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Palestine Protest 22.02.25 (Unsigned) (Leaflet)

Historical Note

This leaflet was distributed in February 2025 in Nicosia.

Content

Palestine Protest 22.02.2025

Here we are again gathered to protest for Palestine and for the Palestinian people. 504 days since the 7th of October (2023) and since Israel initiated its extremely brutal military campaign on the whole of Gaza (one of many in the past). When Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant announced on the 9th October the full blockade on Gaza which included a ban on admission of food, electricity and fuel for the whole of Gaza, a population of 2.1 million (half of them under 18), he was basically announcing the intention of a brutal war crime, a crime against humanity, a genocide. Just the self evident intention of collectively punishing 2.1 million people should have been enough for all countries to condemn and intervene with what Israel clearly intended to do. Disturbingly enough, that was not the case!

The 4th Geneva Convention that focuses on the protection of civilians in times of war, especially in occupied territories, was put together exactly for crimes against the ones we are seeing Israel committing and openly admitting. All 196 parties that signed those treaties, which includes all United Nations member states, require states to not only prevent genocide but also to prosecute individuals accused of genocide and cooperate in prevention of genocide. All of this now being a ridiculous assertion to even consider, given that the vast majority of these countries have yet to really condemn and/or oppose Israel while the USA among other big members like UK, Germany, Canada and others have clearly fed and continue to feed this genocide.

This complete lack of human dignity and morality shown by all these states and institutions has not only showed how inherently corrupted are the systems and power structures that support them but it has also moved the world into one of its darkest ages. This new world order that has been pushed forward is a world where International Law and Human Rights do not matter. The UN Charter has been completely undermined to a point where it no longer matters what crimes against humanity someone has done, it matters more whose interests these crimes are serving. At the same time the international court of justice no longer holds the weight it once did and its members are literally being threatened by US officials.

Again, 2.1 million people live in Gaza with the vast majority of them being refugees from other parts of Palestine who were kicked out of their land continuously through decades by Israeli army and settlers. Just for perspective, the population of Cyprus is only a bit more than 1 million people. This includes the whole island Greek and Turkish speaking including also everyone else living on this land.

So imagine if all of us here were deprived of these essentials that Israel had control off and cut off from day one; food, electricity and fuel. And then imagine each and every one of our hospitals, medical centers, community centers, religious places but also almost any other essential infrastructure (water and sanitation systems) being bombed and shelled relentlessly (in addition to numerous house complexes) while bulldozers continue to destroy roads and neighbourhoods to make path for more war machines. All of this, again for context, in an area smaller than the whole of Pafos, which is surrounded by walls and fences and surveilled 24/7, no one allowed in or out without Israel's approval — a situation that predated the 7th October attack from Hamas.

What also predated the 7th of October were the thousand political prisoners held in Israel, including 160 children, 32 women, and around 1000 people with no charges (2022)! Another important fact that predated the 7th of October was the last time Palestinians marched in peace in what was called the Great March of Return (2018) that saw thousands of Palestinians peacefully protesting the blockade of Gaza and demanding the return to their home land (within what is now called Israel) which was mainly triggered by Donald Trump's decision to move the Embassy of the United States to Jerusalem (2019). Back then, Israeli forces killed 214 Palestinians, including 46 children, and injured more than 36,100, including 8,800 children, leaving many of them permanently disabled or with long-term conditions. What happen then did not have the world reacting. Again, all of this before the 7th of October and no it certainly did not start on the 7th October 2023.

After 15 months in what Doctors without Borders and others have called a war with no rules a ceasefire was achieved on 19“ January. This was mainly achieved, not because the world has finally decided to grow a spine and a moral sense, but because the newly elected president of the USA (the country that has supported Israel militarily with 158 billion since 1946 and 17.9 billion since 7th Oct) wanted to be credited with getting a ceasefire in its first days of presidency, and so he did. The fact though that a ceasefire was achieved now despite Hamas offering the same conditions in negotiations with Israel and the US since almost the beginning of negotiations proved a couple of things — that Israel was the one that did not want a ceasefire and an exchange of prisoners/hostages and that without support from the US they would have never been able to do what they have done in Gaza.

