

# Urgent Appeal on the Palestinian Struggle for Liberation and Food Sovereignty

The Arab Network on Food Sovereignty (ANFS), People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), and the undersigned organizations stand in unwavering solidarity with the oppressed and the victims of historic injustice and power imbalance, particularly with the Palestinian people.

We strongly condemn the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza that has been under a full blockade for 23 days\* now, added to the 17 years of siege that had already made 65% of Gazans food insecure. This insecurity is the product of the weaponization of food by the Israeli occupation to coerce Palestinians into forfeiting their rights.

Food, water, and medical equipment have become very scarce to find in Gaza now, in addition to the complete cut off of internet, electricity, and fuel supplies into the strip. More than 2.5 million people are currently trapped in Gaza without any safe place. More than 8000 Palestinians have been murdered, including 3500+ children, and another 20,000+ were wounded \*as of October 29, 2023. Hundreds of others remain trapped under rubble until this day amid the lack of necessary equipment of debris removal and the continuous bombing that is not sparing medical nor rescue teams.

Only 40 trucks of aid were allowed into Gaza since the aggression began, and they cover less than 3% of what Gaza needs per day in normal circumstances to survive. Normally, 600 trucks carrying different human and medical necessities and needs would enter daily into besieged Gaza.

The Israeli occupation has murdered 114 Palestinians in the West Bank also since the beginning of the aggression on Gaza. Daily raids, bombardments, and sieges on cities and refugee camps are being carried out by Israeli occupation forces. More than 700 Israeli military checkpoints divide the West Bank, which completely separates Al-Aghwar area that produces 80% of the food of Palestinians. Some 100,000 Palestinian families that depend on olive production are unable to access their lands for the harvest now, in Gaza and in the West Bank primarily, due to the thousands of assault rifles that have been distributed by the Israeli government on the settlers. Several Palestinians were murdered by Israeli settlers while working on their lands in the West Bank during the past week.

We extend our solidarity to the Lebanese people as well, especially in the south near the border with occupied Palestine, as they also face Israeli assaults that have displaced many people until now, prevented farmers from accessing their lands, and killed several people including journalists who were covering the developments in the area.

We call upon the global community to actively support the Palestinian people's quest for liberation through all possible means. We emphasize the urgent need to end the occupation and to secure freedom for the resilient Palestinian people who have been struggling against Israeli occupation for 75 years.

We believe that addressing food security and the right to food is an integral part of the broader struggle for justice, peace, and dignity for all.

The situation of food insecurity in Gaza, Palestine, is extremely critical. For decades, small food producers, including fisherfolk and farmers have been denied access to their waters,

land and other crucial common goods. Many were killed by Israeli forces while seeking to secure their livelihoods. The Israeli occupation has created a military exclusion zone on almost half of Gaza's arable land, and a maritime buffer zone that allows access to barely 15% of the Mediterranean, which makes it impossible for fishermen to catch an adequate amount of fish to sustain their communities. This, added to the blockade on exports and imports, access to food, agricultural inputs, and fuel, and the repetitive aggressions turned Gaza into a cramped open-air prison where Palestinians suffer collective punishment and are deprived of their rights, including the right to adequate food. The right to food is recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which Israel has signed and ratified 57 years ago.

"The idea is to put Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger," Dov Weisglass, advisor to former Israeli PM Ehud Olmert. This statement came in light of the "calorie count" created by the Israeli occupation to limit Gazan's food intake to levels slightly above death-by-starvation. This has now turned into an effective death diet.

Israel's continuous 17-year blockade has also led to a severe water crisis in Gaza, primarily due to Israel's forced population transfers, exhaustion of Gaza's freshwater basins, blocking Gaza's access to the Jordan river, prohibiting the construction of wells, destroying rainwater collection facilities, and the over-pumping of the natural aquifer flowing to Gaza from the West Bank's Jabal al-Khalil.

The food crisis has been further exacerbated by the systemic poisoning of Palestinian lands and people through frequent herbicide spraying and razing, and the repeated targeted bombings of Gaza's water, sanitation, and agricultural infrastructure during the 14 aggressions led by the Israeli occupation on Gaza within 17 years. 2006, 2007, 2008 - 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, and again now in 2023, during which internationally forbidden weapons such as White Phosphorus are again being deployed both in Gaza and South Lebanon. Since the year 2000, the Israeli occupation has destroyed 3,000,000 fruitful trees to displace Palestinian farmers.

In his address to the General Assembly on 20 October, the special Rapporteur on the right to food Michael Fakhri said, "It is very difficult to discuss my report on pandemic recovery when we are witnessing how food is increasingly used as a weapon against civilians either through unilateral coercive measures or in armed conflict. In fact, Food is increasingly being used intentionally to starve people and trigger ethnic cleansing... such as now Israel's denial of food, fuel, water, and medical supplies to Palestinians and other civilians in Gaza. Yesterday, a number of human rights experts like myself raised the alarm for the risk of genocide against the Palestinian people... we need to reaffirm Security Council resolution 24/17 where the Security Council strongly condemned starving civilians and the denial of humanitarian access being used as a warfare tactics."

We condemn the renewed Israeli plans of ethnic cleansing and forced mass displacement of Palestinians in Gaza into Egypt, as well as the support and military aid of the imperialist US to the Israeli occupation throughout history that enabled its war crimes. We also denounce the stances of many European countries and the EU on the ongoing genocide, which are encouraging its advancement unabated. We encourage them to take stances that are in line with their promoted values on Human Rights in general, and the right to food in particular, and to refrain from all forms of double standards.

We call for the protection, respect, and promotion of all human rights, including the right to food. One of the best and most effective ways to do so in Gaza is by urgently applying the CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA). The CFS-FFA provides a roadmap for improving food security and nutrition in protracted

crises, with these two principles in it especially relevant and urgent now:

1) Meeting the immediate humanitarian needs of besieged Palestinians in Gaza without discrimination, and ensuring safe and unhindered access to humanitarian and food aid, and the United Nations assuming its moral responsibility to ensure that this aid reaches them.

2) Not to use food as a means of political or economic pressure and the need to refrain from taking unilateral measures that do not take into account international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and that endanger food security and nutrition, as stipulated in the Rome Declaration of 1996. ###

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## **SIGNATORIES**

1. Peoples Coalition on Food Sovereignty, Global
2. Arab Network for Food Sovereignty, Arab Region
3. Arab Group for The Protection of Nature, Jordan (Arab Region)
4. The Gaza Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform - GUPAP, Palestine
5. Care for Cedars Association, Lebanon
6. Coalition of Lebanese Civil Society Organizations, Lebanon
7. HAWA Society for Women, Sudan
8. International Agency for Development and Resettlement - Sudan, Sudan
9. Reseau Maghrebin D'associations De Developpement Local En Milieu Rural. (Remadel), Tunisia
10. National Observatory of Participatory Citizenship, Tunisia
11. Tunisian Farmer's Union, Tunisia
12. Agriculture Cooperative Union, Yeman
13. La Fédération Nationale du Secteur Agricole (FNSEA), Morocco
14. Union of Honey Bee Producers, Iraq
15. Iraqi Society for Nutrition and Food Safety, Iraq
16. Iraqi Association for the Defense of Consumer Rights, Iraq
17. Organization for Rehabilitating Society and Environment, Iraq
18. The National Federation for the Protection of the Environment in Algeria, Algeria
19. African Confederation of Artisanal Fishing Organizations, Mauritania
20. Groupement National Des Ligues Mutuelles Pastorales, Mauritania
21. Social-Life and Agricultural Development Organization, Somalia
22. Peace for Life, Philippines
23. Corporate Accountability, USA
24. MEDITER - Reseau Euromediterraneen Pour La Cooperation Aisbl, Belgium
25. A Growing Culture, USA
26. KON Creative, Canada
27. Int'l Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination & Liberation, Global
28. Commission 10 - Int'l League of Peoples Struggles, Global
29. Riot and Roux!, USA
30. International League of Peoples' Struggle, Global
31. Bangladeshi Queer Liberation, Canada
32. World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples and Pastoralists (WAMIP), Global
33. Science for the People, USA

34. Centre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum - CEHRDF, Bangladesh
35. GABRIELA Alliance of Filipino Women, Philippines
36. Precisely Consulting Ltd, United Kingdom
37. GRAIN, Spain
38. IBON International, Philippines
39. Disability Peoples Forum Uganda, Uganda
40. South Asians for Human Rights, Sri Lanka (South Asia)
41. Farmworker Association of Florida, USA
42. PAN Asia Pacific, Malaysia (Asia Pacific)
43. Komunitas Perempuan Nelayan Sipitangarri, Indonesia
44. SIKLAB Philippine Indigenous Youth Network, Philippines
45. Zambia Social Forum, Zambia
46. Observatoire de la citoyenneté Participative, Tunisie
47. Good Health Community Programmes, Kenya
48. ACTUAR - Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento, Portugal
49. Union of Agricultural Work Committees, Palestine
50. Raw Life Doula & Photography, Australia
51. Agroecology Research-Action Collective, North America
52. Yadi Gari, Canada
53. CUNY Law Environmental Justice Coalition, USA
54. Polo's Pantry, USA
55. BreadHive, USA
56. Bharkhand Farmers Council Chandil, India
57. OTCP/ANFS, Tunisia
58. Jibal, Lebanon
59. Global Peace Alliance BC Society, Canada
60. Philippine Causus for Peace, Australia
61. Migrante International Taiwan, Taiwan
62. The Valley of Change, USA
63. PCFS Europe, Luxembourg (Europe)
64. JPIC Kalimantan, Indonesia
65. Ubinig/ Narigrantha Prabartana, Bangladesh
66. Roots for Equity, Pakistan
67. Sojhla for Social Change, Pakistan
68. ASEEM India, India
69. ADD-Medenine, Tunisie
70. Dibeem for Environmental Development, Jordan
71. Rangmatipadar Adivasi commune, India
72. Karachi High School, Pakistan
73. Institute for National and Democracy Studies, Indonesia
74. SIBAT - Sibol ng Agham at Teknolohiya, Philippines
75. Medvin Gromada, Ukraine
76. Labour Resource Center, Bangladesh
77. Integrated Social Development Effort Bangladesh, Bangladesh
78. Aurat March Lahore, Pakistan, Pakistan
79. Kabataan para sa Tribung Pilipino, Philippines
80. Tunisian farmers syndicate SYNAGRI, Tunis

81. The Jordanian Women's Union, Jordan
82. Palestinian Agircultural Relief Committee, Palestine
83. Palestinian Agro-Ecological Forum, Palestine
84. Italiani senza cittadinanza, Italy
85. SocioEconomic Action Collective - SEAC, Lebanon
86. AgriMovement in Lebanon, Lebanon
87. Seedinabox, Lebanon
88. SERUNI, Indonesia
89. Rural women's association Alga, Kyrgyzstan
90. Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Congo, DR Congo
91. Good Food Community, Philippines
92. Studio ATAO, USA
93. Dakatra Farm, Egypt
94. Food Today, Food Tomorrow, Philippines
95. Go Pangan Lokal (Local Food Movement), Indonesia
96. Agency of Development Initiatives, Kyrgyz Republic
97. Dana Cooperative, Jordan
98. Adelphi University, USA
99. Land in Our Names, England
100. Unidad de la Fuerza Indígena y Campesina, México
101. Center for Women's Resources Inc., Philippines
102. HEAL (Health, Environment, Food, Labor) Food Alliance, USA
103. Soil of Cultures, New Zealand
104. Movimentu Kamponezes Timor-Leste, Timor-Leste
105. Vikas Adhyayan Kendra, India
106. Community Development Trust, India
107. Union of Cypriots, Cyprus
108. National Alliance of People's Movements, India
109. Philippines Palestine Friendship Association, Philippines
110. Gabriela Youth, Philippines
111. National Fisheries Solidarity Movement, Sri Lanka
112. Zambia Social Forum, Zambia
113. National Federation of Sugar Workers, Philippines
114. Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance, Australia
115. Green Dreams of a Generation, Philippines
116. Aliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria, Indonesia
117. Sabokahan Unity of Lumad Women, Philippines
118. WILPF - Womens International League for Peace and Freedom Canada,  
Canada
119. Philippines Australia Solidarity Association, Australia
120. Children and Young People Living for Peace, Nigeria
121. Experimental Farm Network, USA