



PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT
SOCIALISM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

POLICY POSITION ON PALESTINE



Overview

It is over seventy years since Zionist migrants, mainly European, illegally seized and began the ethnic cleansing and colonisation of historic Palestine, creating the colonial state of Israel. In this same period Israel has ignored countless United Nations resolutions condemning the ongoing occupation including the seizure of land and resources which goes against recognised international norms and laws. Israel refuses to end its military occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza. Israel's ignoring of international law has led to the illegal widespread dispossession of Palestinian property. The illegal occupation and subsequent colonisation has delivered nothing but widespread poverty and unemployment for Palestinians and left them economically reliant on their occupier. This has left both the economy and infrastructure completely under developed to the detriment of the natural growth of the Palestinian people both socially and economically.

Further curtailment of this natural growth comes with the ongoing construction of the separation wall in the West Bank since 2002. This is a visceral symbol of the apartheid nature of the Israeli state. This wall has allowed Israeli occupation forces to turn the West Bank into a series of Bantustans. With military checkpoints restricting the movement of Palestinians it has left the full control of Palestinian natural resources of the West Bank in the hands of their occupier. The ongoing blockade of Gaza has created the world's largest open-air prison leading to a humanitarian crisis for 1.8 million Palestinians. This military and economic siege has been condemned by the UN who have declared Gaza as a humanitarian disaster becoming unliveable for humans as of 2020.

In 2018 Israel dropped any pretence about its racist nature to the world when it adopted the Nation-State Laws. These laws stipulate that the "actualisation of the right of national self-determination in the state of Israel is unique to the Jewish people". This law leaves the 1.7 million Palestinians still inside Israel without any hope for sovereignty while being left to the mercy of a hostile majority. It demotes the Arabic language to "special status" and promotes the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied territories. It also proclaims Jerusalem as its capital in defiance of international law.

None of this would be possible for Israel without international complicity and support politically, economically and militarily, including the support given by the Irish state. The long-standing



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support of the United States has intensified under the Presidency of Donald Trump who has moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, violating international law. Both countries also withdrew from UNESCO in 2018 following the world heritage status conferred on the Palestinian city of Hebron which is undergoing a vicious colonisation by illegal Israeli settlers. This ongoing ethnic cleansing could be stopped with international pressure but the state level of support for Israel means that effective change will only come through pressure from civil society both in Palestine and internationally. One of the foremost tactic currently being employed to end the occupation is the call for the boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. This call from Palestinian civil society hopes to motivate the same forces internationally that helped pressure the apartheid regime of South Africa and is a tactic People Before Profit fully endorses.

It is the capitalist systems domination of our lives which promotes the racism and perpetuates the exploitation and oppression of the majority. It is this same system that has allowed Israel to act with impunity towards the Palestinian people. Through people power this system must be changed, not just here in Ireland but across the world especially if states like Israel are to be brought to heel under international law. It is our state that turns a blind eye to atrocities carried out against Palestinians in the pursuit of profit. In a globalised world the freedom of Palestine is tied to the freedom of the working class of every country and their emancipation will hasten the end of oppression world-wide. People Before Profit have a proud tradition of opposing oppression, antisemitism and all forms of religious intolerance; racism and war and for these reasons have developed the following detailed policy outlining our position supporting not just the immediate end to all aspects of the occupation but the creation of a secular one democratic state with equal rights for all who live in the region.



Long Term Policy

One Democratic State

The physical, political, social and cultural fragmentation of the Palestinian people has been the number one objective of the Israeli apartheid regime since the establishment of the state of Israel on 78% of historic Palestine through the ethnic cleansing of the native Palestinian population in 1948. This intensified with the annexation of the remaining 22% of Palestinian land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

People Before Profit believes that in order to achieve justice and attain the right to self-determination for Palestinians, to right the historic wrongs of the past, popular mass struggle both inside and outside Palestine needs to focus on an agreed political end, namely the One State Solution, democratic and secular. This is not a new idea, as noted by the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé: 'The idea of a one democratic state as the only solution for the conflict in historical Palestine is not a new one. After the 1948 catastrophe, it took the Palestinian national movement a few years to re-emerge as a modern day anti-colonialist liberation movement. In the 1960s, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chartered a clear vision for the future. In its 1968 covenant, the PLO called for the establishment of a secular democratic state all over historical Palestine. That vision called for the right of return for Palestinians to their pre-1948 homelands that were now under occupation.'

