



Palestine

Solidarity Network

Aotearoa

19 November 2019

Newsletter No 11

Kia ora

We were incredulous when we read the 12 November tweet from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemning rocket attacks on Israel while ignoring the political assassinations by the Israel Defence Force which provoked the retaliatory rockets.



The first item in the newsletter asks you to take a minute to email the Prime Minister.

One minute of your time for Palestine!

Yes, just one minute of your time is needed to protest the outrageous 12 November tweet from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



MFATgovtNZ @MFATgovtNZ · Nov 12

We are deeply concerned about the firing of rockets from Gaza to Israel. Targeting civilian populations is unacceptable and we condemn these attacks. New Zealand urges all parties on the ground to avoid confrontation and exercise maximum restraint.

51

52

154

What we want you to do right now

Email the Prime Minister j.ardern@ministers.govt.nz to demand the government remove the racist tweet and condemn the political assassinations carried out by Israel which caused rockets to be launched from GAZA.

(Copy your email to Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters w.peters@ministers.govt.nz and your local member of parliament – no matter what party!)

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT YOU COULD SAY:

Kia ora Ms Ardern,

I am requesting you take action to remove the racist, misleading tweet sent from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 12 November.



MFATgovtNZ @MFATgovtNZ · Nov 12

We are deeply concerned about the firing of rockets from Gaza to Israel. Targeting civilian populations is unacceptable and we condemn these attacks. New Zealand urges all parties on the ground to avoid confrontation and exercise maximum restraint.

51

52

154

This is a particularly vile and misleading message straight from the Israel propaganda sheet.

Anyone reading the tweet would think the rockets came as an unprovoked attack against the civilian population of Israel. They did not.

The rockets were fired in response to two political assassinations conducted by Israel when it simultaneously attacked the homes of two leaders of Islamic Jihad in Gaza and Syria, killing Bahaa Abu Al Ata and his wife in their house in Gaza, and the son of Akram al-Ajjouri in the al-Ajjouri house in Damascus.

These attacks are part of interim Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's campaign to regain political power.

Whatever one thinks of the policies and actions of Islamic Jihad they are the micro issue. The macro issue is the brutal, racist behaviour of Israel which has terrorised the Palestinian population of Palestine and the wider Middle East for over 70 years.

But your government is ignoring the biggest crime and the biggest criminals and blaming Israel's victims for the violence in GAZA. So far at least 34 Palestinians have been killed, including several children.



Why is your government condemning the firing of rockets into Israel but giving a nod and a wink when the Israeli government carries out political assassinations and then murders Palestinian children with impunity?

With this tweet you are standing with a brutal, racist oppressor and turning your back on the Palestinian victims.

We expect better from you as leader of our government.

We request you immediately remove the racist tweet and condemn the political assassinations carried out by Israeli and likewise condemn the resulting murder of Palestinian civilians.

Please respond urgently.

NAME

Another example. Here is a marvellous letter sent from Christchurch Teacher John Edmundson to the Prime Minister

Kia ora Ms Arden,

As a teacher who had to manage a distressed group of school students in lock-down for several hours only a kilometer from the Linwood Mosque shooting, and who lost two long-time friends in

the Deans Ave mosque (Haji Daoud Nabi and Junaid Ismail, whom I had known since he was 3 years old) I take the issue of Islamophobic racism very seriously. For this reason, I am extremely concerned over the recent MFAT tweet condemning rocket fire into Israel. As has always been the case in the past with this conflict the death toll has been massively disproportionate and in favour of Israel, yet alarmingly, so has this government's response. In the recent upsurge this week, no Israelis (zero) have died as a result of Palestinian actions but at least 34 Palestinians - women, children and men - have died at the hands of Israeli operatives and their lethal high tech arsenal. Palestinians who oppose Israeli domination over their lives are meant to feel unsafe anywhere in the world and this threat is backed up with deadly force. So far this year, 98 Palestinians and 10 Israelis have been killed, a ratio of almost 1 to 10, yet it is the actions of Palestinians, an occupied and oppressed people, that is focused on in the tweet. This year's death toll is by no means atypical. Since 2008 5,523 Palestinians (561 women and over 1,200 children (989 boys and 245 girls) and 237 Israelis have died.

