

BNC STATEMENT

Hold the Line: Palestinian unions urge global solidarity against Israel's genocide, apartheid and exploitation of workers

May 1, 2024 / By (/news-listing-author/Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC))

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On this May Day, a historic day for the international labour movement commemorating workers' struggles for dignity and justice, Palestinian trade unions reiterate [their call](https://bdsmovement.net/Palestinian-Trade-Unions-Call-On-Indian-Workers) (<https://bdsmovement.net/Palestinian-Trade-Unions-Call-On-Indian-Workers>), on trade unions across the world to build campaigns to end complicity with Israel's genocidal 76-year-old regime of settler-colonialism and apartheid.

For nearly seven months, Israel has been carrying out a genocidal war against 2.3 million Palestinians in the occupied and besieged Gaza Strip, murdering [over 34,000 people](https://www.ochaopt.org/) (<https://www.ochaopt.org/>), displacing 80% of the population. Just recently, [mass graves](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/mass-graves-gaza-what-do-we-know-2024-04-25/) (<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/mass-graves-gaza-what-do-we-know-2024-04-25/>) of Palestinians have been unearthed after Israeli troops pulled out of Khan Younis, following the siege and destruction of critical medical facilities. Everyone in Gaza is facing Israel's forced starvation.

Israel's systematic ethnic cleansing, theft of land, murder of Indigenous Palestinians, destruction of the Palestinian economy, its discriminatory and racist laws, and its restrictions on freedom of movement and association, which affect all Palestinians [including workers](https://bdsmovement.net/trade-union-solidarity#tab1) (<https://bdsmovement.net/trade-union-solidarity#tab1>), are aspects of its settler-colonial apartheid regime.

Thousands of Palestinian workers face daily humiliation and abuse at Israeli military checkpoints. Thousands of Palestinian workers in Israel were detained and tortured (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/3/arrested-tortured-and-insulted-say-workers-returned-to-gaza-by-israel#:~:text=Salameh%20said%20he%20and%20other,electrical%20chair%20for%20several%20days.>) in Israeli prisons as Israel carried out its carpet bombing of Gaza. Tens of thousands of Palestinian workers have lost their livelihoods due to additional movement restrictions. (<https://www.addthis.com/bookmark.php?v=3000>)

The International Court of Justice's ruling on 26 January 2024 that Israel is plausibly committing genocide, as South Africa has charged, makes ending all arms trade and military cooperation with Israel as well as imposing targeted sanctions on it not just a moral obligation, but also a legal one.

During the last nearly seven months of Israel's genocide in Gaza, trade unions across the world have heeded our calls by embarking on inspiring campaigns to #BlocktheBoat, halting arms shipments and refusing to handle weapons headed to Israel. They have called for and joined Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns. Trade unions from the Global South have denounced (<https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/israel-ngo-fairsquare-calls-on-indian-govt-to-refuse-labour-agreement-following-cancellation-of-palestinians-work-permits/>) "workers replacement agreements," aimed at replacing Palestinian workers that have been barred by Israel from their workplaces after October 9 with workers from countries such as India, Malawi, Kenya and Ecuador. Such governmental agreements dehumanize both Palestinian and other workers and cross our picket line.

The onus to end these military, trade and worker agreements, which all support Israel's genocide in Gaza and its underlying apartheid regime as well as dehumanize and commodify workers, lies with respective governments. As parties to the Genocide Convention, in view of the ICJ ruling, states are obligated to take action to end complicity in Israel's genocide. Further, instead of forcing their citizens (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/desperation-migration-why-thousands-indian-workers-want-to-go-israel>) to migrate for work in the midst of a genocidal war, as elected governments they are responsible for addressing the root cause of massive unemployment and creating decent job opportunities in their respective countries.

We, the undersigned Palestinian trade unions, call on workers around the world to support our struggle to end the genocide and dismantle Israel's settler-colonial apartheid regime by:

1. Building more campaigns to #BlocktheBoat, halting Israel-bound ships carrying weapons and cargo
2. Refusing to handle Israeli or Israel-bound weapons and cargo by port workers
3. Rejecting any racist agreement with Israel that would facilitate the replacement and further oppression of Palestinian workers.
4. Building trade union BDS campaigns and declare your union to be an Apartheid Free Zone, to end corporate and institutional complicity in Israel's apartheid regime and genocide of the Palestinian people
5. Urging your governments to cease all forms of cooperation with apartheid Israel, respecting the ICJ ruling of "plausible genocide" in Gaza.

- General Union of Palestinian Workers (GUPW)
- Palestinian Union of Postal, IT & Telecommunications Workers
- Federation of Independent Trade Unions
- General Union of Palestinian Teachers (GUPT)
- The Palestinian New Federation of Trade Unions
- Palestinian Dental Association - Jerusalem Center
- Palestinian Pharmacists Association - Jerusalem Center
- Medical Association - Jerusalem Center

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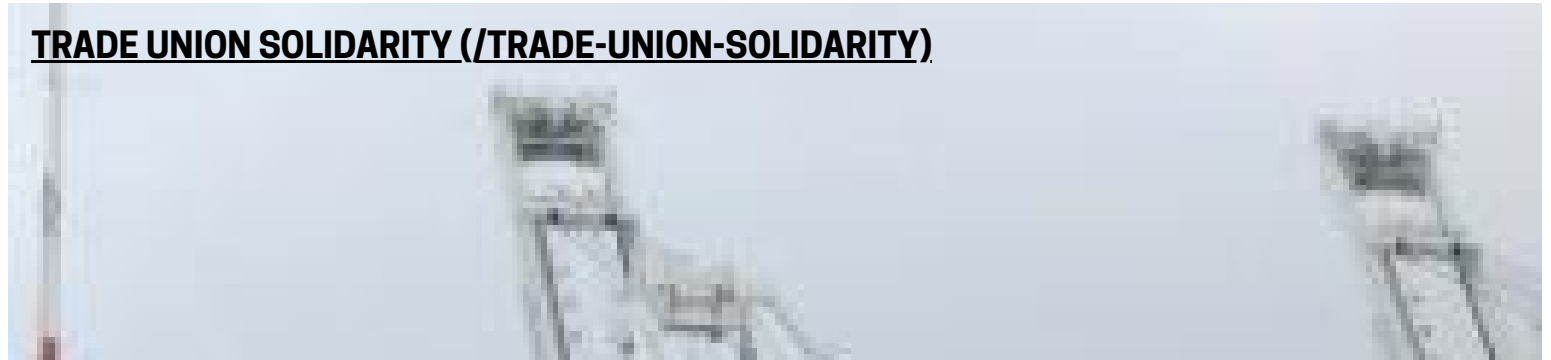
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- [Palestinian Bar Association](#)

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