



ISRAEL and the crime of APARTHEID

For decades Palestinians have been describing the system of rule they live under as apartheid. They have been subjected to systematic dispossession, physical separation and racist discrimination by the state of Israel.

Palestinians aren't the only ones saying this: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and

the Israeli human rights group B'tselem have all published their own studies on Israel's use of

apartheid against the Palestinian people.

Understanding the impacts of apartheid is a crucial part of pushing for justice, and supporting the movement against apartheid, and for Palestinian freedom and self-determination. >>>

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What is apartheid?

The term 'apartheid' was originally used to describe the system of white minority rule in South Africa from 1948-1994. But the term is not only applicable in that historic context; it is defined in international law as *"inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them."*

Apartheid is characterised by a combination of elements, in policy and practice, aimed at a particular racial group, including:

Forcible transfer and expropriation of property

- Between 1947-49, over 750,000 Palestinians were made refugees – expelled or forced to flee as Zionist



Palestinians protesting against the land grabs that still take place today.

Picture: Oren Ziv/Activestills.org

militias seized Palestinian land and property. In the wake of this Nakba (Arabic for catastrophe), the Israeli state passed laws to formally confiscate the refugees' property in a mass land grab.

- Land grabs and forcible transfers continue to this day, including through Israeli military demolitions of

Palestinian homes and properties. Palestinians call this the 'ongoing Nakba'.

- Palestinian citizens of Israel face discriminatory land and planning laws confining them to densely populated areas – while neighbouring predominantly Jewish areas are given permission to grow.

Preventing freedom of movement, including the right to leave or return

- Seven million Palestinians live outside their historic homeland, as refugees in exile. Although they have the internationally recognised right of return to their original homes and properties, Israel denies

them access to their lands.

- Across the occupied West Bank, Israel has imposed a matrix of checkpoints, blockades, Israeli-only roads, and the apartheid wall, which prevent Palestinians from exercising their freedom of movement.

- Palestinians in the Gaza Strip – under land, air, and sea blockade, are prevented, in all but exceptional cases, from leaving the besieged enclave.

Murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment

- Palestinians are under constant threat of deadly violence from Israeli armed forces – whether through bombing campaigns over the Gaza Strip, or invasions and shootings in the West Bank and inside Israel.

- Israel holds thousands of Palestinians as political prisoners, hundreds of whom are held in

administrative detention, a form of arbitrary detention by which they are held indefinitely without charge or trial. Palestinian detainees, including children, regularly face ill-treatment and torture.

Persecution of organisations or persons because they oppose apartheid

- Palestinians outspoken against apartheid are systematically targeted by the Israeli government: Palestinian civil society organisations face disinformation campaigns, raids on their offices, arrest of key staff, and banning of human rights and civil associations..

- Human rights defenders are often subjected to surveillance, including the use of spyware on phones and computers, and coercive control through withholding of medical care or harassment of family members.



What can you do?

Palestinians resisting apartheid have called on people of conscience around the world to stand in solidarity with their struggle, including through campaigns of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS).

The Palestinian-led BDS movement is a global citizens' response to Israel's system of injustice. It works to target the Israeli state, and complicit governments and corporations around the world – by applying

pressure on them until Palestinians achieve liberation.

Join the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and become part of the anti-apartheid movement. Find out more at <https://palestinecampaign.org>

