to protest the U.S. occupation of Iraq, which has inflamed the already volatile situation in the Middle East. We urge our government to engage the United Nations as a peacekeeping presence in Iraq, with the ultimate goal of returning self-determination to the Iraqi people themselves.

Bay Area Women in Black stand with Women in Black around the world against war, militarism and violence. We stand with the Palestinian-Arab and Jewish citizens of Women in Black in Israel who insist: **"We refuse to be enemies."**

- We call for Israeli and Palestinian women to be fully represented in all negotiations leading toward a peace settlement.
- We stand with the Jewish people from whose sacred texts come the words, **"Choose Life, that you and your children may live."**
- We stand for an end to the Israeli occupation and for the evacuation of the Jewish settlements on Palestinian land.
- We stand in support of those people in Israel and Palestine who realize that their well being and self-interest are mutually inter-dependent.

Please join Bay Area Women in Black in calling or writing the United States government today and asking them to urge the Israeli government to sign on to the Geneva Accord.

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Fax: 202-456-6218 (Office of Public Liaison)  
White House Comment Line: 202-456-1111

Secretary of State Colin Powell  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520  
Fax: 202-261-8577  
State Dept. Comment Line: 202-647-6575

**Please visit our new website at [www.bayareawomeninblack.org](http://www.bayareawomeninblack.org)**