



# PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER

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## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

**KAMEL HAWWASH**

I am delighted to be introducing the first ever edition of our quarterly digital newsletter. PSC members will now receive news about our work and Palestine more broadly on a quarterly basis, straight to their email inboxes!

Since taking over as Chair of PSC in January, I have been working with the Executive Committee and the staff to ensure that we support the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom, justice and equality, in their historic homeland. The challenges they face are immense, especially with a Trump Administration that is nakedly biased in favour of Israel and which is working to deny the Palestinians their rights. We must continue to pressure our government to take a more ethical approach to dealing with the Palestinian injustice. It is time its condemnation of Israel's illegal policies were matched with actions against it.

### IN THIS ISSUE

News on Palestine • P.2

Spotlight on...Youth work • P.3

Branch reports • P.4 & 5

Campaign highlights • P.6 & 7

Upcoming events • P.8

# NEWS ON PALESTINE:

## HOW SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND AND DEAL WITH THE "DEAL"?

BY NADIA HIJAB

**US President Donald Trump's so-called Deal of the Century needs to be seen for what it really is: the implementation of Israel's plan to legalize its occupation of and illegal settlement in the occupied Palestinian territory as well as the Golan Heights. How did we get to where we are today? And how do we move forward to a future of freedom and justice?**



Israel almost immediately began to settle the territories it occupied in the 1967 war; **developed plans** to annex much of the West Bank; and extended Israeli law to East Jerusalem (i.e. annexed it), declaring it Israel's "eternal capital" in 1980. And it applied "Israeli law" to the occupied Syrian Golan Heights in 1981. Its goals have been consistent: to make peace with the Arabs and to crush the Palestinian national movement, meanwhile colonizing as much as possible of Palestine and confining Palestinians to ever smaller enclaves (see e.g. **Decades of Displacing Palestinians** and Israel's **Little Known Master Plans** for Jerusalem). The power of the First Intifada (the sustained, peaceful Palestinian uprising of 1987 - 91) was dissipated by the PLO negotiations that led to the Oslo Accords, with the PLO believing it would get a Palestinian state in the occupied territory. However, even Yitzhak Rabin envisaged something **less than a state**, an "entity" for Palestinians, with Israel retaining security control. The Oslo Accords locked the Palestinian economy into Israel's through **the Paris Protocol**, enabling Israel to choke the Palestinian economy at will. Indeed, the peace process was of major economic benefit to Israel, with the Palestinians - and the international community - effectively paying for Israel's occupation. Worse, the Palestinian Authority has been, thanks to programs supported by the US and European Union, locked into **security coordination** with Israel, relieving it of the burden of crushing resistance to its occupation. Thus, Trump's coming to power is a unique opportunity for Israel to once and for all end the conflict on its terms. He and his three envoys - all settlement supporters - had the US recognize Israel as Jerusalem's capital in 2017, move the embassy there in 2018, recognize the Golan Heights as part of Israel in March 2019, and try to end Palestinian refugee rights to return and compensation by ending US funding to UNRWA in 2018. None of this has any validity under international law. Meanwhile Israel has expanded its relations with Arab countries beyond Egypt and Jordan into the Gulf, seeking support to crush Palestinian national aspirations. The farce known as the Manama Workshop being held in Bahrain this week is one more attempt to use money to quash Palestinian rights as has **repeatedly been used** during the so-called peace process since the early 1990s. Despite this bleak future and calls **for surrender** Palestinians still resist a fate that condemns them to permanent submission. So what avenues are open for passionate advocates of justice and human rights for all? First, we should not limit our understanding of the Palestinian people and their cause to the occupied territory: Israel used many of the same tools and tactics in mandate Palestine leading up to 1948, establishing colonies and dispossessing the people. This understanding is vital if we are to achieve freedom, justice and equality for all who live on that land and those who have a right to go home. Secondly, we need to advocate international law, as hollowed out as it seems. Many states still uphold it if only because an unraveling of the system threatens their own security and prosperity. This especially applies to Europe with its tragic history of war and we are well-placed to promote the law's implementation despite Europe's disarray. Third, we need to exchange knowledge across the movements for Palestinian rights in the US and Europe, exchanging tools and tactics to build stronger, intersectional movements that are multi-generational and multi-ethnic. And finally, we need to centre our discourse on the positive uplifting goals that we are for, so as to help push back against the criminalisation of free speech, as I said in **my presentation** to the PSC AGM in January 2018. We are for freedom, and that's why we fight against the occupation; for justice, and that's why we oppose ethnic cleansing and advocate return; and for equality, and that's why we fight against apartheid.

