

Statement of the Palestinian Sociological and Anthropological Association

Ramallah 06 /12/ 2025

Subject: National Associations Must Uphold Suspension of the Israeli Sociological Society at the International Sociological Association's December 2025 Meeting of its National Associations

We are living through the most brutal stage of the Zionist genocidal project against the Palestinian people and our land, now in its eighth decade. Today, the realities of the Israeli settler-colonial military regime and the broad Israeli political and societal consensus supporting the genocide of our people are being exposed to the world. It took two years, and the first live broadcast of a genocide in history in the Gaza Strip, for many sociologists, including the International Sociological Association, to finally respond to the call of the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. The global BDS movement is led by the Palestinian BDS National Committee, the largest coalition in Palestinian civil society, including trade unions and professional associations. It draws inspiration from the international anti-apartheid movement in South Africa in calling for a boycott of Israel, divestment, and sanctions against the state, its complicit institutions, and the companies that support its crimes. The BDS movement is one of the few effective tools available to Palestinians and their allies in the global solidarity movement to pressure the Israeli colonial regime—long protected by European and US diplomatic immunity and deep complicity—to comply with basic internationally recognized legal standards: ending the occupation, implementing the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and achieving full equality for all Palestinians denied their basic political rights.

The suspension of the Israeli Sociological Society in 2025 was an important first step in this direction. Like all Israeli institutions, the Israeli Sociological Society is embedded in, benefits from, reproduces, and actively justifies the regime of military occupation, racial segregation, and colonial domination. Its members, like the vast majority of Israeli society, are mostly active-duty or reserve soldiers in an army that inflicts daily killing, displacement, humiliation, and brutal subjugation on Indigenous Palestinians. Many also conduct research with the genocidal Israeli military. The International Sociological Association applied to the Israeli Sociological Society the same standard it had previously applied to the Russian Society of Sociologists, whose suspension followed its failure to oppose Russia's war and occupation of Ukraine. By suspending the Israeli Sociological Society, the International Sociological Association rectified a historical double standard: for the first time, the lives, dignity, and freedom of Palestinians were treated, even if symbolically, on par with those of Europeans or any other people under military occupation.

However, a concerted effort is now underway within the International Sociological Association to overturn the suspension of the Israeli Sociological Society. This is a blatantly racist and colonial endeavor that applies a double standard to human suffering and the recognition of human dignity. This campaign is being orchestrated while the Israeli Sociological Society continues to lack the moral courage to describe what is happening in Palestine as genocide, to recognize the fundamental rights of the Indigenous Palestinian people under international law—particularly the right of return for refugees—or even to acknowledge the immense harm inflicted on Palestinians as a result of the deep complicity of Israeli academic institutions in planning, implementing, and justifying Israeli war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated against our people. The Israeli Sociological Society is yet to even acknowledge the fundamental Zionist settler-colonial injustice against our people: the establishment of Israel on stolen Palestinian land and the displacement of the majority of the Indigenous population. This refusal is not accidental: it reflects the Israeli Sociological Society's deep complicity with the Israeli military and the structures of racist segregation, apartheid, settler-colonial

violence, and genocide, which the leaders of the campaign to reinstate the Israeli Sociological Association in the International Sociological Association are attempting to normalize within our organization.

Members of the Palestinian Sociological and Anthropological Association live and work under the longest military occupation in modern history. Sociologically, this occupation manifests itself as a system of permanent military rule based on racial segregation, apartheid and the confinement of Palestinians to racial enclaves through the brute force of an occupying army supported by armed settler militias. This system is based on the earlier Zionist settler-colonial takeover of Palestine in 1948, during which more than 800,000 Palestinians—four out of every five people—were displaced, more than 500 villages and eleven towns were destroyed, and refugees were prevented from returning to their lands. We study and document a society that survived the attempted genocide of 1948 and is now facing another, accelerated genocide—one that leading legal scholars and experts on genocide have explicitly defined as such. Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip—which comprises less than 1% of our historic homeland, where a quarter of those ethnically cleansed in 1948 are concentrated and imprisoned—has revealed to the world the true face of Israeli settler-colonial violence. At the same time, Israel's brutal aggression in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has escalated rapidly in scale, speed, and savagery.

From Birzeit University, our organization's headquarters, we write from within a network of walled ghettos, surrounded by Israeli settler-colonies built on land seized from Palestinian farmers; connected by Israeli roads, which we are forbidden to use; and controlled by military checkpoints staffed by 18-year-old military conscripts enforcing a system of racist domination. These soldiers, along with the heavily armed settler militias they protect, have murdered more than 1,000 Palestinians in the West Bank alone—a quarter of them children—during the genocidal war on Gaza, simply for insisting on remaining on their land. This violence is part of an ongoing project to destroy our people since 1948, of which the current and ongoing genocide is but the latest stage. In the West Bank, entire refugee camps—whose inhabitants are descendants of those forcibly displaced in 1948—have been bombed, bulldozed, and destroyed, and their residents forcibly uprooted. More than 30,000 refugees have been displaced from the Jenin, Tulkarm, and Nur Shams refugee camps. Leaked footage has documented the scale of Israel's brutality and its attempts to break our will, including systematic physical and sexual torture in newly established Israeli detention camps, whose population—which was 10,000 before the genocide in Gaza—has more than doubled.

National Sociological Associations must reject any attempt to normalize, minimize, or justify this horrific, sustained violence. The Israeli Sociological Society has neither condemned nor rejected the genocide in Gaza, nor has it fulfilled any of its obligations regarding the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of our refugees to return to our homes and lands from which we were displaced in 1948, the end of the occupation, and the dismantling of entrenched system of racial segregation and apartheid. The reinstatement of the Israeli Sociological Society would legitimize a racist hierarchy within the International Sociological Association: a hierarchy in which Palestinians, as well as similar people and communities outside of Europe, are deemed unworthy of the same protection, empathy, and solidarity afforded to others. The Palestinian Sociological and Anthropological Association calls upon all National Associations to stand with historical justice and support the suspension of the Israeli Sociological Society. Defending the right to life, dignity, and freedom in all its forms means rejecting the readmission of institutions that support occupation, racist segregation, apartheid, displacement, and genocide anywhere.

No to occupation, genocide, racism, and human hierarchies within the International Sociological Association.

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