More Palestinian girls have been killed than the entire total of Israelis. Every single one of these children had a life cut short, leaves a grieving family to try to go on living in the open prison that is Gaza, every day wondering when the next family member will be taken. All these statistics from a United Nations body <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

That some Palestinians then choose to retaliate by firing largely ineffective rockets back into Israel is not the real issue here, yet it is the act that drew this MFAT tweet. In the context of the ongoing conflict in Israel/Palestine, this one-sided response is clearly racist. I find myself compelled to ask, what value does this government put on those Palestinian lives when its official agency takes such a one sided stance? When since 2008, 23 times as many Palestinian have died and our government chooses to express how "deeply concerned" it is over the desperate acts of the oppressed, I truly wonder where our humanity lies and whether we have in fact come to see Israelis as 'like ourselves' and Palestinians as 'other'. It is the equivalent of having singled out an act of resistance by the ANC while remaining quiet about daily aggression by the Apartheid South African regime, a parallel made starkly clear by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Such partisan treatment of the issue of Israel/Palestine, which conforms entirely to Israel (the occupying power)'s agenda can only give succour to Islamophobia in this country and internationally, since New Zealand is seen as a world leader in this area of international relations. The Christchurch shooter will, I am sure, be delighted to learn that our government is presenting interim Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's perspective as our own.

Nga mihi,

John Edmundson

Well done Hamilton!



Hamilton supporters gathered for a roadside protest against the Israeli attacks on GAZA. They had hundreds of toots for their “Toot for GAZA” sign and just a few people giving the fingers.

Congratulations to the five winners from the last newsletter!

We have sent maps to the first five supporters to correctly identify the Israeli political leaders who made the racist statements:

Ayelet Shaked made the statement “What’s so horrifying about understanding that the entire Palestinian people are the enemy?” and **Benjamin Netanyahu** made the statement “Israel isn’t a state of all its citizens...Israel is the nation state of the Jewish people...and it alone?”

29 November – United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

More details are here: <https://www.un.org/en/events/palestinianday/index.shtml>

Several centres are organising activities to mark this day. Get in touch with your local group – contact details at the end of the newsletter – to find out what is happening in your area.

Early warning for three important events coming up next year.

1. BDS Conference in Sydney next July.

The conference is titled “BDS – Driving Global Justice for Palestine, 24-26 July 2020” and is being hosted at University of Sydney.

More details are here: <https://www.bdssydney.org/>

2. Visit by Mazin Qumsiyeh.



Mazin is a well-respected Christian Palestinian scientist and author and the director of the Palestine Museum of Natural History. Mazin will be here for a week following the BDS conference in Australia. We are planning for him to visit all the main centres over the week of 27th July next year.

3. “Imprisoning a Generation”

Wellington Palestine are in touch with Zelda Edmunds, the director of a new film called “Imprisoning a Generation” which is to have its New Zealand premier in Wellington early next year. The film follows the experiences of four Palestinian children imprisoned by Israel and this issue will be the focus of Wellington Palestine activities next year.



Date and Time
Location

Additional Information
Sponsor/ Co-sponsors



The trailer can be seen here <https://www.anemoia.net/>

The film will be available for our local Palestine solidarity groups to screen between 30th March and 17th April next year – contact your local group for details. Contact details at the end of the newsletter.

Julie Webb-Pullman's fundraising tour of New Zealand is almost at an end

She has a last meeting in Christchurch next week before flying back to GAZA. If you haven't made a donation to her fundraising campaign the bank account details are on this notice below

**YOU CAN HELP INVESTIGATE WAR CRIMES IN
GAZA**

**GAZA-BASED NEW ZEALAND JOURNALIST AND WAR
CRIMES INVESTIGATOR JULIE WEBB-PULLMAN IS
TOURING NEW ZEALAND TO RAISE FUNDS TO EMPLOY
MORE WAR CRIMES INVESTIGATORS IN GAZA.**

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED
ACCOUNT NAME: PALESTINE SOLIDARITY NETWORK
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 38 9015 0849542 02
REFERENCE: GAZA

**TOUR ORGANISED BY PALESTINE SOLIDARITY
NETWORK AOTEAROA
WWW.PSNA.NZ**



Dr Abu Sitta presentation

We have been asked several times for a link to the presentation by Dr Salman Abu Sitta which was an eye-opening look at the issue of the right of return of Palestinian refugees to their homes and land in Palestine.

The link is here and well worth the time to watch: <https://vimeo.com/367673717>

Delegations to Members of Parliament

More MPs are being visited every week but we still have a long way to go...

Are you able to organise a delegation of two or three people to speak with your local MP and deliver a copy of the "Let's talk about Palestine/Israel" booklet?

We are aiming to cover all government MPs by the end of this year BUT TO DO THIS WE NEED YOUR HELP!

If you can please email secretary@PSNA.nz for your local MP.

3rd Reprint - If you haven't purchased one yet - buy a copy of our excellent small booklet of common questions and answers on the Middle East conflict.



We are on our third reprint of the booklet.

Have you got your copy yet?

Buy a copy for yourself and maybe a few to give to friends and family. Send your address in an email to bronwensummers@gmail.com and pay \$5 online for a single copy – includes post and packaging – add \$2 each for extra copies)
Account Name: Palestine Solidarity Network
Account No: 38 9015 0849542 00

T-shirts and merchandise for sale:



Our spokesperson John Minto recently walked Te Araroa (from Cape Reinga to Tekapo – he will finish in Summer) wearing this T-shirt. He still has the T-shirt but has lost the beard!

