

Tear Down the Apartheid Wall! Boycott and Sanctions! Free Palestine!
2nd Palestinian National and International Week against the
Apartheid Wall, November 9-16

The Second International Week against the Apartheid Wall in Palestine, called for by the grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign, is under way. The week is a time of Palestinian national and international solidarity and mobilization, and an important opportunity to raise awareness about and opposition to the Apartheid Wall being built throughout Palestine.

The Apartheid Wall “project” began in June 2002, but its beginnings go back much further. The goals have always been clear: to strangle and eradicate Palestinian existence through land confiscation/annexation, economic and infrastructural devastation, communal imprisonment, humiliation and suffering, and other forms of brutal control imposed by the Occupation. Once completed, the Apartheid Wall will de facto annex over 50% of the Occupied West Bank. But any Wall with any path is intended to ensure the total demise of Palestinian life.

At this time last year, the Wall was being completed in its “first phase,” in the northern West Bank, where the Palestinian fruit basket, i.e. the most fertile lands, agriculture, and water resources, are located. Today, these areas are indescribably devastated. Entire districts have had all their lands stolen or isolated. Lands are inaccessible and drying out. Schools, work places, and medical care are unreachable, and the Occupation Forces have set up gates that impose closures on entire villages. While at this time of year the olive harvest season should take place, people cannot reach their lands. The only sounds people hear outside their homes are the noises of bulldozers and the military. More than 20,000 citrus trees have died on the isolated land of Falamyia, north of Qalqilya, and the total area of greenhouses decreased in Jayous from 170 dunums to 75 dunums in less than one year because farmers weren’t able to access their land.

This year, the Wall is nearly completed in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, and is beginning in the southern district of Hebron. In an unimaginable extension of the tentacles of Occupation, the concrete Wall, barbed wires, ditches, sensors, foot paths, cameras, and military patrol paths are spreading everywhere. Today, the Wall is over 1/3 complete and is in place in 9 of the 11 West Bank districts. The Occupation has been met with popular resistance in numerous villages, and the Occupation Forces have responded with various forms of suppression, along with attempts to legitimize its system by demanding appeals in its courts. But the only acceptable call is for the Wall to be torn down!

The continuing resistance in Palestine against the Wall is at the center of the larger Palestinian struggle. The imposition of the Wall is clearly seen as the final stage of the Occupation in its goal of ensuring an Apartheid-like Bantustan existence that mocks the notion of statehood. It is perhaps the most massive Occupation measure undertaken since 1948; it corresponds with Oslo and is a framework to Oslo’s successor, the Road Map; it is the real face of so-called “negotiations.” Ghettos, reservations, Apartheid, Bantustans, and open-air prisons best describe Palestinian reality.

Following the decision against the Wall by the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the movement against the Wall has gained further momentum, and the illegality of the Wall and the Occupation has become a focal point of international condemnation. But barely more than a week after the Court’s decision, the Israeli Occupation Forces committed one of the largest demolitions that has yet taken place for the construction of the Wall, eradicating an entire marketplace in Barta’a Al-Sharqiya. Both during the Court’s deliberations and since the ICJ decision, construction/destruction for the Wall has continued non-stop. While the decision has reminded the world of the need to call for a boycott and sanctions, as was the case following the Court’s important decision against South Africa in 1971, without international pressure this call will remain mere rhetoric.

Last year, during the week of November 9-16, demonstrations took place in all districts of the 1967 Occupied Territories, as the Palestinian grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign mobilized with over 50 local committees in areas affected by the Wall in an act of unity and determination to defeat this final plan: to stop the wall, to tear down all its sections, to return all the land that has been stolen, and to demand compensation for losses. Over 70 demonstrations took place worldwide in solidarity, and the world wide mobilization received significant coverage in the Arab media. Since then, the Campaign has continued its organizing efforts, and new committees have formed in devastated areas, calling for national organization against the Wall and preparing for continued resistance.

In the face of the blatant refusals by Israel to comply with UN resolutions and even with the verdict of the International Court of Justice, this year, mobilization is forced to go beyond the call to tear down the Apartheid Wall! Today, the Campaign and the world wide solidarity and civil society movement is demanding that calls for boycotts and sanctions must be integral to all anti-Occupation/anti-Wall actions. Pressure needs to become concrete and effective.

This year the International Week against the Apartheid Wall has been endorsed by movements, organizations, and networks all around the world, marking a new trend towards widespread international awareness of the Apartheid system Israel is tightening around the necks of Palestinians every day.

Their aim is to enslave our future in ghettos, to control our lives and at the same time to use us as cheap labor in Israeli industrial zones. In short: the goal of this Israeli Apartheid system is the denial of our rights and our dignity to live freely in our country like any other people around the world should be allowed to do.

We will thus continue our resistance with the support of all the groups, movements, organizations, unions, and individuals that are organizing during this week in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and in order to strengthen our calls worldwide:

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Boycott and Sanctions against Israeli Apartheid!
Free Palestine!