Not many days after the ceasefire was agreed, the US president, when asked if he believes the ceasefire will hold, said in his own words that 'it's not a US problem' and that 'it doesn't seem that the ceasefire will indeed hold'! This is how committed to the ceasefire agreement the US is. Not long after this and while the ceasefire had not yet reached even half the time-frame it was agreed on, we again had the president of the USA saying word for word that he views Palestine as a 'big real estate site, which the United States is going to own and develop' suggesting that Palestinians are moved to parts of Jordan and Egypt so

that Gaza can be turned into the Riviera of the Middle East (!). Absurd comments that show the complete disregard of International Law, Human Rights but also just basic human empathy and decency and of the Palestinians themselves. Did anyone bother to ask them?

Let's not forget that this is who the government of Cyprus considers their partners and allies, both Israel and the US, who under these circumstances of literal genocide and intense regional militarization, are signing agreement after agreement which include US army naval and air bases on Cypriot land (!) as well as US defence sales programs and many other collaborations and sometimes what one would call appeasements like giving Israel the right to have armed people in Larnaca airport and its Tower Control. People might not know or realise this, but nowadays even Larnaca Airport is used to transfer military aid for Israel. The US is allowed to use Larnaca airport for military flights including US military Boeing C-40 Clipper that has been seen making trips to Israel through Cyprus. Are Cypriots safe now that our main airport is being used for essentially military operations? And to

fight who? One of the most oppressed peoples of the world — Palestinians.

Palestine and Palestinians continue to suffer despite the ceasefire. The reality on the ground is that Israelis continue without impunity to attack and kill Palestinians, raiding their houses and taking their land despite limited reports from mainstream media about the numerous ceasefire violations committed by them, while thousand prisoners (many with no charges) continue to be tortured in captivity. More than 100 Palestinians in Gaza have died during the ceasefire (including children) while the violence and continuous raids in the West Bank still take place since the ceasefire was agreed on. Still the ceasefire now means less shelling and airstrikes than before and some aid being allowed in Gaza which at least, is a moment of relief for many Palestinians, many of who are now trying to return to their land despite the intense destruction (41,946,018 metric tonnes of debris, volume of debris is 14 times greater than the combined total from all conflicts over the past 16 years).

The fight against the Zionist settler colonialist project that started in 1946 will continue. This might be the first time in history that the true face of Israel and the USA has been so clearly uncovered. The pro-Palestine movement finds itself for the first time being supported by the majority of people across the world who can clearly see now Israel and the USA but also the West for what it truly is — a morally corrupt system of economy that benefits the few at the expense of the many and the less privileged which will commit and justify atrocities to retain its status quo. The political goal of Zionism which was to engineer a demographic shift in Palestine, making the minority Jewish population a majority through massive Jewish immigration and settlement building and expulsion of the Palestinians is still at play and possibly in its worst and more brutal form which is why it needs to be put to an end. The conflation of Zionism and anti-Semitism also needs to end if this is to be achieved. If anything it is the Israeli state that puts Jewish people at risk by committing thousands-of war crimes in the name of Judaism. And-no, Israeb cannot be considered a democracy — it is an apartheid state. And surely a state who’s policy is to have millions of people under occupation and continually torture and harass them while taking their land cannot be considered a democracy. Only imperialist and colonialist states can claim such a democracy — no surprise Israel is making the same claim.

The world can no longer hide its head in the sand and a clear denunciation and opposition towards Israel! from all countries needs to be put forward with boycotts, divestments and sanctions applied.

We will fight this fight in every way we each consider best and in any capacity we each consider appropriate. This is for sure, that we will fight this fight until the end. As a Palestinian friend told me ‘it might not come today or tomorrow next week or next month or next year but justice will come, maybe in 5 years, in 10 or 20, it will come’. inshallah

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