



**The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) is a wide coalition of the largest Palestinian mass organizations, trade unions, networks and organizations.**

BNC member organizations:

Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine

Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO)

Palestinian Nat'l Institute for NGOs

Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition

Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS)

Federation of Indep. Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Workers

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Women

Union of Palestinian Farmers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Teachers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Writers

Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUUPE)

Union of Professional Associations

Gen. Union of Palestinian Peasants

Union of Public Employees in Palestine-Civil Sector

Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (STW)

Nat'l Committee for Grassroots Resistance

Pal. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

Nat'l Committee to Commemorate the Nakba

Civic Coalition for the Defense of Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem

Coalition for Jerusalem

Union of Pal. Charitable Organizations

Palestinian Economic Monitor

Union of Youth Activity Centers-Palestine Refugee Camps

Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Initiative

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## **Palestinian Freedom Riders Challenge Israeli Apartheid**

Occupied Palestine, 15 November 2011 -- The Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) salutes the brave Palestinian Freedom Riders who today challenged through civil disobedience the Israeli occupation and apartheid [1]. With creative tactics inspired by the U.S. civil rights movement and with resolve stemming from a century of ongoing and richly diverse Palestinian civil and popular resistance to settler colonialism and apartheid, the Freedom Riders have highlighted the need to stand up to Israel's impunity and to further its growing isolation in order to compel it to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

By exposing Israel's segregated and colonial buses serving illegal settlers in the occupied Palestinian territory, this initiative, which is a continuation of a century of Palestinian civil and popular resistance to Israeli occupation, colonization and apartheid, helped to show the world the true nature of Israel's regime of oppression.

In a statement released today, one of the initiative's organizers stated:

“As the Arab Spring spreads across the region, rekindling hope for freedom, social justice and democracy to replace tyranny and repression, we struggle on the ground for the basic, comprehensive rights of the entire Palestinian people. We call on people of conscience around the world to compel Israel into complying with international law by applying creative, sustainable, and context-sensitive boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) initiatives. We too deserve freedom and justice.”

With their particular focus on the need to take BDS actions against Israeli company Egged and French company Veolia, both of which run bus lines serving the illegal Israeli colonies, the Palestinian Freedom Riders have called attention to the complicity of Israeli and international corporations in maintaining Israel's occupation and apartheid.

We call on conscientious citizens of the world and all groups advocating human rights and a just peace to stand up to Israel's violations of international law by implementing creative, context-sensitive and sustainable BDS campaigns.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said: “Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent.”

Today, the world has realized, once again, that Palestinians stand with our backs straight, persisting with our struggle for freedom and dignity. But as in the civil rights struggle in the US and the anti-apartheid struggle in South

Africa, Palestinians need effective international solidarity to end Israeli impunity and hold it accountable for its colonial and apartheid crimes.

Support the Palestinian struggle against Israeli apartheid and occupation! BDS Now!

**BNC Secretariat**

[1] In its most recent session in Cape Town, South Africa, the Russell Tribunal on Palestine concluded that, "Israel's rule over the Palestinian people, wherever they reside, collectively amounts to a single integrated regime of apartheid."

<http://www.russelltribunalonpalestine.com/en/sessions/south-africa>