

As part of the International Day of Action against the Israeli apartheid wall, Justice For Palestine, Brisbane, is organising a rally, *TEAR DOWN THE APARTHEID WALL*, on **Saturday, July 9, 2011 between 1:00 and 3:00 pm at King George Square, Brisbane CBD**, to demand the tearing down of Israel's Apartheid Wall, an end to the occupation of Palestine, equal rights for Palestinians, and granting the right of return for Palestinian refugees forcibly expelled by Israel.

Attached is an electronic version of the flyer for the rally. *Please publicise the event and its background in your website, newsletters and bulletins.*

As you know, Israel, as part of her occupation of the 22% of Palestine that remains after Israel's formation, has constructed an Iron Wall – far worse than the **Berlin Wall** - separating Palestinian neighbour from neighbour, farmer from his land and market, patient from hospital, child from school, and employee from his workplace. The concrete Apartheid Wall has the following impact on people's lives:

- In many places is 8 meters high – twice the height of the Berlin Wall - with armed watchtowers and a "buffer zone" 30-100 meters wide for electric fences, trenches, cameras, sensors, and military patrol.
- In other places, the Wall consists of layers of razor wire, military patrol roads, sand paths to trace footprints, ditches, surveillance cameras and in the middle a three meters high electric fence.
- The Wall's "buffer zone" paves the way for large-scale demolitions and the expulsion of nearby residents as in many places the Wall is located just meters away from homes, shops, and schools.
- In addition to being located by the Wall, some communities are further closed-off by an "**Isolation Barrier**", ensuring they are surrounded on all sides.
- The Israeli military has created "gates" in the Wall which strengthen Israel's strangling system of permits and checkpoints where Palestinians are beaten, detained, shot at and humiliated.
- It has 34 fortified checkpoints that control all Palestinian movement.

But the apartheid Wall forms only a part of the sustained cruelty that is life under Israeli occupation. By September 2008, there were 699 Israeli closure obstacles in the West Bank – checkpoints and other military obstructions including trenches, roadblocks, and metal gates. 74 % of the main routes in the West Bank are controlled by Israel's checkpoints or blocked entirely. Imagine a large neighbourhood, an area, a nation in which you have to obtain the consent of the officer of another country to take your child to hospital or to go to your university, promising to return in two hours. Imagine waiting under snow or rain for hours, sometimes enduring insults, just to move forward one metre.

In a letter to former Marrickville NSW Mayor, Fiona Byrne, South African anti-apartheid campaigner **Archbishop Desmond Tutu** wrote: *"We in South Africa, who both suffered Apartheid and defeated it, have the moral right and responsibility to name and shame institutionalized separation, exclusion, and domination by one ethnic group over others. In my own eyes I have seen how the Palestinians are oppressed, dispossessed and exiled. ...We call on*

all our Jewish and Israeli sisters and brothers to oppose the occupation and work for equality, justice and peace, between the River and the Sea, in the same way that so many South African Whites took risks to oppose the crime of Apartheid."

In a letter to the President of the **Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)**, Ontario, Willie Madisha, the President of **COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions)** wrote, "*As someone who lived in apartheid South Africa and who has visited Palestine I say with confidence that Israel is an apartheid state. In fact, I believe that some of the atrocities committed against the South Africans by the erstwhile apartheid regime in South Africa pale in comparison to those committed against the Palestinians.*"

The people of Palestine's Gaza strip fare even worse. Israel's blockade of the strip, with the support of the United States and the European Union, has grown increasingly stringent since January 2006. Fuel, electricity, medicines, imports, exports and the movement of people in and out of the Strip have been slowly choked off, leading to life-threatening problems of sanitation, health, water supply and transportation.

The blockade – worse than the 1960s blockade of Berlin - has subjected many to unemployment, penury and malnutrition. This amounts to the collective punishment — with the tacit support of the United States and Australia — of a civilian population.

From time to time Israel conducts attacks like the 22 day 'Operation Cast Lead' on Gaza beginning 27 December 2008 which killed 1,400 Palestinians - more than 900 of whom were civilians, including 300 children and 115 women. Amnesty's report states that they were "*killed in attacks carried out using high-precision weapons – air-delivered bombs and missiles, and tank shells. Others, including women and children, were shot at short range when posing no threat to the lives of the Israeli soldiers. Aerial bombardments launched from Israeli F-16 combat aircraft targeted and destroyed civilian homes without warning, killing and injuring scores of their inhabitants, often while they slept. "*

We are confident, therefore, that you will endorse Justice for Palestine's rally, **TEAR DOWN THE APARTHEID WALL**, on **July 9, between 1:00 and 3:00 pm, at King George Square, Brisbane CBD.**

For further information:

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Thank you.

Yours in solidarity,