**Nadia Hijab is Board President of the Palestinian Think Tank **Al-Shabaka****

# SPOTLIGHT ON...YOUTH & STUDENT WORK

BY PSC YOUTH & STUDENT COMMITTEE



The PSC Youth & Student Committee was established in 2018 with the purpose of seeking to strengthen and grow organisational engagement with young people and students. In less than a year, a huge amount has been achieved!

## Student work

In Autumn last year the "Apartheid off Campus" campaign was launched, highlighting that many UK universities are complicit in Israel's human rights abuses through financial and institutional links with companies that resource or support the military occupation of Palestine.

The campaign is calling on institutions to end their complicity and divest from companies that prop up occupation and apartheid. In November, there was a first major victory when Leeds University announced it was divesting more than \$1.2 million from three corporations that trade military equipment with Israel. With divestment campaigns continuing to grow, in March we held a joint "Divest for Justice" conference with environmental campaigning organisation People and Planet aimed at equipping student activists with key skills and knowledge to hold their institutions to account and push for change. Then a couple of weeks later in Israeli Apartheid Week, students at over 30 UK universities took coordinated action on their campuses to protest their institutions' complicity in Israel's violations of human rights. Actions included rallies, marches and banner drops, as well as a range of creative actions such as the construction of an "apartheid wall" and the staging of a mock checkpoint. The success of this day demonstrated the strength of student activism for Palestine even in the face of hostility and crackdowns on protest. Looking forward, in Autumn there will be a PSC Student Conference where we will be launching a major database exposing the full extent of UK universities' complicity in Israeli apartheid - watch this space!

## Youth work

PSC's first ever dedicated Youth Conference took place on 22nd June! The event saw dozens of young activists from across the country come together to network, gain key skills and shape the future of major BDS campaigns. The conference was also a starting point for launching PSC Youth Branches which will join in with nationally coordinated campaigns for Palestinian rights (if you are interested in setting up a Youth Branch in your community, please get in touch via [branches@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:branches@palestinecampaign.org)!). Alongside this, back in May PSC held a sold-out gig in support of the campaign to boycott Eurovision 2019. The event was a huge success and attracted large numbers of young people. We intend to build on this by organising further cultural events in support of the campaign for Palestinian rights, in order to maximise youth engagement and enhance the diversity of the organisation. The cultural boycott is an absolutely crucial part of the global BDS movement and we need people of all ages to be involved!

So a lot has been achieved since the Youth & Student Committee was set up. We look forward to building on this success by exploring different ways to increase youth and student engagement and strengthen campaigns on campus and beyond. One aspect of this is looking at how we can better use media as a tool for engagement, and the committee is currently working on a series of podcasts which will highlight key campaigns as well as addressing key issues that affect Palestinian lives on the ground. **Watch this space!**

# BRANCH REPORTS

FIND OUT WHAT PSC BRANCHES ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN UP TO OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS! THIS SECTION WILL FEATURE ONE BRANCH REPORT PER ISSUE FROM OUR 5 BROAD REGIONS: **NORTH, MIDLANDS, WEST & SOUTH-WEST, EAST & SOUTH-EAST, LONDON.**

TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH GO TO THE BRANCHES SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.PALESTINECAMPAIGN.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/BRANCHES/](http://WWW.PALESTINECAMPAIGN.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/BRANCHES/)

## SCOTLAND & NORTH - MANCHESTER

On the 30th March the branch participated in the National Day of Action: Exist Resist Return with a protest outside HSBC in St Anne's Square. Singer Robb Johnson joined the protest **singing a song in solidarity with Gaza "Bring it Down"** outside HSBC.

On April 2nd the tribunal hearing for the right to challenge the Charity Commission's refusal to end the JNF's charitable status took place in Manchester. We had an excellent protest outside the tribunal, as well as a great public meeting with Kholoud al Ajarma, whose family still have the title deeds to their land in Ajjur, land expropriated during the Nakba and now forming part of the JNF-UK funded British Park. On April 25th we had a rally with Greater Manchester Stop The War coalition to mobilize for the national demonstration on 11th May, for which we organised a coach to London. On May 1st we staged a protest against the BBC broadcasting Eurovision from Tel Aviv at the BBC Studio in Media City in Salford. Involving members of local community choirs we sang "Cultural Boycott" in the reception of the studio. On 15th May we had a Nakba day commemoration in Manchester's Piccadilly Gardens in the city centre with a tent encampment. On Friday 14th June we staged a protest at the offices of PUMA in Manchester, followed by a protest outside Sports Direct and HSBC for the #BoycottPuma day of action on 15th June.



## MIDLANDS & CENTRAL - OXFORD

At the end of March we marked the anniversary of the Great March of Return with a vigil for Gaza, with pictures of some demonstrators injured by Israeli snipers, and readings of the names of all those who had died - names handwritten on extremely long scrolls, unfurled while the readings went on. There was a much larger attendance at this action, very publicly visible and we got good reach with our social media postings.



Our April meeting hosted a talk and interesting discussion about Leila Khaled. One of our members spoke at Oxford's May Day celebrations, and May saw our AGM. We hired a coach to the national PSC demonstration on 11th May - though costly this increased numbers, and we were grateful to receive a contribution from Oxford Trades Union Council.

We are aware of the need for recruitment especially of younger people. Partly with this in mind, we are updating our website (with help from 2 younger members!) and are pleased that our social media sites have a lot of interest. We hope to build on this work going forward.

## WALES, WEST & SOUTH-WEST - JERSEY

Our chair has successfully delivered 5 talks on the back of her experiences serving 3 months as a human rights monitor in Hebron with EAPPI and this has been well received. One of these talks was a lunchtime briefing in the local parliament, with about 10 local politicians present. On March 30th we held a vigil and stall for the anniversary of the commencement of the Great Return March, to coincide with actions around the world. We gained attention by dressing up as paramedics and press members, with 'targets' on us and held photo placards of paramedics and journalists who have been killed by Israeli forces. We marched through the main street in town with these and a banner to raise awareness, ending with us congregating in our 'Liberation Square' where we displayed a sheet with the names of all victims that had been killed participating in the marches. We were proud to take part in national #BoycottPuma day of action, where we had a number of really positive conversations and even ran out of leaflets! We are also currently in the process of trying to professionally record - with input from 2 Palestinian musicians - a song that one of our members has written about apartheid!



## EAST & SOUTH-EAST - SOUTHAMPTON

We have run six stalls this year, all but two outside HSBC. We ran one outside a local supermarket and one outside Sports Direct, asking people to boycott Puma. We have also run stalls at three major union conferences in Bournemouth this year as well as running a busy stall at Southampton's May Day event. In addition, we have organised a number of successful events this year. In February we held a gig at a local 'Not for Profit' venue which brought in 60 people and raised



£155 for group funds. On March 30th we held a March through the town centre to mark the first year of the March of Return in Gaza, supported by 30 people with many leaflets distributed. In the weeks prior to Ramadan we had well-received leafletting sessions outside three local mosques, asking the Muslim community not to break their fast with an Israeli date. This year's annual sponsored walk in June was poignant as we planned it as a tribute to a long-term supporter, Peter Harvey, who passed away last year. He had always participated and raised a significant individual contribution. We finished with a cuppa at his home and raised an affectionate toast! This event is on course to raise approximately £700.

