

May 28, 2021

Dear Raleigh City Council:

As President of the Raleigh Cary Jewish Federation and Chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council, we are writing today to make you aware of a petition entitled “End Israel Police Exchanges with the Raleigh Police Department”.¹ This petition has factual errors and fundamentally misrepresents international police exchanges that are sponsored by a wide variety of organizations, including the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Jewish Institute for National Security of American (JINSA), and the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE). The petition states that U.S. law enforcement agencies travel to Israel each year to learn and train in Israeli military practices. This is simply not true. These exchanges are police-to-police not police to military.

The following are the objectives of each program:

ADL:

- The ADL sponsors an international exchange between U.S. law enforcement and their counterparts in Israel, sharing best practices and their strategies to combat threats to public safety, including drug trafficking, violent extremists, and counterterrorism. The seminar in Israel consists of briefings and presentations and site visits which allow participants to meet their counterparts in the Israel National Police. Participants also meet with Palestinian law enforcement leaders and over the course of their visit hear a variety of perspectives on contemporary issues related to security.

JINSA

- The JINSA Homeland Security Program (HSP) forges a best practice exchange between U.S. law enforcement community and experts in Israeli counterterrorism. HSP was founded in the wake of 9/11 and accomplishes their goal by bringing groups of active senior American law enforcement officers together in Israel including representatives from the FBI, DEA, and other Federal agencies as well as various police chiefs, sheriffs, and State Homeland Security directors.

¹ <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/end-israeli-police-exchanges-with-the-raleigh-police-department/>



The Jewish Federation
OF RALEIGH-CARY

GILEE

- The mission of GILEE (housed at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies) is to enhance law enforcement executive development and international cooperation for the provision of better law enforcement services and public safety through the protection of civil rights. The goal is to provide peer-to-peer professional training through the introduction of best practices in order to enhance capabilities to better deal with threats to public safety and improve security.

It's important to note that the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) recognizes the importance of exchanging best practices:

“For decades, many of our members have participated in these valuable exchanges to ensure that law enforcement leaders are prepared to address current and emerging issues facing law enforcement and enable them to provide the best police services available to the community they serve.”

The petition suggests that these programs help the police terrorize black and brown communities here in the U.S. This is simply a malicious lie. Israel's police rules of engagement (ROE) are exactly the opposite; they aim to minimize danger to life. American law enforcement is based on the principle of home rule and features 18,000 distinct law enforcement agencies at the local, state and federal levels. Israel has one national police force with policies that apply to all officers on the force. The Israel Police does NOT train American law enforcement leaders to harm minorities. On the contrary, the ROE explicitly states that “The use of force by a police officer in the performance of his duties, unnecessarily or in excess of what is required, is prohibited,” and “The use of firearms for the purpose of fulfilling a function shall be done as a last resort, with the appropriate degree of caution, and only in circumstances where there is a reasonable relationship between the degree of danger arising from the use of the weapon and the result sought to prevent - all in accordance with this ordinance.”





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This petition wants to misrepresent successful police exchange programs that have benefitted participants for decades. It inaccurately presents the facts, to serve a political agenda. While we are strong supporters of the state of Israel, we recognize that there can be honest debate on certain policies of the government. Differences in policy are legitimate, but efforts like this petition are not intended to discuss policy. To suggest that programs of international police exchange are really a way to target American minorities is in fact an attempt by the groups behind the petition to promote division and are antisemitic. This petition is not unique to the city of Raleigh and has been rejected by virtually all communities when there was a full understanding of the subject matter.² It is promoted by groups who largely support Boycott, Sanctions and Divestment (BDS) which attempts to delegitimize and destroy the state of Israel.

As we're sure you are aware, Wake County benefits from a wide variety of Israeli businesses and start-ups that add to the economic vibrancy and the diversity of our community. Petitions like this have no place in our community as we try to achieve, as the City Council has articulated, "One Raleigh." This petition is only intended to divide and as often happens with petitions that quickly appear with little public notice, it is important to shine a light on their misrepresentations and inaccuracies.

We hope this letter will encourage you to reject the petition if/when submitted to you. Certainly, this should not be an issue for which there is a rush to judgment.

Sincerely,

Jamie Eliahu

Judah Segal

Jamie Eliahu
President

Judah Segal
Chair, Jewish Community Relations Council

² See statement by Atlanta' Mayor Kassim Reed: <https://www.algemeiner.com/2016/07/19/atlanta-mayor-flatly-rejects-demand-from-local-black-lives-matter-group-to-cut-ties-with-apartheid-israel/>

