



Making Sheffield an Israeli Apartheid-Free Zone



Sheffield Palestine Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid

COALITION ASSEMBLY STATEMENT Wednesday 13th December 2023

The Sheffield Palestine Coalition against Israeli Apartheid was launched one year ago to campaign, inform and build support for Sheffield to become an Israeli Apartheid Free Zone. The four founding organisations are Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Sheffield Labour Friends of Palestine, Kairos Sheffield and Sheffield Trade Union Council. The devastating attack that Israel is currently conducting against Gaza's population makes the task we set ourselves more important than ever. Today we come together with the aim of building a broad-based and powerful movement, that can develop solidarity with the Palestinian people by making Sheffield an apartheid-free zone once more (as it was in the face of South African apartheid nearly 40 years ago).

STOP THE GENOCIDE – END THE OCCUPATION AND ETHNIC CLEANSING – ABOLISH APARTHEID - FREEDOM FOR PALESTINE

This is Genocide

The Israeli military has subjected Gaza's population to the most intense bombing and widescale collective punishment ever recorded in modern times. Nowhere else in the world have so many civilians been killed in such a short space of time. People now face a serious risk of disease, and even starvation. This is GENOCIDE (see ICHR statement: <https://www.ichr.ps/en/category-1/8600.html>) and it has taken place with military and diplomatic support in which the US and Britain have been at the forefront.

It is incumbent on us to hold to account politicians, commercial interests and educational and cultural institutions that on the national level, and here in Sheffield, are complicit with Israel's oppression and criminal conduct.

End the Occupation and Ethnic cleansing

At the root of the current conflict is not Hamas' brutal attack against Israeli civilians on 7th October 2023 but the culmination of Israel's 75 years of oppression and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population. The Israeli state is the product of a settler-colonial political

movement, Zionism, which has, as its central aim, the replacement of Palestine's indigenous inhabitants with Jewish settlers.

In 1948, Zionist militias expelled 750,000 Palestinians and, with the backing of the major powers, established the state of Israel which has gone on to entrench, with Western assistance, the economic and political dominance of its Jewish citizens at the expense of the remaining Palestinians. With Israel's military occupation of the West Bank, in 1967, there too it has pursued settlement expansion for its Jewish citizens and the expulsion of the Palestinians. The current far right Israeli political leadership, which includes openly fascist elements, is now threatening the ethnic cleansing of Gaza. The barbaric bombardment of Gaza is aimed at making this land unliveable and thereby driving its people into Egypt, with the goal of eliminating the Palestinians as a political force. If this succeeds, it will be one more step in realizing the Zionist dream of a Greater Israel, free of Palestinians.

Apartheid must be dismantled

We are not alone in calling Israel's racist system of oppression apartheid. Al Haq, the Palestinian human rights organisation, as well as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and, from Israel, B'Tselem have produced detailed analytical reports explaining the legal definitions of apartheid and why this terminology applies to the territory under Israeli rule. There can be no room for apartheid and colonialism in our modern world.

We aim to make our city an Israeli Apartheid-Free Zone by building a coalition of civil society organisations to campaign against all forms of complicity in Israel's apartheid rule and ethnic cleansing.

We welcome initiatives and ideas from our diverse coalition members to help build the global BDS movement and secure justice for the Palestinians.

Will you join this movement, as an individual? Will your community group, union, or other organisation also commit to joining this movement? If so, please sign up using this QR code to access the newsletter subscription AND the Sheffield Pledge for Palestine:

