



---

**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS:  
ISLAMOPHOBIA:  
A SENTENCE FROM THE BRIEF OF JASMIN ZINE**

*Prepared by:* David Matas and Sarah Teich June  
18, 2024

---

Jasmin Zine, in her [brief](#) to the Committee wrote:

“Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strategically dehumanized Palestinians using racist colonial tropes by referring to Israel's deadly onslaught as ‘a war between forces of light and forces of darkness, between humanity and animalism.’”

This one sentence contains a myriad of problems. First, the quote of Netanyahu is taken out of context. Jasmin Zine indicates that the quote refers to Palestinians when the context shows that this was not the case. The Netanyahu quote comes from a [newspaper article](#). The newspaper article in which the quote appears does not refer to Palestine or Palestinians even once. The article and the quote refer alternatively to Hamas and to terror groups.

The headline to the article is “Netanyahu to Knesset: Fight with ‘Nazi’ Hamas is war between light and darkness”. The article states “Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says that Israel’s ongoing war against terror groups in the Gaza Strip is an existential battle against the forces of darkness.” The article states “‘We will win, because our existence here is at stake,’ he says, likening Hamas to Nazi Germany and calling the conflict ‘a war between forces of light and forces of darkness, between humanity and animalism.’”

Netanyahu did not equate Hamas or terror groups with Palestinians. It is Jasmin Zine who does so. Equating Hamas or terror groups with Palestinians is a form of racism. Zine, later in her brief, decries “linking support of Palestinians and Muslims as support for Hamas”. Linking opposition to Hamas as opposition to Palestinians is another form of the same fault, one that Zine herself commits.

Jasmin Zine, of course, asserts this slanderous equation – opposition to Hamas means opposition to Palestinians – in order to attribute it to Netanyahu. Yet, misrepresenting what Netanyahu says in order to put racism in his mouth is not just inaccurate; it is itself a form of racism against Palestinians, a form which she both criticizes and commits.

Second, Jasmin Zine refers to Netanyahu as using “racist colonial tropes”. It is not racist to characterize terror groups in general nor Hamas in particular in critical terms since neither terror groups nor Hamas are a race or races. Nor can they reasonably be perceived as a race or races.

As well, Israel is not a colonial power. Colonialism is the establishment of colonies sent from the metropolis by an imperial state. There is no Jewish imperial state which has sent colonies to Israel or the Palestinian territories in the West Bank of the Jordan River, or Gaza.

Colonialism consists of colonies which come from outside the region. The majority of Jewish Israelis either are those, or descendants of those, who were living in Israel before the establishment of the State or those who came from the region or are the immediate descendants of Jews who came from the region – Jews expelled from Arab countries after the creation of the State of Israel and because of the creation of the State.

Colonialism consists of colonies which historically have had little or no association with the region prior to the colonization. Yet, Jews are indigenous to Israel, having lived in Israel since centuries before the advent of Islam. Jews have lived in Israel continuously from pre-historic times to the present. Israel is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people.

Israel is the expression of the right to self-determination of the Jewish people. Threatening the existence of Israel, and Hamas takes pride in asserting that it does just that, is, as Netanyahu is quoted as saying, “existential”. The suggestion of Jasmin Zine to the contrary, by the use of the word “colonial”, is untenable.

One sentence does not a whole brief make. Nonetheless, the Committee would perform a useful task by distancing themselves from those components of the Zine brief, including the sentence addressed here, which are not properly sourced and do not contribute to combatting Islamophobia.