



NUMSA continues to demand that the South African government must impose sanctions on Apartheid Israel
28 November 2024
Press statement

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) is repeating the call for the South African government to cut all diplomatic ties and to impose sanctions on Apartheid Israel. We must also state that we welcome the decision by the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant the former Israeli Defence Minister, this is long overdue.

We have to acknowledge the good work that the South African government has done so far by taking a strong moral stand, and filing a case against Israel, alleging that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. South Africa claims that Israel's actions violate the Genocide Convention.

And more recently in October, South Africa filed The Memorial, which is the name for the document which records the main case and contains evidence to back up the claim of Genocide. South Africa is on the right side of history on this issue because we know what Apartheid looks like and we are fighting back in solidarity with the Palestinians. However, we are calling on the government to do more, and to lead from the front by imposing full blown sanctions against Israel.

It is very obvious that Israel is ethnically cleansing Palestinian people. More evidence has emerged in a document published by the [United Nations](#) stating that the Israeli military has murdered the highest number of children in Gaza. This is backed up by a report by Oxfam which was published in September that found that more women and children have been killed in Gaza, than in any other conflict in any part of the world, in the last year.

At least 70% of those murdered by Apartheid Israel are women and children and the highest category are children aged 5 to 9 years old. Israel has justified the systematic extermination of Palestinians by claiming it is defending itself. This begs the question, what is it that the state of Israel could possibly find so threatening that it has to massacre thousands of innocent children?

Recently, we witnessed dozens of people burning alive following an Israeli air attack on Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central Gaza. A disturbing viral video showed a man lying in a hospital bed is lifting his hands, and in another video, children can be seen being burnt alive, while residents desperately try and put out the fire. The terrified screams of the victims can also be heard. We are witnessing another holocaust in Palestine and it is happening in real time, and it is visible on social media.

Israel is barbaric and NUMSA condemns Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and his cabinet of war criminals for their savage behaviour. The English language is limited in its ability to properly define the depth of depravity and cruelty that the Israeli government has unleashed on the Middle East, and on Palestine in particular.

The brutal assault on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza did not begin on the 7th of October 2023. Since 1948 Palestinians have fought bravely against the unlawful occupation, and persistent oppression by the Apartheid state of Israel.

Since the 7th of October 2023 Israel has imposed a prolonged blockade, denying Palestinians food, electricity and cutting off communication. Palestinians are being punished through a brutal form of collective punishment, for the actions of Hamas, when it launched an attack and killed 1200 mostly Israeli citizens and kidnapped 250 people. In response Israel has launched a program of ethnic cleansing in order to totally wipe out Palestinians, and it is using the attack by Hamas to justify the genocide.

It is NUMSA's view that resistance is not terrorism. Israel is directly responsible for the actions of resistance movement which are responding to the brutal Apartheid state, because it is violently oppressing Palestinians. We are reminded of our own armed resistance which we as Black people, launched through uMkhonto weSizwe, in response to Apartheid in South Africa. We can relate to the struggle of the Palestinians who wish to live freely in the land of their birth.

Below are #FastFacts on Israel's holocaust against Palestinians:

1. At least 70 per cent of the population that has been killed are women and children.
2. The population is being deliberately starved of food, water and medicine.
3. There have been repeated attacks on hospitals, aid distribution clinics, food trucks and humanitarian aid agencies have been attacked, to prevent assistance to the people of Palestine who desperately need it.
4. More UN workers have been killed in Gaza than at any other time in the UN's history. Israel has deliberately murdered over 300 aid workers.
5. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) Israel has killed more journalists than and media workers in the last year, than in any other conflict in the last 30 years.
6. Over 900 families have been entirely wiped out by Israel.

At its last Central Committee meeting in July NUMSA resolved that it rejects all wars because it is the working class that suffers. We said,

"For NUMSA, it is about silencing guns to stop all wars and most importantly, it is to ensure that we stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine to realise our noble objective in the struggle for a ceasefire and to join forces with all people of the globe who understand the strategic importance politically that the people of Palestine must secure their freedom and that Israel with its bloody Netanyahu must get out of Palestine. This is a struggle and a campaign that the union must continue, and it must be infused in all the union's campaigns; in fact, the CC resolved that this is a struggle we will wage and carry side-by-side".

What is to be done?

1. There must be a permanent ceasefire in all the Palestinian territories which Israel is bombing.
2. We demand that the South African government lead, (as it has led in court at the ICJ), to impose sanctions on Israel
3. Israel must stop its attacks against its neighbours and this includes, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza.
4. Israel must immediately stop its unlawful occupation of Palestine and all land which was stolen by settlers must be returned back.
5. The U.S. and its Western allies must stop funding Israel

6. Economic sanctions must be urgently imposed on Israel until a democratic Palestinian state has been created, where everyone has equal human rights.

Members of NUMSA's Hlanganani region will be participating in the International Day of Solidarity with Palestine on Friday 29 November. We urge as many NUMSA members as possible to attend if they can. We will also be continuing with our educational and awareness programs to ensure that all Metalworkers and their families understand the importance of defending Palestine.

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