We have these T-shirts for sale:

\$26 + postage XXL, XL, L, M, S, XS (size 8)

\$30 + postage XXXXL, XXXL

Email bronwensummers@gmail.com or phone 03 55 00 132
txt 0220850161

Alternatively, you can buy merchandise including T-shirts from our website

<http://www.palestinesolidaritynz.net/shop.html>

Are you able to donate a cup of coffee a month to the campaign?

We will need some serious money to make our campaign as effective as possible. For example, we will need somewhere in the vicinity of \$25,000 to bring speakers to New Zealand over the next year and organise large public meetings to help spread the message.

You can help. Are you able to donate a cup of coffee a month to the campaign? In other words, **can you afford to make an automatic payment of \$5 per month to support the Palestinian struggle?** (If you can afford more that would be great!)

Our account details are:

Account name: Palestine Solidarity Network

Account number: 38-9015-0849542-00

Or Pay Pal account: admin@palestinesolidaritynz.net

We are happy to provide a receipt upon request (however, we are not a registered charity so this is not tax-deductible)

Links to important stories

Victoria University: Shut Down Unethical Israeli Prize

<https://www.change.org/p/victoria-university-of-wellington-victoria-university-shut-down-unethical-israeli-prize>

Why is this important?

Victoria University of Wellington has refused to remove an essay prize funded by the Apartheid government of Israel. The prize is insulting to the university's own Palestinian students who have been forced from their homeland by the Israeli government. The Embassy of Israel Prize of \$250 is awarded to one student per year on the merit of an essay on one of the given topics - including "Israel in the Middle East", "Israel's bilateral relations with its neighbours", and "Israel's democracy in the context of the Middle East". This prize is unethical because the Israeli government is guilty of building illegal settlements in Palestinian territory, preventing the flow of essential resources, and denying Palestinians the right to vote. It is a regime akin to Apartheid South Africa.

Petition to stop global tourism sites from profiteering from stolen Palestinian Lands

There is currently a petition from Amnesty International NZ calling on Trip Advisor to stop profiting from illegal Israeli settlements. The target is 1000 signatories, let us help them achieve this!

<https://www.amnesty.org.nz/tell-tripadvisor-pull-out-illegal-israeli-settlements-occupied-palestine>

Please note Trip Advisor are not the only company to do this, others include Air BnB, Expedia, and [booking.com](https://www.booking.com)

See Amnesty International's full report titled ***Destination: Occupation*** here:

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE1594902019ENGLISH.PDF>

<https://www.newstalk.com/Tourism-giants-fuelling-human-rights-violations-with-Israeli-settlement-listings>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=92&v=-lk7VLsAKIM

The Daily Blog has regular articles in it about Palestine/Israel.

<https://thedailyblog.co.nz/>

More ways you can get involved

- Forward this Newsletter – If you know people who may be interested in this movement, please forward this Newsletter to them.
- Join in local activities in your area monthly Rallies - In Auckland, we hold a monthly Protest at 2.00 pm on the first Saturday of every month. Please consider doing the same in your community. Contact <mailto:admin@palestinesolidaritynz.net?subject=Flags> and Banners if you would like to know where and how to get Flags and Banners
- Help set up a Students for Justice in Palestine groups on your campus
- Tell Your MP your opinions on Divestment and Sanctions of Israel.
- Write Letters to Newspapers – Call Talkback Radio

- Keep in touch with the campaign on social media
 - NZ Palestine Solidarity Network website: <http://PalestineSolidarityNZ.net/index.html>
 - NZ Palestine Solidarity Network Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/671376706283605/
 - NZ Palestine Solidarity Network email: admin@PalestineSolidarityNZ.net
- Keep Updated on our Facebook pages and websites (listed below)

Regional	
Whangarei	Freedom & Peace for Palestine from Whangarei
Auckland	PSNA – Auckland – Tamaki Makaurau
Hamilton	Palestine Human Rights Campaign Waikato
Tauranga	Tauranga Moana 4 Palestine
Napier/Hastings	Aotearoa Standing with Palestine
Palmerston North	PSNA Palmerston North
Wellington	Wellington Palestine
Nelson	Te Tau Ihu (Nelson) Palestine
Christchurch	PSNA Christchurch
Dunedin	Dunedin for Justice in Palestine
Invercargill	PSNA Invercargill

New Zealand Affiliates	
	Boycott Divestment and Sanctions NZ
	Palestine Human Rights
	Kia Ora Gaza
	Letters for Palestine
	Auckland Peace Action
	Global Peace and Justice Auckland

John Minto

Spokesperson

Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa