



PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

KAMEL HAWWASH

The new Israeli Government has continued the path of oppression, illegal measures and attempts to silence critics of Israel, which both BT'selem and Human Rights Watch concluded is an apartheid state. Western Governments have not heeded the call to recognise this reality and to move to bringing Israel to account for its crimes.

The residents of Sheikh Jarrah withstood the pressure to accept an unjust and immoral offer from Israeli Courts to accept that a US settler organisation owns their land and that they could remain as protected tenants for a period. Their principled stance and bravery could see them forcibly evicted from their homes. Other Palestinians continue to face evictions and home demolitions both in other parts of Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank.

Israeli's prime minister has rejected calls for resumption of talks with the Palestinians, a meeting with Mahmoud Abbas or a Palestinian state. He is currently engaged in a battle of wills with US President Biden as he refuses the American decision to re-open the American Consulate in East Jerusalem.

The world was outraged when the Israeli Defence Minister labelled six Palestinian human rights NGO's 'terrorists'. However, the world must do more to force Israel to reverse this dangerous and unfounded designation.

We in the Palestine Solidarity Campaign stand with the 6 organisations. In addition, we stand with the imprisoned hunger strikers as they fight for their freedom. The Palestinian people need our solidarity more than ever.

IN THIS ISSUE

Voice from Palestine
#StandWithThe6 • P.2

Spotlight on: Opposing Arms
Fairs • P.3-4

Students • P.5

Campaign highlights • P.6 & 7

Why Palestine is a Climate
Justice Issue • P.8

Bernard's Book Club! • P.9

Resources • P.10

VOICE FROM PALESTINE: #STANDWITHTHE6 AGAINST THE CRIMINALISATION OF OUR FREEDOM STRUGGLE

BY MILENA & RANA

As staff members at Addameer, a Palestinian NGO providing direct support to Palestinian political prisoners, we are used to attacks on our organisation. Like other civic institutions under military occupation, Addameer has endured military raids on our offices, arrest of our staff and board members, and harassment. But nothing could have prepared us for what happened in October, when our workplace, along with five other leading Palestinian human rights organisations, were designated as “terrorist” groups by the Israeli government. This blanket attack effectively outlaws our work; puts us at risk of arbitrary arrest and prosecution and our organisations at risk of closure or defunding.

On a daily basis, we at Addameer give free legal support to Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, helping families navigate a legal system that was built to facilitate land grabs. We advocate for the rights of children imprisoned by the occupation, we take testimony from prisoners about the torture and inhumane conditions they face, and we visit hunger strikers in prison hospital beds, protesting their arbitrary detention. Over the years, we have faced off against Israel’s prosecution in unjust military courts to defend thousands of our people: parliamentarians, students, children, journalists, feminists, human rights defenders, academics and others.

This is the vital work that Israel is trying to end. As Palestinians we are not surprised that Israel is trying to silence us with the claim of “terrorism.” This red herring, with decades of anti-Arab racism behind it, is used against us every time we try to stand up for our rights under Israel’s prolonged military occupation, entrenched apartheid system and ongoing settler-colonialism.

Our glimmer of hope is the support we received from our own people, who immediately stood with us, knowing that this attack is a part of the oppression we all face. We also were relieved to see international human rights groups condemn this designation, and proud to receive messages of support from around the globe, including from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in the UK and its trade union partners who committed to standing firm in support for us and for the whole Palestinian people.

Our immediate call is for people of conscience around the world to press their governments and institutions to publicly reject this designation, and to demand that Israel revoke it. But we know also that this is one important battle in our longer struggle: against apartheid and colonialism, and for freedom and self-determination. We need international solidarity in this struggle, and we hope that we can continue to count on you.

SPOTLIGHT ON: OPPOSING ARMS FAIRS



The UK Government's complicity in supporting the arms trade with Israel doesn't end with the licensing of arms – it also facilitates arms fairs in towns and cities across the UK, where military delegations from repressive states like Israel hobnob with companies producing deadly weaponry.

These events all take place with the active involvement of the UK Defence and Security Exports wing of the Department for International Trade, who invite international delegations to the heinous events.

The events include DSEI, the world's largest arms fair, which took place at the Excel Centre, in Newham, last September.

PSC is part of Stop the Arms Fair (STAF), a coalition of campaigning organisations who work to oppose the fair. As a partner in STAF, we co-hosted two events as part of the resistance to DSEI in September.

On the eve of DSEI 2021, we held a community demonstration through Newham, under the banner 'Stop DSEI – Stop Arming Israel.' Over 300 residents of East London took part, sweeping through the streets of Newham, supported by shopkeepers and local residents. This was the first community demonstration through Newham held against DSEI.

We also took Palestinian demands direct to the fair, by hosting a rally with solely Palestinian speakers at the gates of the Excel Centre. Palestinian poets, performers and speakers spoke of the impact of Israeli apartheid, and why DSEI must be driven out of London.

But arms fair's don't just happen in London! For the last two years, PSC has been supporting Liverpool Against the Arms Fair in co-ordinating the local campaign against the AOC Europe 2021 arms fair, which took place in October 2021, at a venue owned by Liverpool City Council.



Although the fair took place, local campaigners built an inspiring local coalition, organising a thousands strong local demonstration on 11th September, addressed, among others, by PSC Chair Kamel Hawwash, and PSC patron Jeremy Corbyn.

Alongside demonstrations, the campaign caused a financial cost to the council-owned venue. In solidarity with the campaigners, trade unions including UNITE, the NEU, and NUS committed not to use the venue again, unless the arms fair was given the boot.

The campaign has had an impact. While the organisers of the fair, the Association of Old Crows, initially showed a repeat of the fair in Liverpool in 2022 on their website, they have now announced next year's event as taking place in Montpellier, France.

The campaign hasn't stopped there. The local campaign is continuing to put pressure on Liverpool City Council, including Mayor Joanne Anderson, to implement adequate measures to ensure no such arms fair ever takes place again.

Supporting the local campaign in Liverpool has demonstrated that continued, years-long campaigning can have an impact. This is lesson we must take in our work to stop DSEI 2023. Alongside opposing arms fairs in London and Liverpool, PSC branches have also been active in supporting local anti-arms fair campaigns. In November, Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester PSC branches joined Three Counties CAAT and other local groups in taking action to oppose the 3CDSE arms fair in Malvern.



STUDENTS

**STUDENT
DAY OF
ACTION FOR
PALESTINE**

MONDAY 29TH NOVEMBER



**#ApartheidOffCampus
#DivestForPalestine**



Last month, the far-right Israeli ambassador Tzipi Hotovely came to speak at the London School of Economics. Previously Israel's minister in charge of illegal settlements in the West Bank, Hotovely has a record of virulent anti-Palestinian racism, denying the Nakba, and publicly opposing personal relationships between Jews and Palestinians.

Students weren't going to let her spout her racist views unopposed. In a massive display of solidarity with the Palestinian people, hundreds gathered on campus to oppose her, and to speak out against Israeli apartheid.

The students have faced attacks in the press and by politicians, seeking to delegitimise a protest that was loud, appropriately angry - but non-violent. But students at LSE, and across the UK, weren't going to be daunted by the vicious attacks that sought to prevent them bringing the facts of Palestinian dispossession and oppression into the public domain.

Hundreds gathered again in the week following Hotovely's visit, joining an LSE wide solidarity assembly, standing together for the right to protest, and for justice for Palestine. Then, on Monday 29th November, students across the UK joined a student day of action for Palestine, called by PSCs Youth and Student Committee.

The day drew attention to Israel's continued attacks on Palestinian human rights defenders, including students. Since May, Israel has conducted mass arrest raids across historic Palestine, including on university campuses.

At Birzeit University, in the West Bank, hundreds of student activists have been arrested by Israeli forces. The university reported last month that "More than 70 Birzeit University students are currently detained in Israeli military prisons — some without charge — where they are assaulted, tortured, and deprived of the most basic human rights."

On this day of action, students at dozens of campuses across the UK stood together, to demand Universities respond to Israel's repression, by ending their complicity in Israeli apartheid. This includes through divesting the over £450m they hold in companies aiding Israel's oppression, such as companies supplying weapons and military technology to the Israeli state, and companies active in Israel's illegal settlement economy.

The day of action demonstrated that, despite facing challenges, students in the UK won't stop standing in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality.



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

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

LGPS DIVEST

The campaign continues, co-ordinated by PSC and our Trade Union partners, to get the Local Government Pension Scheme to end its complicity in Israeli apartheid.

Local campaigns are continuing to have an impact, including on pooled funds. For example, London Combined Investment Vehicle (CIV) have committed to ensure their “funds are not complicit in any violations of human rights or international law anywhere in the world” following lobbying.

