**The International Community Must Support and Protect Palestinian Civil Society**

As a group of regional and international organizations, we express our full solidarity with Palestinian civil society and human rights defenders as Israel continues to escalate its attacks to shut down critical human rights work and silence opposition to its occupation of Palestinian territory and [apartheid](https://cihrs.org/united-nations-israel-attempts-to-silence-growing-condemnation-of-its-apartheid-regime/?lang=en) over the Palestinian people as a whole. We urge the international community to take all necessary action to support and protect Palestinian civil society and human rights defenders and ensure the continuation of their invaluable work.

On 19 October 2021, Israeli Defense Minister [Benny Gantz](https://www.npr.org/2021/10/23/1048690050/israel-palestinian-human-right-groups) designated six leading Palestinian civil society organizations as terrorist organizations, including [Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association](https://www.addameer.org/), [Al-Haq Law in the Service of Man (Al-Haq)](https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/19050.html), [Bisan Center for Research and Development](https://www.bisan.org/), [Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCI-P)](https://www.dci-palestine.org/), [the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)](https://www.uawc-pal.org/index.php?&lang=en), and [the Union of Palestinian Women’s Committees (UPWC)](http://upwc.org.ps/?page_id=4150).

The Israeli government has continued to intensify its attacks on independent Palestinian human rights organizations and their staff, who regularly face smear campaigns, spurious accusations of links to terrorism as well as threats and intimidation, travel bans and movement restrictions, and arrest for their work. Independent [Israeli](https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2017C36_ass.pdf) and [international](https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/11/25/israel-expels-human-rights-watch-director-today) organizations have also been targeted by Israel for their work documenting and advocating against Israel’s human rights violations. Israel’s actions clearly follow the pattern set by authoritarian states in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and around the world.

This unprecedented designation is merely the latest escalation in Israel’s widespread and systematic institutionalized campaign that has aimed to silence and discredit any Palestinian individual or organization that dares seek accountability for Israel’s grave human rights violations, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The “persecution of organizations and persons, by depriving them of fundamental rights and freedoms, because they [oppose apartheid](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.10_International%20Convention%20on%20the%20Suppression%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Apartheid.pdf)” is one of the methods used by Israel to maintain its domination and oppression over the Palestinian people.

On 18 October 2021, the Israeli Interior Minister announced the official revocation of the Jerusalem residency status of Palestinian-French human rights defender and lawyer [Salah Hammouri](https://www.addameer.org/news/4531) based on “breach of allegiance” to the State of Israel, opening the way for more widespread use of [residency revocation](https://cihrs.org/palestine-un-special-procedures-must-respond-to-israels-latest-steps-to-approve-the-residency-revocation-of-palestinian-hrd-salah-hammouri/?lang=en) on this basis, putting thousands of Palestinians in Jerusalem at risk of arbitrary and punitive measures leading to their forcible transfer.

[UN experts](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27702&LangID=E) condemned the designations of the six NGOs as terrorist organizations “a frontal attack on the Palestinian human rights movement, and on human rights everywhere” and called upon the international community to “defend the defenders.” The [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27708&LangID=E) called on Israel to revoke the designations, affirming that "claiming rights before a UN or other international body is not an act of terrorism, advocating for the rights of women in the occupied Palestinian territory is not terrorism, and providing legal aid to detained Palestinians is not terrorism". The designation has also been condemned by other international actors, including members of the [US House of Representatives](https://twitter.com/BettyMcCollum04/status/1451595120395051014?s=20), [Europea](https://twitter.com/EP_HumanRights/status/1452895491969232896?s=20)n [Parliamentarians](https://twitter.com/ManuPineda/status/1452680120343334914?s=20) as well as international [civil](https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/22/israel/palestine-designation-palestinian-rights-groups-terrorists) [society](https://hrp.law.harvard.edu/press-releases/international-human-rights-clinic-statement-in-support-of-palestinian-civil-society-and-human-rights-defenders/).

The designation presents a challenge to the international community, especially democratic states that speak out and support independent human rights organizations and defenders in other parts of the world. Remaining silent is insufficient given the urgent support and protection needs of the six organizations that are now at an additional risk of raids, confiscation of property and materials, closure of bank accounts, arrest of staff members, and closure of their offices. Israel’s attacks against these organizations pose an existential threat to independent Palestinian human rights organizations and civil society who work to monitor and document violations of human rights and provide basic services to the Palestinian people.

