August 29, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write because your administration’s consistently yielding response to the Israeli government’s escalating attacks against prominent Palestinian human rights and civil society groups over the past 10 months has put the safety and well-being of Palestinian human rights defenders at serious risk. We call for immediate action in response to the Israeli government’s latest escalation so as to curtail any further imminent repressive tactics by Israeli authorities and ensure Palestinian civil society is free to continue its critical work.

Last week, in a significant escalation, Israeli military forces raided the offices of seven Palestinian human rights and community organizations in the occupied West Bank on 18 August 2022, sealing shut their doors, ordering them closed, and seizing computers and other confidential materials. In the following days, directors of the organizations were summoned by the Israeli military and Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) for interrogation. All staff are currently under threat of imminent arrest and prosecution. While many in the international community were swift to condemn the Israeli government’s shameful political maneuver in October 2021 designating leading Palestinian human rights organizations as “terrorist” under Israel’s draconian Counter-Terrorism Law, your administration has refused to act or reject this clear attack on Palestinian civil society, and even took affirmative steps including canceling the valid U.S. visa held by the head of one of the targeted organizations.1 The response so far has only enabled and empowered the Israeli government to sustain and escalate its repression.

The targeted organizations form part of the bedrock of Palestinian civil society that has been protecting and advancing Palestinian human rights for decades across the full spectrum of issues of global concern, including children’s rights, prisoners’ rights, women’s rights, socio-economic rights, the rights of farmworkers, and justice and accountability for international crimes. They include: Defense for Children International - Palestine, Al Haq, Addameer, Bisan Center for Research and Development, Union of Agricultural Work Committees, and Union of Palestinian

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Women’s Committees. They are trusted partners in our collective work to secure human rights for all.

Since the Israeli government officially outlawed these civil society groups, international human rights groups, the United Nations, and governments that did investigate Israel’s claims — found them to be baseless. This includes 10 European governments that dismissed the allegations in mid-July 2022. In a deeply troubling report released this week, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency reportedly assessed information passed on by the Israeli government earlier this year finding none of the so-called evidence supported the Israeli government claims. Additionally, members of Congress have called on your administration to condemn and reject the Israeli government’s clear attack on Palestinian civil society.

As groups committed to social justice, civil rights, and universal human rights, we have seen first hand the ways that the charge of “terrorist” and the so-called “war on terror” threatens not only international human rights defenders, but also social movements and marginalized communities here in the U.S.: Indigenous, Black, brown, Muslim, and Arab activists and communities have similarly faced silencing, intimidation, criminalization and surveillance under such baseless charges. A threat against the Palestinian human rights movement is a threat against movements for social justice everywhere, and in order to protect human rights and human rights defenders, all states must be held accountable for taking such manifestly unjust actions.

While our government has long offered unconditional support to the Israeli government, our movements and organizations will always stand first and foremost with the rights and safety of people.

Therefore, we the undersigned organizations, call on you, in your authority as President to immediately:

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2 Palestinian NGO Network and Palestinian Human Rights Organization Council, “PNGO & PHROC: Israel’s Sinister Designation of 6 Leading Palestinian Organizations As “Terror Organizations” is an Attempt to Silence and Control Palestinians,” October 23, 2021. Available online: https://www.pngo.net/?p=3774&lang=en; note that the office of Health Work Committee (HWC), a Palestinian organization committed to securing the right to health was also raided on 18 August.


6 Nadya Tannous, Al-Shabaka, Policy Brief: Restricting US Military Aid to Israel in the Age of Normalization, September 14, 2021
1. Condemn the Israeli government’s repressive tactics and escalating campaign of criminalization and intimidation against Palestinian civil society organizations and their staff and board;
2. Reject the Israeli government’s unsubstantiated accusations levied against Palestinian civil society organizations and demand Israeli authorities rescind the designations;
3. Take diplomatic action, in concert with European counterparts, that serves to protect the targeted Palestinian organizations, their staff and board, premises, and other assets;
4. Refrain from imposing any obstacles or policies that would prevent direct engagement between the U.S. government and Palestinian civil society, or otherwise preclude full, comprehensive public understanding of the severity and impacts of Israeli repression;
5. End U.S. efforts to undermine the right of Palestinians and Palestinian civil society organizations to pursue justice and accountability, including at the International Criminal Court;
6. Ensure no actions are taken at the federal level that in any way encumbers funding from U.S.-based organizations or individuals to the targeted Palestinian organizations; and
7. Suspend U.S. military funding to the Israeli government and cease any diplomatic efforts that enable systemic impunity for Israel’s gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights.

Sincerely,

U.S.-based Organization Signers

1for3.org
Access Now
Action Center on Race & the Economy
Adalah Justice Project
Advance Native Political Leadership
Al-Awda New York: The Palestine Right To Return Coalition
Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Yale Law School
Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine
American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine
American Friends Service Committee
American Muslim Bar Association
American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Americans for Justice in Palestine Action
Amnesty International USA
Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)
BackYard Mishkan
Beloved Community at Gesu Catholic Church
Bethlehem Neighbors for Peace
Black Liberation Party
Black Lives Matter Grassroots
Boston University International Human Rights Clinic
Brooklyn For Peace
Brooklyn Shabbat Kodesh Organizing Team
Butler University Students for Justice in Palestine
CAIR-Minnesota
California Scholars for Academic Freedom
Catalyst Project
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Jewish Nonviolence
Central Jersey JVP
Charity & Security Network
Chavurah for a Free Palestine of Kehilla Synagogue
Chicago Area Peace Action
Christian-Jewish Allies for Justice and Peace in Israel/Palestine
Civil Liberties Defense Center
CODEPINK
Committee for a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine
Communist Workers League
Concerned Families of Westchester
Corporate Accountability Lab
Corvallis Palestine Solidarity
Coulee Region Coalition for Palestinian Rights
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Culture and Conflict Forum
Dallas Palestine Coalition
Delawareans for Palestinian human Rights (DelPHR)
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
DSA Long Beach CA, Steering Committee
Don’t Shoot Portland
East Bay Citizens for Peace
East Side Jews Activist Collective
Edmonds Palestine Israel Network
Episcopal Bishop's Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land (Diocese of Olympia)
Episcopal Peace Fellowship Palestine Israel Network
Equality Labs
Eyewitness Palestine
Face to Face
Fight for the Future
Friends of Sabeel - Colorado
Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA)
Friends of the MST (US)
Friends of Wadi Foquin
Global Justice Center

Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
Grassroots International
Harvard Advocates for Human Rights
Hawai‘i Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines
Highlander Research & Education Center
Hindus for Human Rights
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
ICNA Council for Social Justice
IfNotNow
IfNotNow Los Angeles
Indiana Center for Middle East Peace
Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
International Corporate Accountability Roundtable
International Human Rights Clinic, Cornell Law School
International Human Rights Clinic, Harvard Law School
International Human Rights Law Institute
International Network for Economic Social and Cultural Rights
Islamophobia Studies Center
Jahalin Solidarity
Jewish Voice for Peace - Detroit
Jewish Voice for Peace - North Carolina Triangle Chapter
Jewish Voice for Peace - South Bay
Jewish Voice for Peace Action
Jewish Voice for Peace at the University of California, Los Angeles
Jewish Voice for Peace Austin
Jewish Voice for Peace Bay Area
Jewish Voice for Peace Boston
Jewish Voice for Peace Central Ohio
Jewish Voice for Peace DC-Metro
Jewish Voice for Peace Havurah Network
Jewish Voice for Peace Hudson Valley Chapter
Jewish Voice for Peace Ithaca
Jewish Voice for Peace New Haven
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<td>Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice</td>
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<td>The Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church USA</td>
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The United Methodist Church -- General Board of Church and Society
Tree of Life Educational Fund
Tzedek Chicago Synagogue
U.S. Palestinian Community Network (USPCN)
Union Street Peace
Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community
Unitarian Universalists for Justice In the Middle East
United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network
United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR)
United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC)
University Network for Human Rights
US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR)
US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
US PALESTINIAN COUNCIL
USA Palestine Mental Health Network
USC International Human Rights Clinic
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Virginia Coalition for Human Rights
Visualizing Palestine
Voices For Peace in ME
Washington Advocates for Palestinian Rights
WESPA Foundation, Inc.
Whatcom Peace & Justice Center
White People for Black Lives
Win Without War
Women Against War
Working Families Party
Yale Law School National Lawyers Guild

International Organization Signers

Academia for Equality, Israel
Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Palestine
Al-Marsad - Arab human rights Centre in Golan Heights Heights, occupied Syrian Golan
ALTSEAN-Burma, Thailand
Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, Jordan
Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos de España, Spain
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Bolivia (APDHB), Bolivia
Asociación pro derechos humanos de España, España
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos-APRODEH, Peru
Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc, Morocco
Association tunisienne des femmes démocrates, Tunisia
Associazione delle organizzazioni italiane di cooperazione e solidarietà internazionale, Italy
ASSOPACEPALESTINA, Italy
Australian Centre for International Justice, Australia
Bahrain Human Rights Society, Kingdom of Bahrain
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Egypt
Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO), Cambodia
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), Canada
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, El Salvador
Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos - Perú EQUIUDAD, Peru
Child Rights International Network (CRIN), United Kingdom
Civil Society Institute, Armenia
Colectivo de Abogados JAR, Colombia
Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, Mexico
Defence for Children International, Switzerland
DITSHWANELO - The Botswana Centre for Human Rights, Botswana
European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), Germany
EuroMed Rights, Denmark
European Legal Support Center (ELSC), United Kingdom
FAIR Associates, Indonesia
Finnish League for Human Rights, Finland
Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux, Tunisia
Fundación Regional de Asesoría en Derechos Humanos, Ecuador
Housing and Land Rights Network - Habitat
International Coalition, Switzerland/Egypt
HRM "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan", Kyrgyzstan
Independent Jewish Voices Canada, Canada
Instituto Latinoamericano para una Sociedad y un Derecho Alternativos ILSA, Colombia
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, France
International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW Asia Pacific), Malaysia
Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte, Germany
Jewish Liberation Theology Institute, Canada
Justiça Global, Brasil
Justice For All, Canada
Latvian Human Rights Committee, Latvia
LDH (Ligue des droits de l'Homme), France
League for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran (LDDH), Iran
Ligue des droits humains, Belgium
Maldivian Democracy Network, Maldives
Manushya Foundation, Thailand
Moroccan Organization for Human Rights OMDH, Morocco
Movimento Nacional de Direitos Humanos - MNDH, Brazil
Observatorio Ciudadano, Chile
Odhikar, Bangladesh
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), Palestine
Piattaforma delle Ong italiane in Mediterraneo e Medio Oriente, Italy
Programa Venezolano de Educación-Acción en Derechos Humanos (Provea), Venezuela
Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO), Senegal
Réseau des avocats du maroc contre la peine de mort, Morocco
Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains (RNDDH), Haiti
Rinascimento Green, Italy
Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theory Center, Jerusalem
Scientists For Palestine (S4P), United Kingdom
Serve Globally / Evangelical Covenant Church, International
Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression SCM, France
The Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy, Palestine
The Palestinian Human Rights Organization "PHRO", Lebanon
Union of Agricultural Work Communities, Palestine
Vento di Terra, Italy
World BEYOND War, International
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, International
Zimbabwe human rights association, Zimbabwe