On December 4th, campaigners will take action across the UK, lobbying local pension committees, asking them to implement adequate policies to remove investment in complicit companies. We'll be contacting you with actions and other updates you can take to support scheme members and their allies in taking action!

Following the success of our Summer Lobby of Parliament - where over 1000 people registered and secured meetings with over 50 MPs - we are now gearing up for the Winter Lobby Day on the 7th December. Building upon the fantastic motion passed at Labour Party conference in September, we are continuing to mainstream the understanding of Israel as an apartheid regime.



Our priority in Parliament is pushing for a complete ban on trade with illegal settlements, and ending the UK-Israel arms trade. Our regular e-actions, parliamentary briefings, and face-to-face meetings all help keep Palestine on the agenda of Parliament.

Working with the office of Richard Burgon MP, PSC helped in tabling the UK-Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill - which is now supported by over 50 MPs. Our lobbying has also been critical in responding to Israel's outrageous criminalisation of six highly respected Palestinian human rights organisations in the last month.

ACTION ALERT 



WRITE TO YOUR COUNCILLORS

ASKING THEM TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE LGPS' INVESTMENT IN COMPlicit IN ISRAEL'S BREACHES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS!

PSC IN PARLIAMENT

BOYCOTT PUMA

Pressure for PUMA to drop its sponsorship of the Israel Football Association (IFA) is growing. The international campaign got a significant boost this Autumn with the arrival and support from SumOfUs, the global advocacy organisation, and launch of a new petition.

Within weeks, we had helped collect over 120,000 signatures calling on Puma to end its complicity with Israeli apartheid. PSC activists delivered this petition to PUMA's UK headquarters, as partners around the world simultaneously staged similar hand-ins.



This builds on the message sent to PUMA from over 200 Palestinian sports teams. We know PUMA is feeling the heat over its sponsorship of the IFA, which includes football teams in illegal Israeli settlements on land stolen from Palestinians.

PSC continues to lead the #BoycottPUMA campaign in the UK, including with a day of action in September. Hundreds joined a protest outside PUMA's flagship store in London, and branches across the country led demonstrations near sports stores selling PUMA merchandise.

SHRINKING SPACE

Over the past few months, we have been working hard to push back on attempts to shrink our space to campaign for justice for Palestinians. We have recruited a new member of staff to coordinate this work. One particular highlight was the launch of our campaign website, which acts as a resource centre for people campaigning against the adoption of the IHRA definition within their education establishments or within local councils. Hundreds attended our launch event for it and the campaign toolkits featured on the website are being utilised in campaigns at universities across the country.

We've also supported a number of partner organisations in campaigns and advocacy around the silencing of professors and the right to protest on campus against Israel's apartheid actions. Key to our work on shrinking space is building our networks at universities across the country and we'd encourage you to contact us if you can help.



[VISIT NO IHRA WEBSITE](#)

WHY PALESTINE IS A CLIMATE JUSTICE ISSUE

Last month, we mobilised across the UK to speak out against Israel's environmental violence as part of actions targeting COP26. This excerpt from Abeer Butmeh's 2019 article explains the intersection between climate justice and Palestine.



In my work coordinating Palestinian environmental organisations, I witness daily that for Palestinians, climate change is not just a natural phenomenon, but a political one. Israel's regime of occupation and apartheid, which denies us the right to manage our land and resources, exacerbates the climate crisis Palestinians face, making us more vulnerable to climate-related events.

The most extreme example is the Gaza Strip, where two million Palestinians live in an open-air prison under Israeli occupation and siege. The UN projected that Gaza will be unlivable by 2020. Many say it already is.

Gaza's acute shortage of potable water has been worsened, not only by climate change but also by Israel's restrictions on the entry of materials and fuel needed for wastewater treatment. As a result, sewage has infiltrated Gaza's aquifer and is flowing untreated into Gaza's coastal waters, damaging marine life and health. Ninety-seven percent of Gaza's scarce water is now unfit for human consumption and contaminated water causes 26 percent of all illnesses in Gaza, and is a leading cause of child deaths.

[...] In the occupied West Bank, Israel systematically steals and destroys Palestinian land and water. Israel controls more than 60 percent of West Bank land, where 640,000 Israelis now live in illegal settlements. Israeli settlers consume six times as much water as the West Bank's 2.9 million Palestinian residents. Israel has also uprooted 800,000 olive trees since 1967. [Read the full article here.](#)

TIS' THE SEASON

TO GIVE HOPE

DONATE TO PSC TODAY!



