

Home » Stop imperialist war and occupation » Unions demand arms embargo of Israel, back protest of Netanyahu's visit

Unions demand arms embargo of Israel, back protest of Netanyahu's visit

By Martha Grevatt posted on August 1, 2024

When tens of thousands of people demonstrated against Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu on July 24, the day he spoke to Congress, a strong labor contingent was part of the march. Six unions — Association of Flight Attendants, American Postal Workers Union (APWU), International Union of Painters, United Auto Workers (UAW), United Electrical Workers and National Education Association — endorsed the protest.

UAW Region 9A Director Brandon Mancilla, addressed the rally: “Why is a ceasefire and an end to arms shipments to Israel a labor issue? I’ll tell you why. Because autoworkers in Dearborn, Michigan, have been personally affected by this issue and have demanded that their union and their government stop funding a genocide. Because academic workers all across the country in countless campuses, in almost every state of this country, have been protesting for their literal right of free speech to call on their universities to divest and to be held accountable.



WW Photo: Joe Piette

Caption: Unions protest speech by Israeli President Netanyahu, Washington, D.C., July 24, 2024.

“Our members were part of that movement. They will continue to be part of that movement. We are also here because public defenders, UAW members, in New York City have been targeted by our government for calling for a ceasefire. So don’t tell me this isn’t a labor issue when our very own government is coming after labor unions for standing with the people of Palestine.” (YouTube.com)



APWU President Mark Dimondstein also addressed the rally.

One day earlier the same six unions that backed the protest, along with the Service Employees Union (SEIU), called on the U.S. government to end all arms shipments to Israel. These seven unions, which together formed the National Labor Network for Ceasefire, have a combined total of 9 million members and represent the majority of unionized workers in the U.S.

This is a major step forward for labor, going beyond the bare minimum of calling for a ceasefire in Gaza.

Many rank-and-file members, through groups such as UAW Labor for Palestine, Purple Up for Palestine (in SEIU) and the Labor for Palestine National Network, are calling on their unions to do much more. Their demands include: Terminate all union investments in Israel Bonds; sever ties to the Zionist labor federation Histadrut; give no endorsement to any pro-Zionist candidates for political office; and act on the call from Palestinian unions to block the production and shipment of weapons to Israel.

[netanyahu](#) [Palestine](#) [unions](#)

[← Previous article](#)

[Next article →](#)

