



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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The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) supports the legitimate demands of Palestinian political prisoners in their open-ended hunger strike, and calls for stepping up the global BDS campaign to end Israeli impunity

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For the fifteenth day in a row, our brave political prisoners continue their open-ended hunger strike in Israeli prisons, challenging the walls of silence and international complicity, and refusing indignation and the persistent violations of their rights.

While today marks the historic UN day of solidarity with South African political prisoners, the UN, under US hegemony, has turned its back on the plight of Palestinian political prisoners, including hundreds of child prisoners, languishing under severe hardships in Israel's notoriously inhumane prisons. This put the moral burden on international civil society to act, by applying effective pressure on Israel to release all Palestinian and Arab political prisoners and to respect their internationally recognized rights in the meanwhile.

The BNC, the largest Palestinian civil society coalition representing the overwhelming majority of unions, coalitions and political forces, fully supports the hunger strike called for by Palestinian prisoners and endorses their legitimate demands for:

1. Ending the policy of solitary confinement
2. Ending the ban on college education for prisoners
3. Ending the policy of collective punishment, including the denial of visits, and imposing financial penalties on prisoners
4. Ending the policy of provocative incursions and invasions of prisoners' cells
5. Stopping the policy of shackling the hands and legs of prisoners during visits by family members and lawyers
6. Improving the health conditions of hundreds of sick and injured prisoners and providing them with the needed treatments
7. Allowing books, newspapers and clothes to enter prisons
8. Allowing the broadcast of satellite TV channels that have been banned by Israeli Prison Service (IPS)
9. Ending the policy of restricting visits to 30 minutes every month, and the arbitrary denial of visits

In support of Palestinian political prisoners' hunger strike, the BNC calls for intensifying the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel as the most effective way to pressure Israel until it abides by the Palestinian people's rights in full by:

1. Intensifying the boycott of Israeli academic institutions—all complicit in Israel's occupation and apartheid--in response to the denial of Palestinian prisoners' basic right to education
2. Organizing broad boycott and divestment campaigns around the world targeting Israeli and international companies that have contracts with the IPS or other authorities to provide the large sector of prisons, detention facilities and the farcical Israeli court system. These contracts make companies complicit in grave violations of human rights international law resulting from the exploitation of Palestinian prisoners to generate profits, forcing prisoners to pay exorbitant prices due to the lack of alternatives. We demand that the Palestinian leadership bans these companies from private and public tenders, and ask for the strict application of the boycott legislation in the Arab world against these companies.
3. Boycotting the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) and expelling it from the World Medical Association (WMA) as a result of the systematic collusion of its members with torture, and its persistent violations of the seminal anti-torture code for doctors, and the Declaration of Tokyo, obliging doctors to denounce and report torture whenever they encounter it. There is voluminous evidence documenting the visits of Israeli doctors to prisoners, seeing prisoners at various points during and after episodes of torture, and failing to take a proper history or make protest, but instead, returning the prisoners to their interrogators. This includes the IMA's complicity and silence during the current Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike, as IPS has been reported to confiscate salt from prisoners rooms, which is essential for their health and safety during the strike. We recall here how the Medical Association of South Africa's was obliged to withdraw from the WMA on the issue of medical complicity¹.

The Palestinian prisoners' movement has always been at the forefront of the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and self determination. As the hunger of Palestinian prisoners bangs the walls of their prison cells², we in turn to prod the conscience of international civil society to hold Israel accountable to international law by intensifying BDS campaigns against it.

¹ For more information, see: <http://www.bricup.org.uk/documents/archive/BRICUPNewsletter45.pdf>. Both Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) have submitted documentation to the WMA in support of the demand for examining the record of complicity of the IMA in torture.

² Refers to Ghassan Kanafani's famous "Why didn't they bang the sides of the tank?" from his novel, *Men in the Sun*. Kanafani is a leading Palestinian writer who was assassinated by Israel in 1972 at the age of 36.