All we want for Christmas is a free Palestine.

But we need to fight for it. Will you join us?

A small donation can go a long way this festive season. We have accomplished so much this year, but we can do much more.

[DONATE](#)



BERNARD'S BOOK CLUB!



Many people have asked for the names of books on Palestine that they should look at. The intention here is to give a brief introduction to books on and about Palestine that may interest you. I will take a look at history, poetry and literature more generally that might be of interest. Please also send in your suggestions of books you think we should take a look at - Bernard Regan

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Voices of the Nakba: A Living History of Palestine. Edited by Diana Allan. (Pluto Press 2021)

For anyone wanting to buy a good present– this new book is an excellent choice.

“History is written by the victors” – this has been repeated so often it has become a cliché – sadly of course it contains a grain of truth. However this book breaks that mould in a unique way. To say it is the voice of the victims would be doing it a disservice. More accurately it is the voice of resistance – of those who fought and are fighting against injustice. It is testimony to the resilience of the many Palestinians who have been striving for independence and self-determination over the decades.

The title might lead you to think this book is about 1948 but in fact it is about much more than that, both in a chronological and a historical sense covering the revolts of the 1920s and the 1930s as well as the events of 1948. Importantly it is the authentic voice of participants in struggles whose testimonies bring the events of the time to life through the personal recollections of women and men who experienced those days.

The work is the result of a collaboration between a number of dedicated historians committed to recording the experiences and lived realities of generations of Palestinians who were forced into exile by the expansionist colonial settler state chaperoned by the British. Diana Allan and Mahmoud Zeidan who, together with other colleagues, established the Nakba Archive in Lebanon in 2002 recorded over 650 interviews with first generation Palestinian refugees.

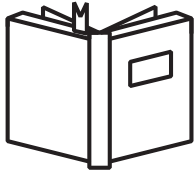
In the book we can read some of these accounts recalling their efforts to establish a Palestinian state and the repression they met. Almost everything the Israeli Defence Force does today, they learnt from the British – collective punishments, reprisals, human shields, physical brutality. This is unsurprising however since during the 1936 Palestinian General Strike sections of the Haganah (forerunner of the IDF) worked with the British military in suppressing the revolution that was unfolding.

Through the personal accounts, the book reveals the sense of a real collective endeavour during the 1936-1939 revolution. In a Chapter called “Songs of Resistance” the reader learns how the uprising was expressed in poetry and song as well as in the acts of resistance that took place. The pre-1948 Palestine comes alive through accounts of the daily lives of the narrators – in the village, the countryside and in the towns and cities.

In a brilliant introduction Diana Allan explains the importance of oral history and how it not only shifts the imbalance created by the dominant narratives but adds a real depth to our understanding of the Nakba. Don't wait – go and buy your copies now!

RESOURCES

Every newsletter, we will be bringing you recommendations for a book, a film and a podcast on Palestine!



Rifqa by **Mohammed El-Kurd** is a searing, incandescent and intimate debut collection rooted in the Palestinian struggle, reflecting on the brutality of conflict and the meaning of freedom, memory and home with powerful, lyrical fire. [Purchase here.](#)



From the Foundation for Middle East Peace, this podcast episode is titled **Not Without Precedent: The History of Israel's Escalating War on Palestinian Solidarity Work**. Listen to FMEP's Lara Friedman in conversation with Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch about Israel's criminalisation of 6 leading Palestinian human rights NGOs, its wider context and the role of the international community in granting Israel impunity that has for years enabled, fueled, and legitimized Israel's attacks on human rights defenders. [Listen here.](#)



During the 1990 World Cup, two young Palestinian boys hunt through their town for Maradona's legs, the last missing sticker needed to complete their world cup album and win a free Atari. Shot in a dusty village in the rolling hills of Palestine, the film keeps the beauty of Palestine in center stage throughout this sweet, gratifying watch peppered with 90s nostalgia.

[Watch Maradona's Legs here.](#)



'TIS THE SEASON: TO CHECK OUT THE PSC SHOP!

Make sure to browse our collection of products, including our Christmas cards, keffiyeh tote bags, keffiyeh scarves, gift cards, 2022 calendar and much more! Get your festive gifts in time for the holiday season!



Shop now:
shop.palestinecampaign.org