We call upon the international community to publicly condemn and reject Israel’s designation of Palestinian human rights and civil society organizations as “terrorist organizations” as an internationally wrongful act, to call for Israel to immediately rescind the designation, and to demand Israel repeal its Anti-Terrorism Law (2016) as it does not meet basic human rights standards and to end all other actions that deny Palestinians their inalienable human rights. We also urge members of the international community to publicly show support for the six organizations and Palestinian civil society at large.

Further, the international community, especially the European Union and its member states who are key supporters of and donors to Palestinian civil society, should ensure that banks and financial institutions in their jurisdiction are notified Israel’s designation of Palestinian organizations is unfounded and inapplicable.

**Signatories:**

1. 11.11.11
2. Abna Al-Quds Club
3. Action for Change and Democracy in Algeria
4. AFKAR for Educational & Cultural Development
5. Agir pour le Changement et la Démocratie en Algérie (ACDA)
6. Al Ataa Charitable Society
7. Albanian Human Rights Group
8. Al Dameer Association for Human Rights
9. Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man
10. Al Karmel Culture and Social Development Association
11. Al-Marsad Arab Human Rights Center in Golan Heights
12. Al Mezan Center for Human Rights
13. Altawasol Forum Society
14. Aman Organization Against Discrimination
15. ANSWER Coalition
16. Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem
17. Arab Canadian Lawyers Association
18. Arab Center for Agricultural Development
19. Artists for Palestine UK
20. Asha Parivar
21. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
22. Asociación Paz con Dignidad
23. Association Africaine de Défense droit de l’Homme (ASADHO)
24. Association Belgo-Palestinienne WB
25. Association des Magistrats Tunisiens
26. Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP)
27. Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS)
28. Association Internationale de Soutien aux Prisonniers Politiques
29. Association Nachaz
30. Association pour le Droit à la Différence (ADD)
31. Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates
32. Association Tunisienne de Soutien des Minorités
33. Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children
34. Australia Palestine Advocacy Network
35. Australian Centre for International Justice
36. Bait Lahia Youth Association Center
37. BankTrack - Netherlands
38. Basma Society for Culture and Arts
39. Basmeh & Zeitooneh
40. Baytna
41. Beity
42. Belady Foundation for Human Rights
43. BDS País Valencià
44. Broederlijk Delen
45. Bytes For All
46. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
47. Canada Palestine Association
48. Canadian BDS Coalition
49. Canadians for Peace and Justice in Kashmir
50. Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME)
51. Canada Palestine Friendship Society
52. Carleton University Students for Justice in Palestine
53. Catholics for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land
54. Center for Civil Liberties
55. Center for Constitutional Rights
56. Center for Defense of Liberties & Civil Rights (Hurryyat)
57. Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)
58. Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)
59. Central Blood Bank Society
60. Coalition of African Lesbians
61. Committee on the Administration of Justice (Northern Ireland)
62. Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network (CEMSOJ)
63. Community Media Center
64. Conectas Direitos Humanos
65. Confederación Intersindical Galega (CIG)
66. Congregations of St. Joseph
67. Citizen News Service (CNS)
68. Citoyenneté, Développement, Cultures et migrations des deux Rives
69. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
70. CNCD-11.11.11
71. Collectif des Familles de Disparus en Algérie (CFDA)
72. Cooperazione Internazionale Sud Sud (CISS)
73. Cultura è libertà una campagna per la Palestina
74. De-Colonizer
75. Defence for Children International - Italy
76. DefendDefenders (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project)
77. Defender Center for Human Rights
78. Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
79. docP - BDS Netherlands
80. Dominican Sisters of Blauvelt, NY
81. Dr. Haider Abdel Shafi Center for Culture & Development
82. Edmonton Run for Palestine
83. European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine (ECCP)
84. European Legal Support Center (ELSC)
85. European Trade Union Network For Justice in Palestine (ETUN)
86. Fares Arab Foundation for Development
87. FIAN International
88. Finnish-Arab Friendship Society
89. Free Gaza Australia
90. Fundación Mundubat
91. Gaza Action Ireland
92. General and Autonomous Confederation of Workers in Algeria (CGATA)
93. General Confederation of the Portuguese Workers (CGTP-IN)
94. Gibanje za pravice Palestincev
95. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
96. Grassroots AlQuds
97. Groupe LOTUS
98. Grup de Suport a Juani Rishmawi
99. Gruppo Ibriq per la cultura e la causa Palestinese
100. Hassan El Saadawi Association for Democracy and Equality
101. Human Rights and Democracy Center (SHAMS)
102. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
103. International Accountability Project