This vision was buried under the expanding illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that were facilitated by the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, an agreement which proposed the new Two State Solution paradigm, an Israeli invention entirely: two Bantustans in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would comprise a Palestinian state, alongside Israel, with no mention of the right of return for Palestinian refugees or any measures of redress for those Arab citizens of Israel.

In their 2017 UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) report **'Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid'** Richard Falk and Virginia Tilley find that the strategic fragmentation of the Palestinian people is the principal method by which Israel imposes an apartheid regime. Their report finds that the apartheid regime of Israel operates by splintering the Palestinian people geographically and politically into different legal categories. The international community has unwittingly collaborated with this manoeuvre by drawing a strict



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distinction between Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, treating Palestinians outside the country as “the refugee problem”. The Israeli apartheid regime is built on this geographic fragmentation, which has come to be accepted as normative. The method of fragmentation serves also to obscure this regime’s very existence.

People Before Profit believes that the two-state solution would cement forever this fragmentation of the Palestinians; the One State Solution, on the other hand, has the potential to bring together not just a fragmented Palestinian population but all those who live on the land of historic Palestine, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Accordingly, People Before Profit endorses the vision laid out by the ‘*Campaign for a One Democratic State*’. This is a Palestinian initiative supported by progressive Israeli Jews. The aim of the initiative is to try and organise under one umbrella all the groups and individuals who support the idea inside and outside historical Palestine.

THE ODSC PROGRAM

1. *A Single Constitutional Democracy.* One Democratic State shall be established between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River as one country belonging to all its citizens, who will enjoy equal rights, freedom and security. The State shall be a constitutional democracy, the authority to govern and make laws emanating from the consent of the governed, in which all of its citizens shall enjoy equal rights to vote, stand for office and contribute to the country’s governance.
2. *Individual Rights.* No State law, institution or practices may discriminate among its citizens on the basis of national or social origin, colour, gender, language, religion or political opinion, property, sexual orientation or other status. A single citizenship confers on all the State’s residents the right to freedom of movement, the right to reside anywhere in the country, and equal rights in every domain. All mechanisms of governance, law enforcement and security shall be thoroughly integrated on the basis of individual merit, including the military and internal security and police forces. The IDF and other Israeli security and police forces will be replaced by newly constituted national forces.
3. *Collective Rights.* Within the framework of a single democratic state, the Constitution will also protect the collective rights of Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews to freedom of association – national, ethnic, religious, class or gender – within the framework of a



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common state and democracy. Constitutional guarantees will ensure that all languages, arts and culture can flourish and develop freely. All citizens shall have equal rights to use their own dress, languages and customs, to freely express their cultural heritage, and to maintain such cultural institutions as universities, museums, theatres, newspapers and all other forms of communication. No group or collectivity will have any privileges, nor will any group, party or collectivity have the ability to leverage any control or domination over others. Parliament will not have the authority to enact any laws that discriminate against any community under the Constitution.

4. *Right of Return of Restoration and of Reintegration into Society.* In accordance with UN Resolution 194, the State recognizes the right of Palestinian refugees – those who currently live in Palestine/Israel, all those who were expelled over the past century, their descendants and all others of the Exile/Diaspora – to return to their country and to the places from where they were expelled, to rebuild their personal life and to be fully reintegrated into the country's society, economy and polity. To the most practicable degree, the private property of the refugees shall be restored and/or compensation arranged. Restoring the rights of the Palestinians will be done while respecting the rights and protections of all citizens under the law. Normal procedures of obtaining citizenship will be extended to others choosing to immigrate to the country.
5. *Constructing a Shared Civil Society.* The State shall nurture a vital civil society in which common educational institutions, civil institutions such as marriage, and both the Arabic and Hebrew languages will be official languages. The State will not establish or accord special privilege to any religion, but shall provide for the free practice of all religions.
6. *Economy and Economic Justice.* Our vision seeks to achieve justice, and this includes social and economic justice. Economic policy must address the decades of exploitation and discrimination which have sown deep socioeconomic gaps among the people living in the land. The income distribution in Israel/Palestine is more unequal than any country in the world. A State seeking justice must develop a creative and long-term redistributive economic policy to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to attain education, productive employment, economic security and a dignified standard of living.
7. *Decolonization, Restoration and Reconciliation.* The liberation of Palestinians and the creation of a genuinely equal and inclusive society entails more than just a political settlement or new governmental arrangements. It requires a process of thorough



