



## No Business As Usual: May Day for Palestine!

Issued by the [Labor for Palestine National Network](#), April 6, 2024

Organizational endorsements welcome [here](#).

On March 23, 2024, “in the midst of pain and blood, in the displacement camps, amidst the rubble, and the ruins of our homes, workshops, factories, stores, and institutions destroyed by the ‘Israeli’ occupation, using U.S.-made weapons,” the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions-Gaza (PGFTU-Gaza) sent U.S. workers, unions, and other labor organizations an [urgent May Day appeal](#).

The PGFTU-Gaza’s appeal salutes “some exceptional examples of unions, clearly demonstrated in leading protests denouncing the Zionist war of genocide being waged on the Gaza Strip.”

However, it also decries the “shocking silence and neglect by the international labor movement,” citing those who have “retreated to verbal positions without taking measures on the ground or pressuring the decision-makers to stop this war of extermination, limiting union activities to conferences and statements and not delving deeply into the need to guarantee humanitarian aid, or influencing international public opinion to expose the truth about Zionist crimes and the practices of the allied countries that continue to support Israel.”

The appeal specifically highlights the need “to ban the occupation’s trade unions [the Histdarut] internationally, as they are partners in the war of genocide. In particular, we call on American unions to boycott these unions to protest their complicity in this genocidal war.”

In response to the PGFTU-Gaza May Day appeal, and the [Urgent Call from Palestinian Trade Unions: End all Complicity, Stop Arming Israel \(October 16, 2023\)](#), the [Labor for Palestine National Network reaffirms](#) that labor must go beyond words and escalate pressure to stop the genocide in Gaza by:

- (1) Demanding an immediate end to the siege on Gaza and to all U.S. military aid for Israel;
- (2) Following the example of [Block the Boat, ILWU West Coast dockers, and workers around the world](#) who refuse to build or transport weapons destined for Israel; and
- (3) Respecting the Palestinian-led [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions \(BDS\)](#) picket line by [severing ties with Israel’s racist labor federation, the Histadrut](#) and its [US mouthpiece, the Jewish Labor Committee](#), and by divesting from Israel Bonds and industries connected with Zionist settler colonialism and occupation.

We further call on the working class and labor bodies across the U.S. to build on the May Day call from [Bay Area Labor for Palestine](#), by taking one or more of the following actions on May 1, 2024:

- **Withhold** labor and rally with a labor contingent for Palestine or amplify demands to stop this genocide within your local May Day action
- **Hold** a teach-in or moment of silence
- **Post** a group photo, with flags, signs, keffiyehs, buttons, and other symbols of Palestinian solidarity
- **Leaflet and demonstrate** at a weapons plant, military facility, or other complicit institution
- **Storm** social media with:
  - #MayDay4Palestine
  - #StopArmingIsrael
  - #BDS
  - #DumpIsraelBonds
  - #DroptheHistadrut
  - #FromtheRivertotheSeaPalestineWillBeFree
- **Devise** other creative actions

## **Why is Palestine a Labor Issue?**

- (1) **An injury to one is an injury to all.** The Israeli settler-colonial regime is part of the same U.S.-backed system of racist state violence that brutalizes Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and working class people around the world. With Israel's knee on their neck, Palestinians can't breathe, and we unconditionally stand with them, just as they have stood with our struggles for Black and Brown Lives, Standing Rock, migrant rights, and beyond.
- (2) **Our tax dollars fund Israel.** Israel's crimes are committed with more than \$3.8 billion a year (or \$10+ million per day) in bipartisan US military aid, tax dollars that should be spent instead on badly-needed jobs, food, housing, healthcare, education, and transportation for poor and working people at home.
- (3) **Our workplaces arm Israel.** Many of our unionized factories, logistics, academia, tech, and other workplaces—without our consent—produce weapons, transportation, research, technology, and other materials for the genocidal Israeli regime.
- (4) **Our unions fund Israel.** Our unions are already involved—on the wrong side. In the 1920s-1930s, top labor officials donated millions to the Histadrut, the Zionist labor federation that spearheaded anti-Palestinian dispossession, apartheid, and ethnic cleansing, including the Nakba (Catastrophe) that established the Israeli state in 1948. For more than 70 years, they have used our union dues and pension funds to buy billions of dollars worth of Israel Bonds. Today, despite horrendous Palestinian casualties, most labor officials remain silent—or worse.
- (5) **Global working class solidarity is the only way to win.** More than ever, in this era of globalization, workers and oppressed people everywhere are up a common enemy. We can't win if we are atomized by union, or even country. We need international, classwide unity. That means every worker must take on the task of building solidarity with Palestine—today an epicenter of class struggle.
- (6) **Workers can stop Israeli genocide.** More than 50 years ago, Arab and Black auto workers led a wildcat strike and other actions to protest UAW complicity with Israel. Today, we can follow their example in respecting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) picket line by protesting, bringing union resolutions, and—above all—by mobilizing our collective power at the workplace, as shown by dockers in South Africa, India, Sweden, Norway, Turkey, Italy, Belgium, and the ILWU on the West Coast of the United States, which has respected Block the Boat's community-labor picket line by refusing to handle Israeli cargo.



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