## LONDON - RICHMOND AND KINGSTON

Our stall on the 9th March was our second year of supporting the international Open Shuhada Street Campaign. We had a street theatre event based on a check point scenario where Palestinians are treated rudely and not allowed through while settlers and tourists go through easily. This year we held the event in Kingston Town Centre. Our branch AGM was on the 3rd April included the showing of a short film Jeremy Hardy made for MAP and a speaker from MAP. We had successful events on the 3rd and 10th May at 2 local mosques after Friday Prayers, where we gave out leaflets advertising the national demo. On 12th May we had a successful stall at the Richmond May Fair where we sold in the region of £600 of Zaytoun produce, and added many supporters to our mailing list. On May 21st we had a well-attended launch event for Ben White's latest book, Cracks in the Wall, where we sold 32 copies. Our stall at this year's Ham Fair, on June 8th, was also very successful. We sold over £600 worth of Zaytoun produce and made contact with many supportive local people. Finally on June 15th we took part in the international day of action against Puma, by leafletting customers outside Sports Direct in Kingston, and by handing in a letter to the store manager. Our branch has continued to produce Unreported Palestine, which describes some of the serious human stories of each month. It goes out in a digital format to all of our mailing list and as an A5 leaflet which we give out to the public at events. We are happy to share this resource with other branches.



# CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

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

## PUMA

Puma sponsor the Israel Football Association (IFA), which includes football clubs based in illegal settlements, on stolen Palestinian land. As one of the world's top athletic apparel makers and only international sponsor of the IFA, Puma brings international legitimacy to the IFA and helps maintain its direct involvement with violations of human rights and international law off the field.



More than 200 Palestinian sports clubs have called for an international campaign and boycott of Puma. In response, we have launched the campaign in the UK, in co-ordination with the international #BoycottPuma campaign. We have launched our new campaign resources including placards, flyers, stickers and more. Our e-action resulted in over 25000 emails being sent to UK football clubs sponsored by Puma, asking for them to use their position to influence Puma to end its complicity or, failing that, cease their partnership. On June 15th, over 25 PSC branches took creative action across the UK inside and outside Puma stores and stockists of Puma. Thousands participated in the day of action online, with the #BoycottPuma hashtag reaching over 8.5million impressions on twitter alone. Puma is feeling the pressure and we will only continue to grow the campaign until Puma ends their complicity with Israeli apartheid. Get involved and join the #BoycottPuma campaign today!

## AIRBNB

Following the announcement in April that Airbnb was reversing its decision to remove listings based in illegal Israeli settlements, PSC joined forces with a number of international organisations including Jewish Voice for Peace to coordinate a global day of action against Airbnb. Under the slogan #deactivateairbnb, the campaign saw nearly 20000 people across the world pledge to deactivate their Airbnb accounts on the Nakba Day in protest against the company's outrageous policy reversal. Other supporting organisations included the BDS Movement, SumofUs, American Muslims for Palestine, Just Peace Advocates, the Palestine Institute for Public Democracy and CO-DEPINK, and the campaign was covered in national as well as international press! On the day, PSC members and supporters also held a creative protest outside Airbnb's London headquarters to take the campaign right to the company's doorstep! Going forward, we will be working with JVP and other partners to plan how we can keep up the pressure on Airbnb to do the right thing and stand by its original decision to remove these listings based on stolen Palestinian land.



**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CAMPAIGNS  
BY DONATING TO PSC TODAY!**

## STOP ARMING ISRAEL

Our campaign calling on HSBC to end all its complicity with Israeli apartheid continues after our first victory: HSBC divested fully from Elbit Systems, Israel's largest private arms company. However, HSBC continues to invest over £800million in companies arming Israel. This includes around £100million worth of shares in Caterpillar, a company who supply the Israeli army with bulldozers which are weaponised and used to demolish Palestinian communities, construct Israel's illegal settlements and apartheid wall.

