



# Labour for Palestine Statement of Unity

## Palestine: a history of colonization, occupation and resistance.

The Palestinian struggle for liberation from colonialism and occupation dates back to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, the Zionist settler-colonial project established itself in historic Palestine with the support of British colonialism. This ultimately resulted in the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 but not before over 750,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed from their homes and lands, through a systematic process that erased over 500 villages and towns. The remaining Palestinians inside Israel lived under martial law and currently exist as marginalized, second class citizens in their own ancestral home.

1967 marked a turning point in the Palestinian national liberation struggle against occupation when Israel occupied the remaining 22% of historic Palestine (Jerusalem, Gaza Strip and West Bank). In the 1990's, Palestinians and Israel entered into a "peace process". Instead of

resulting in an independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian state beside Israel, the peace process further fragmented Palestinian society and led to the "bantustanization" of the promised homeland.

Today, Palestinians under occupation are divided between the West Bank and Gaza, and Israel continues the land grab and ethnic cleansing that started in the mid 1940's. This is the reality being imposed by the Apartheid Walls in Gaza and the West Bank as well as Israel's policies towards its Palestinian citizens and residents of Jerusalem. Gaza's almost 2 million inhabitants are under complete siege in the biggest open air prison on earth. They are subjected to various forms of human rights violations from food deprivation to massacres and attacks with internationally prohibited weapons.



## **What is Labour 4 Palestine:**

We are a network of labour activists across Canada who stand in solidarity with the struggle of Palestinian workers and people. To that effect we work with like-minded community groups and organizations across the country to further our goals. As Labour activists, we recognize the important role that unions can play in support of justice for Palestinians, as we did in the case of the struggle for justice in South Africa.

## **Our Goals:**

As Canadian labour activists our primary goals are:

- to raise awareness within our movement of the plight of the Palestinian people and workers.
- to actively support labour unions and workers in Palestine.
- to educate our members about the history of Palestinian liberation struggle.
- to expose the role of the Canadian state and its complicity with Israel's violations of international law.
- to build solidarity within our movement for Palestinian human and labour rights.



## **STATEMENT OF UNITY / PRINCIPLES:**

We recognize that as an indigenous people, Palestinians are an occupied people in a settler colonial state who are exploited, oppressed and denied basic human, civil and political rights.

We recognize the system in Israel/Palestine as one that is closely resembling Apartheid as per the Apartheid Convention of 1973.

We recognize that we are a part of a growing international solidarity movement that is guided by the just and legitimate demands of Palestinian labour, civil society and political organizations. As such, we support the 2005 call from Palestinian civil society for a global campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions as the most effective and non-violent tool to compel the State of Israel to:

1. End the blockade against the people of Gaza;
2. End its occupation of all Arab lands, dismantle the Wall and free all Palestinian and Arab political prisoners;
3. Recognize the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and,
4. Respect, protect and promote the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN General Assembly resolution 194 of 1949.

Adopted in 2019