

After 63 years of the Palestinian Nakba, and despite 20 years of unsuccessful peace negotiations, the Palestinian people continue to be denied their most fundamental and inalienable rights to self-determination, national independence, sovereignty and return to the homes and properties from which they have been forcibly displaced. Living under the Israeli apartheid regime and in forced exile away from the towns and villages, hills and olive groves that they call home, the Palestinian people remain steadfast in their struggle to end the systematic human rights violations committed against them and return to their homes of origin.

Meanwhile, the international community, especially the USA and the dominant member states of the UN continue to shield Israel from accountability and maintain extensive economic and diplomatic ties which finance and subsidize the Israeli regime. This persistent support has taken place under the guise of a 'peace process' which has worked to embellish Israeli violations with the facade of peace; a situation Israel has exploited to increase its international and regional economic and diplomatic links. As the pretense of negotiations falls away, so too does the cover it provides Israel to continue its policies, a reality reflected in the growing civil society response insisting upon the application of international law to end Israeli impunity.

An accounting for the collapse of the peace process, a failure now a recognized reality by all parties involved in it for the past 20 years, inevitably leads to the need to establish a strategy which puts the realization of Palestinian rights at its center and focuses on the practical action needed to bring Palestinian rights into reality, combining grassroots, civic struggle on the ground with international pressure on Israel to respect the rights of the Palestinian people.

The latest agreement between the two main Palestinian factions is an encouraging first step towards establishing such a strategy. However, genuine national reconciliation and unity can only come about through the inclusion of the Palestinian people in their entirety in contributing to and deciding upon the way forward for the Palestinian people. It is in this vein that the campaign for direct elections to the highest decision making body of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian National Council (PNC) was relaunched, to ensure that the voice of all Palestinians, including those with Israeli citizenship and refugees living forced exile are included.

These attempts at national unity take place against the backdrop of political transformations in neighboring Arab countries which reassert the power of people to take their fate in their own hands in seeking freedom, justice and equality. In 2011, the year of revolutions, it is as clear as ever that the Palestinian people are at the centerpiece of a regional-wide yearning for rights, denied to them by powers concerned more with geopolitical influence than upholding the rule

and values of international law. Ending the particular systematic denial of rights suffered by Palestinians as a result of Israel's regime of occupation, colonialism and apartheid is therefore intrinsically tied in with fate of the millions of demonstrators on the streets of the Arab world.

On the 63rd commemoration of the Nakba and as part of activities to confront ongoing forcible transfer of Palestinians by Israel, We the undersigned organizations call:

On the Palestinian leadership to:

- To adopt a coherent strategy which places at its forefront a just and permanent solution for Palestinian refugees and IDPs, based on their right to return and in accordance with international law, universal principles of justice and UN resolutions 194 (1948) and 237 (1967);
- Ensure genuine national reconciliation and unity as a matter of urgency, and rebuild the PLO as a legitimate and credible platform representing the entire Palestinian people and its political organizations through initiating direct elections to the PNC;
- Support and activate popular resistance in all forms permitted under international law.
- Establish a consultative mechanism with professional civil society organizations to support the efforts of the PLO in international fora.

On Civil Society, Governments, UN Members States, Organs and Agencies to:

- Support civil society-led direct action in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle;
- Build and expand the civil society-led movement for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law and exert stronger pressure on states to implement sanctions and adopt decisions and resolutions which support the global BDS Campaign;
- Redouble efforts for investigation of Israeli war crimes and crimes against humanity and prosecution and punishment of those responsible, as well as efforts to prevent Israel's accession and integration into international and regional organizations.
- Implement international protection standards for Palestinian refugees and IDPs.

- **BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights**
- **The Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI)**
- **Defense for Children International/Palestine Section**
- **Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association**
- **Housing and Land Rights Network: Habitat International Coalition**

- **Joint Advocacy initiative -The East Jerusalem YMCA and YWCA of Palestine-**
- **Kairos Palestine**
- **The Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign**