



PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

KAMEL HAWWASH

The 1st of July has come and gone without an announcement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to trigger further annexation of illegally occupied Palestinian land. Working with our partners, PSC played its part in the worldwide effort to stop the Israeli Government's latest annexation plans through pressure on our elected representatives, demonstrating the potent and powerful role of lobbying.

We must now maintain this support of the Palestinian people as they analyse the impact of the deal brokered by the American Administration between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, which claimed it resulted in the 'postponement' of annexation. Netanyahu however has quickly committed to continuing with his annexation plans, claiming that this normalisation of relations will not be predicated on delivering Palestinian rights but rather on "peace for peace." Our message to him is that peace comes through justice, not dictates and we at PSC will continue our work supporting Palestinians until they realise their rights to freedom, justice and equality.

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NEWS ON PALESTINE:

THE OCCUPATION HAS LEFT PALESTINIANS UNABLE TO CONTROL THE VIRUS

BY JALAL ABUKHATER

This is an extended extract of an opinion piece originally published in Al Jazeera English.

[You can read the full version here](#)



COVID-19 has spread, uncontrolled, in heavily populated Palestinian cities, towns, and overcrowded refugee camps. The Palestinian Authority's efforts in stemming the spread of the coronavirus was particularly difficult in Palestine due to Israel's military occupation and the resulting apartheid and economic devastation.

The fractured administrative structure of the occupied West Bank has made it impossible for the Palestinian leadership to impose effective preventive measures.

The situation in the city of Hebron, the area hardest hit by the second wave of infections, provides proof of the occupation's devastating effect on the PA's ability to contain the virus. The 1997 Hebron Protocol signed between Israel and the PA divided the city into two areas: H1 and H2. The H1 is controlled by the PA, but H2 is under Israeli military control.

During the first wave of infections, the PA imposed a strict lockdown in H1, however, Israeli authorities did not follow the same strategy in H2. Thus, while some shops and venues were forcefully shut down, others, sometimes located on the opposite side of the same street, were allowed to continue with business as usual. This caused a lot of confusion and frustration for the residents of the city and exacerbated the spread of the virus.

Furthermore, on July 21, at a time when the Palestinian Ministry of Health recorded daily increases averaging 400 cases across the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem, with 80 percent of active cases being recorded in Hebron, the Israeli authorities demolished a COVID-19 quarantine and testing centre in the city.

Today, Hebron alone accounts for half of the active Covid-19 cases recorded in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. Hebron also accounts for over 70% of the total death toll recorded by the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

Palestinians in the occupied territories are aware that their capabilities in the health sector are pale in comparison with those of more developed nations who had been devastated by the pandemic. This is why they fear the worst could be still to come. They are angry with the PA for failing to protect them from this deadly virus, but they are also aware that the Israeli occupation is making it almost impossible for the Palestinian leaders to manage the situation.

Jalal Abukhater, a Jerusalemite, holds an MA in International Relations and Politics from the University of Dundee.

SPOTLIGHT ON...OUR STUDENT WORK



Our research has uncovered UK universities collectively invest over £450,000,000 in companies complicit in Israel's violations of Palestinian human rights. This includes companies supplying the Israeli military with weapons and technology, and companies listed in the UN database of businesses active in Israel's illegal Jewish-only settlements on stolen Palestinian land.

While those who make decisions in our institutions may have little formal accountability, there is a way to fight back.

Across the UK students, supported by PSC, have been building strong campaigns to get their universities to divest from all complicit companies. By bringing together powerful coalitions they've been fighting for justice, and winning.

Early this month, campaigners found that the University of Manchester divested millions from a raft of companies complicit in Israel's violations of international law and Palestinian human rights, including Caterpillar, Cemex and Booking.com.

Inspiring campaigners brought together a powerful coalition on campus, joining in multiple protests and events to demand divestment from companies complicit in human rights abuses. This victory was the second major Israeli apartheid divestment win in the UK, after the University of Leeds sold its shares in 3 complicit companies targeted by student activists.

But there's still a long-way to go. As our research has demonstrated, the complicit investments of most institutions remain, contributing to the oppression of the Palestinian people. Whatever university life looks like come September, our campaigning can't stop.

To this end, the PSC Youth and Student Committee is busy strategising for the upcoming year. Plans include a series of webinar-style events to replace the usual in-person student conference, which will bring together university activists from across the world to mutually learn and strengthen student campaigning. The YSC is also looking to increase their digital presence, ensuring our key messages reach students, even if they're not being taught on campus.

While the upcoming year will have its challenges, it's also an opportunity. The current financial crisis has shown that the model of higher education which relies on extortionate fees, high accommodation charges, the exploitation of precarious academics, and human rights abusing investments can't continue. A coalition of all parts of the university community can bring justice.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

READ ABOUT HIGHLIGHTS FROM SOME OF OUR CORE CAMPAIGNS OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS!