decolonization, a reimagining and reinventing of the country in a way that fundamentally alters relations of domination. This includes what Fanon and Ngugi call the “decolonization of the mind.” Only then will a process of national reconciliation be possible.

8. *The Commitment to Human Rights, Justice and Peace.* The State shall uphold international law and seek the peaceful resolution of conflicts through negotiation and collective security in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The State will sign and ratify all international treaties on human rights and its people shall reject racism and promote social, cultural and political rights as set out in relevant United Nations covenants.

Immediate Policy Demands:

Palestinian State Recognition

The recognition of the Palestinian state has been a long-held demand of the Palestinian people. Stemming back to the PLO's, “Palestinian Declaration of Independence” which was proclaimed in Algiers on the 15th November 1988. The Palestinian people have continuously requested that the international community afford them full recognition as an independent state.

In light of this People Before Profit call for Ireland to immediately recognise the Palestinian state in line with 137 other countries across the world who do so already. The current situation of non-formal recognition has done nothing to promote peace in the region. On the contrary it has emboldened Israel to expand its settlement program and further subjugate the Palestinian people under an oppressive military occupation in defiance of international law.

We also call on the Stormont assemble to give recognition to the Palestinian state within the remit afforded to it.

In the case of the EU we call for full recognition of the Palestinian state. The EU should also establish a preferential trade agreement with Palestinian. Thereby, offering Palestine an appropriate framework for political dialogue and economic cooperation with the EU over and above that normally afforded to non-EU states.

In the case of the UN we call for Palestine to be moved from non-member observer state to that of a full member.



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Other than the appeasement of the rogue Israeli state there is no reason that Ireland cannot immediately afford Palestinian full recognition as an independent state. In contrast full recognition of the Palestinian state will afford the Palestinians a level of equality when they take their place at any future peace negotiation with Israel.

Separation Wall

Walls represent division, and the snaking 700km Separation wall erected by Israel in the West Bank solidifies the separateness and apartheid practiced by Israel. Symbolising Israel's governing political philosophy of Zionism and its colonial approach to Historic Palestine the Separation Wall represents an end to any possibility of independent statehood for Palestinians in any part of their native land.

The wall allows the easy confiscation of Palestinian land and through a series of military checkpoints restricts the free movement of Palestinians while preventing natural societal growth and expansion. The annexation of the territory facilitates the achievement of Israel and Zionism's primary objective, the establishment of an exclusive Jewish state in Palestine by forced separation of Palestinians from the Jewish population and aiding the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. People Before Profit call for the immediate dismantling of the Separation Wall and for an end to the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

Right of Return

The right to return has been a long-held demand of the Palestinian people. This stems from the forced expulsion of the Palestinian people from their home land of Palestine by a Zionist occupation force. The initial expulsion or Nakba as it is referred to by the Palestinian people saw 700,000 people driven from their land in 1948. These Palestinian refugees are scattered across the world as well as being internally displaced within the state that is now known as Israel the West Bank and Gaza. A lot of these initial refugees were left stateless as are their descendants right up to today. Millions are unable to travel, work or build any sort of normal life in their adopted countries as a result of this forced expulsion. In reality the Nakba or forced expulsion has never ceased. Right up to today Palestinian people are being forced from their homes and lands across Palestine. This is being done in a ruthless violent fashion. Just as in 1948 the Palestinian families are then replaced by Jewish settlers or what we in an Irish historical context describe as planters.

People Before Profit therefore, demand that any peace agreement be underpinned by the right to return of the refugees and their descendants.



