

## **STATEMENT IN OCCASION OF THE WORKERS' BOYCOTT CALL**

Today, 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2007, we, the Palestinian labour federations, vocational and professional trade unions, and the grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign, have convened a press conference to announce a call for solidarity with our workers and the Palestinian people endorsed by the General Union of Palestinian Workers, Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, the Coalition of Independent Democratic Trade Unions and other professional unions.

This call addresses the Arab and International Trade Unions and, in particular, the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, the Arab League, the Arab Labour Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Trade Union Confederation, the Organization of African Trade Union Unity, the Palestinian people and the international community.

We call upon all the above to:

- Boycott and divest from Israel
- Work towards sanctions upon Israel

Until Israel stops its crimes against our people and implements international law safeguarding human rights for all.

This call from the Palestinian workers movement is part of our struggle against the Occupation and for Freedom, Self-determination, the Right of Return, Social Justice and a Palestinian independent state with its capital as Jerusalem and to end the racism against our people inside the Green Line.

This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and next year will mark 60 years from the Nakba. In the meanwhile, the Palestinian people still yearn for their right to live free in their homeland, and 6.8 million refugees scattered all over the world strive for their right (as enshrined in international law, including UN resolutions) to return to their homes, villages and cities.

It is imperative to recognize that since its inception, the Histadrut has supported the Occupation and enacted racist policies against our workers, denying them their rights. It has kept silent in front of Israel's crimes against our people throughout the decades of occupation. We are thus asking the international trade unions to boycott the Histadrut to pressure it to guarantee rights for our workers and to pressure the government to end the occupation and to recognize the full rights of the Palestinian people.

Since July 2002, the Occupation is creating a new reality on the ground via construction of the Apartheid Wall. It turns the West Bank into ghettos, escalates the confiscation and isolation of our lands and water and increases racist policies against our people, eventually destroying the dream of a Palestinian state. On top of this, the Occupation continues with the policies of "targeted assassinations", home demolitions, expulsion of non-Jews from Jerusalem and destruction of homes and historical monuments there, attacks on holy sites, and destroying our industries and entire economy then exploiting our workers, starving our people in order to force the Occupation's projects upon us so that we will eventually surrender.

Today, we initiate as the Palestinian Labour Movement a Workers' Call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) to build upon the United Palestinian Call for BDS against

Israel to the International Community. This call has been signed by more than 170 Palestinian organizations and political parties from the West Bank, Gaza and the Diaspora.

We thank and express our gratitude to the movements, unions and organizations all over the world that in the last two years have taken up the call for boycott and launched campaigns in their countries. They challenged the Zionist lobby and have shown steadfastness in the face of attacks instigated against them.

We thus ask the international trade unions to grant their support to these initiatives in their countries, to organize their own boycott campaigns and to coordinate international efforts to effectively implement boycotts, divestment and sanctions in order to:

1. Stop the crimes committed against our rights, above all occupation and the expulsion of our people;
2. Tear down the wall of silence built up by the international community in order to finally shun the crimes of the Occupation;
3. Keep the conscience of the world alive and nurture respect for international human rights law while promoting its implementation;
4. Reach a just and comprehensive solution for the Palestinian cause.

*Greetings to the Liberation Struggle of our Workers.*

*Greetings to those around the World Standing in Solidarity  
and Struggling for the Palestinian Cause.*

*Eternal Glory to Martyrs for Freedom Everywhere.*

## **Signatories**

General Union of Palestinian workers: *Haidar Ibrahim (General Secretary)*

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions: *Amneh Rimawi / for: Shaher Sa'ad (Steering committee)*

Coalition of Independent Democratic Trade Unions: *Muhammad al Arouri (Coordinator)*

General Union of Palestine Labor Vocational Associations: *Hassan Sharake (General Secretary)*

Palestinian Farmers Union: *Adel Abu Ne'meh (General Secretary)*