104. International Association for the Support of Political Prisoners
105. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
106. International Commission to Support Palestinian Rights
107. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
108. International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW AP)
109. Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign
110. Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
111. Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD)
112. Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) - Finland
113. Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) - Germany
114. Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions UK
115. Jabalia Rehabilitation Society
116. Joussour De Citoyenneté
117. Jurists without Chains
118. Justice for Iran
119. Justitia Center for Legal Protection of Human Rights in Algeria
120. Kairos Ireland
121. Kairos Sabeel Netherlands
122. Kenya Human Rights Commission
123. Land Research Center
124. Leadership Team of the Dominican Sisters and Associates of Racine, WI
125. League for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran (LDDHI)
126. Lebanese Center for Human Rights
127. Libya Al-Mostakbal
128. Libyan Center for Freedom of the Press
129. Libyan Network for Legal Aid
130. Libyan Women's Platform for Peace
131. Ligue Algérienne de Défense des Droits de L'homme
132. Ligue des droits de l'Homme
133. Ligue Suisse des Droits de l'Homme - Genève
134. MA'AN Development Center
135. MADRE - USA
136. Maine Voices for Palestinian Rights
137. Makan
138. MakeShiftPublishing BV
139. Manushya Foundation
140. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
141. MENA Rights Group
142. Mwatana for Human Rights
143. Nā Pua Kūʻē – Hawaiʻi Dissenters
144. National Autonomous Union of Public Administration Staff (SNAPAP)
145. National Fisheries Solidarity
146. National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT)
147. Netherlands Palestine Committee
148. Niagara Movement for Justice in Palestine-Israel (NMJPI)
149. NOVACT
150. New Weapons Research Group onlus
151. Oakville Palestinian Rights Association
152. Odhikar
153. One Justice
154. Organisation 23\_10 d'Appui au Processus de Transition Démocratique
155. Österreichische Liga für Menschenrechte
156. Our Revolution Northern Virginia (ORNOVA)
157. Palestina Solidariteit vzw
158. Palästina Spricht
159. Palestinakomiteen i Larvik-Sandefjord
160. Palestine Solidarity Alliance of South Africa
161. Palestine Solidarity Campaign - Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland)
162. Palestine Solidarity Campaign - Gauteng (Johannesburg)
163. Palestine Solidarity Campaign - Cape Town
164. Palestinian Solidarity Group at Mount Holyoke College
165. Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)
166. Palestinian Assembly for Liberation
167. Palestinian Children in Israeli Military Prisons (PIM)
168. Palestinian Counseling Center
169. Palestinian Youth Movement
170. Pax Christi Flanders
171. Pax Christi USA
172. PeaceWomen Across the Globe
173. Plan International - Jordan
174. Platform of French NGOs for Palestine
175. Portuguese League for Human Rights - Civitas
176. Princeton Committee on Palestine
177. Project48
178. Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice
179. Racial Literacy Groups
180. Réseau International des Droits Humains (RIDH)
181. Rumbo a Gaza
182. Salaam Ragazzi dell'Olivo, Comitato di Trieste
183. Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
184. Sareyyet Ramallah
185. Sexual Rights Intiative
186. Sheffield Labour Friends of Palestine
187. Sinistra Italiana
188. Socialist Party (India)
189. SOLSOC
190. South African BDS Coalition
191. South African Jews for a Free Palestine (SAJFP)
192. SumOfUs
193. Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)
194. Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ)
195. Syrian Justice and Accountability Center (SJAC)
196. The Community Action Center at Al-Quds University
197. The Cultural Forum Center
198. The Culture and Free Thought Association
199. The National Society for Democracy and Law
200. The Palestine Committee of Norway
201. The Palestine Project
202. The Palestinian Developmental Women Studies Association (PDWSA)
203. The Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO)
204. The Rights Forum
205. The Society of Women Graduates
206. Toronto Palestine Film Festival
207. Trade Union Friends of Palestine
208. Transnational Institute
209. Trócaire
210. Tunisian Association of Defending Individual Liberties (ADLI)
211. Tunisian Association of the Democratic Women (ATFD)
212. Tunisian Youth Movement in Germany
213. UK-Palestine Mental Health Network
214. Union Aid Abroad APHEDA
215. Union Juive Française pour la Paix (UJFP)
216. Union Syndicale Solidaires
217. United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine - Israel
218. Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
219. USA Palestine Mental Health Network
220. Visualizing Palestine
221. Viva Salud
222. WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
223. Women Against Violence
224. Women in Black Vienna
225. Women Now For Development
226. Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC)
227. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
228. Women's Studies Centre
229. Youth Development Association (YDA)
230. Youth for Tawergha
231. Zochrot