Boycott Divestment, Sanctions Movement

The BDS movement, established in 2006 by 170 groups including NGO's, unions, political parties and civil bodies. Its aim is to resist the illegal occupation of Palestine by Israeli Zionists through non-violent means.

Boycott divestment and sanction campaigns have a long history of success from Ireland in the 1800's with a local boycott to south Africa in the 1980's, when world governments refused to act in defence of the indigenous people it took a global civil action of BDS to defeat the apartheid state.

By adopting the BDS model we support the boycott of Israeli goods and services who directly or indirectly support the occupation of Palestine. We urge all public and private institutions including business banks universities etc, to withdraw their investments and where applicable suspend all cultural exchanges. We demand all governments and relevant international bodies impose severe sanctions befitting a state condemned in more UN resolutions than the rest of the world combined. This would mean ending military trade, free-trade agreements including EU trade under the EUROMED agreement and expelling Israel from international forums such as the UN and FIFA.

Due to Israel's continued assault on Palestine and constant violations of international law, People before profit fully supports the BDS campaign and demand that all arms of the Irish state support and implement BDS directives.

Gaza

Gaza has been under occupation or siege by the state of Israel from 1948 to the present day. Over this period the population of the Gaza strip has swollen as a result of the Nakba or ethnic cleansing of Palestine by Israeli Zionist the Nakba commenced in 1948 and has been continuous right up to today. This policy of ethnic cleansing has resulted in more than 1,8 million Palestinian, mostly refugees crammed into just 140 square miles. The people of Gaza are further punished by Israeli trade embargoes, travel restrictions, food, fuel and medical shortages, Inadequate water (90% of the water in Gaza is unfit for consumption), limited to no sewage, and electrical services. Constant military attacks alongside high rates of unemployment makes the life extremely difficult if not impossible in Gaza



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In 1994, the Palestinian Authority was tasked with limited self-governance of parts of the West Bank and the Gaza strip. In 2006 following the democratic election of Hamas, sanctions were intensified. Since then Israel has engaged in an almost continuous bombardment of Gaza and its citizens. Israel's targeting of schools, hospitals and residential areas has clearly exposed its genocidal policy in relation to Gaza.

The reasoning behind Israel's inflicting of these horrors on the people of Gaza can be found in the Zionist vision of a Jewish state for a Jewish people and without the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people from their land this could never be possible. Consequently, the people in Gaza live under conditions of strangulation, isolation, starvation and economic collapse. In addition to Israeli sanctions the US and other western governments also imposed economic sanctions on Gaza after the 2006 elections. The reasoning for these economic sanctions has resulted from Hamas's insistence on its right to defend itself against the Israeli occupation Force, a right that is recognised under international law.

People Before Profit therefore demand that Israel cease all military attacks on Gaza. Furthermore, we call for removal of all air, land and sea barriers, lifting of all sanctions and embargos by Israel and its allies and most importantly the right to return of all Palestinian refugees living in Gaza to their Palestinian homeland.

Administrative Detention and Political Prisoners

Currently (2019) Israel is holding over 5000 political prisoners including many held under administrative detention, a similar tactic of the British policy of Internment. Over 200 prisoners are children under 18 who will have been tried under military court often without access to lawyer/parent during interrogation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights restricts the use of internment. Article 9 states that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile". The separate military judicial system aimed at Palestinians, contrary to this law, is a result of Military Order 101(1967) *Order Regarding Prohibition of Incitement and Hostile Propaganda* and subsequent amendments are used as justification for this breach of human rights.

Israeli military laws prohibits the organisation or participation in any civic activities that the Israeli state deems political incitement, often leading to incarceration. Many political prisoners are kept in isolation as a form of punishment while being held under administrative detention. Article 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides that "all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity



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of the human person". Israel's use of isolation as punishment against Palestinians is contrary to this agreement of which both Ireland and Israel are signatories.

People Before Profit condemns the use of administrative detention and the imprisonment of children and will use the Irish states position within International institutions to apply pressure on Israel to end such practices. This includes expulsion of membership from these international institutions in line with BDS guidelines.



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