LGPS DIVEST

In April 2020 we defeated the UK government in the Supreme Court, overturning regulations that prohibited local government pension scheme funds from taking ethical investment decisions, including removing investments from companies complicit in Israel's violations of international law and Palestinian human rights.

Soon after, we released ground breaking research, detailing the complicit investment of 49 LGPS funds. The funds have over £3.5bn of investments in companies that aid Israel's violations of international law. This includes companies on the United Nations Human Rights Office's blacklist of companies active in illegal Israeli settlements, built on stolen Palestinian land.

Since then, the campaign targeting local authority pension fund complicity has kick-started. Hundreds of pension holders have written to the chair of their local pension fund committee, demanding they remove complicit investments.

Up and down the country, our branches, working in coalition with scheme members and their representative trade unions, are co-ordinating working groups to take forward the campaign in their local area. They'll be building support among scheme members to put pressure on the fund to remove all complicit investments.

We won't rest till they divest!

49

local government pension funds have known direct complicit investments

£3,582,374,282

known complicit investment for all funds

STOP THE JNF UK

Hundreds have gathered on Zoom to hear expert speakers and activists discuss the multifaceted ways in which the Jewish National Fund is complicit in the ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people, and why its UK partner is unfit to hold charitable status.

In addition, Stop the JNF has been part of the Sumarin Coalition, which has led the campaign to stop the eviction of the Sumarin family of Silwan, East Jerusalem, who have faced a decades-long attempt by the KKL-JNF to drive them out of their family home. Despite an Israeli court rubberstamping their eviction, their appeal will be heard by the Supreme Court, meaning the eviction has been delayed until November.

In this country, the Stop the JNF campaign has organised a twitter storm and co-ordinated 69 MPs signing Early Day Motion 527, condemning the eviction, and calling on the Charity Commission to review the charitable status of JNF UK.



Land Theft

NOT

Charity!

Stop JNF UK

BOYCOTT PUMA

After months of campaigning, Luton Town FC have given PUMA the boot, ending their kit supply contract with the company. The victory comes after over 5,000 human rights supporters wrote to the club to raise their concerns, and the local Luton PSC undertook months of constructive engagement and dialogue with the club.



Following the victory we must ramp up the pressure on the remaining UK clubs with contracts with PUMA. You can write to them to demand they drop PUMA [here](#).

Our activists have also been busy urging PUMA brand ambassador and model Cara Delevigne to join worldwide calls on PUMA to end its support for Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land. As she released a special collection with PUMA for pride month thousands of you tweeted at her to remind her that there is no pride in the denial of the fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people.

In addition, we've been joining supporters from across the globe to urge W Series, the women's racing series, to drop PUMA as a sponsor. This follows The Speed Sisters, a Palestinian all-women racing team writing to W Series to explain that Israel's illegal settlements are forcing Palestinians from their land. [Take a moment to write to W Series drivers now.](#)

STOP ARMING ISRAEL

Over 30 socially distanced protests are set to take place across the UK tomorrow on Saturday 22nd August, 6 years after the cessation of Israel's aerial bombardment and ground invasion of Gaza, demanding an end to UK complicity in Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people.

The protests will point to the arms export licenses with millions the government has granted to firms exported weapons and military technology to Israel. We are demanding an immediate two-way arms embargo on Israel, with thousands expected to write to their MPs to demand they raise the issue in Parliament.

But UK complicity runs deeper than the government, and so do our demands. Many of the protests will take place outside HSBC, which provides loans and financial services worth millions to companies arming Israel, including BAE Systems and Raytheon. Both of these companies supplied components used in weaponry deployed by Israel in 2014.

Students and pension holders will also use the day to demand their institutions divest from companies arming Israel. Our research has uncovered that local authority pension funds and universities hold swathes of investments in companies complicit in Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people.



PALESTINE ON A PLATE: COOKALONG FUNDRAISER



PSC are teaming up with Zaytoun for this cook-along fundraiser with talented Palestinian chef Joudie Kalla of Palestine on a Plate. All proceeds go towards PSC's vital campaigning work.

[Click here to sign up!](#)

DONATE TO PSC

We could not have defeated the UK Government's latest crackdown on BDS in the Supreme Court without your help. Now the fight continues.

Will you support us in standing by the Palestinian people, and donate to PSC today? bit.ly/PSCdonate2020



PSC ONLINE SHOP

Buy Keffiyahs, t-shirts, accessories and more Palestine-related products (including our brand new tote bags) on our online shop! All money raised goes towards funding our crucial campaigns for Palestinian rights.

Shop now: shop.palestinecampaign.org