We have joined with UK based LGBT+ communities, to oppose HSBC's attempt to pinkwash its complicity with Israeli apartheid, in response to Aswat's (Palestinian LGBT+ organisation) call for international solidarity and for Birmingham Pride to drop HSBC as their main sponsor, due to HSBC's complicity with Israeli apartheid. On the day of Birmingham Pride, we joined NUS LGBT+ campaign and handed out over 2000 flyers to attendees calling for Birmingham Pride to drop HSBC, receiving a warm response from the Birmingham community. In addition, we joined up with environmental groups, including Banktrack and 360.org, to mobilise at HSBC's AGM and oppose HSBC's involvement in funding Israeli apartheid, the arms trade and environmental degradation. These coalitions are core to expanding and broadening our movement and campaign for justice for Palestine. Join the #StopArmingIsrael campaign today!



## BOYCOTT EUROVISION

After it was announced that the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest was to be held in Tel Aviv, Israel, a worldwide campaign was launched calling on broadcasters, songwriters and performers to withdraw from the competition and adhere to the Palestinian people's call for a cultural boycott of Israel until it respects international law and human rights. PSC took the lead on coordinating the UK response to this call. PSC members and supporters added thousands of signatures to the international petition calling on public broadcasters to withdraw from the contest - by the end of the campaign this petition had been signed by over 150000 people. In December, we held a protest outside BBC HQ in London highlighting the campaign, and on the night of Eurovision itself we hosted a sold out gig in London called "Not the Eurovision: Party for Palestine" which featured Lowkey, Wolf Alice, Mic Righteous plus many more. The gig was part of the wider "Globalvision" initiative; a live international

event that was broadcast online during the Eurovision finale and included shots of a number of concerts, including in London, Dublin and Bethlehem. The global campaign received widespread media coverage and support from a wide range of artists, cultural figures, LGBTQ+ organisation and more. Reports highlighted that the song contest was much less of a success than organisers hoped for, with thousands of tickets remaining unsold. Going forward, we will be building on the success of the London gig and organising more vibrant events as part of the crucial cultural boycott of Israel.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

- **SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE: NEXT STEPS FOR THE UK TRADE UNION MOVEMENT**  
Sat 12th Oct, London. A PSC Trade Union Conference: Developing Palestine as a core issue for UK trade union members to grow the international solidarity movement.
- **APARTHEID OFF CAMPUS: STUDENT CONFERENCE 2019**  
5th & 6th October, Manchester. Gain key tools and techniques to end your university's links to Israeli apartheid through powerful and direct BDS campaigning! More details soon.
- **LONDON YOUTH PSC: FIRST MEETING**  
6pm 10th July, Hamilton House WC1H 9BD. A gathering of young activists in London, seeking to form the first London Youth PSC branch!

**JUDICIAL REVIEW UPDATE:** Earlier this year PSC **won the right** to challenge the Court of Appeal's upholding of Government regulations that restrict Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) from divesting from companies complicit in Israel's human rights violations. Our day in court is on **November 20th** and we will contact members and supporters with information on how you can support us on the day. In the meantime, please keep giving to PSC's 2019 Fighting Fund to cover our costs and our wider campaigning. **CLICK BELOW TO DONATE!**

## PSC'S 2019 FIGHTING FUND

This year we're taking on the Government in the Supreme Court over ethical pensions divestment – and it will cost us £60k. But we also need crucial funds to sustain our campaigns. Can you help? **DONATE NOW!**



### PSC ONLINE SHOP

Buy Keffiyahs, t-shirts, accessories and more Palestine-related products by visiting our online shop!

All money raised goes towards funding our crucial campaigns for Palestinian rights.

[shop.palestinecampaign.org](http://shop.palestinecampaign.org)