

San Francisco Labor Council Resolution in Solidarity with Palestine

Whereas, on May 25, the Northern California District Council of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) issued a statement, signed by ILWU District Council President Melvin Mackay, District Council Vice President Christopher Christensen, and other top union officials, that reads as follows:

"Over the past few weeks, the world has witnessed the forced removal of Palestinian families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem as well as attacks on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the holiest sites in Islam, during the sacred month of Ramadan. The Israeli military continues its attacks and airstrikes on civilians in Gaza, while racist mobs attack Palestinian homes and businesses in many Israeli cities like Bat Yam, and Haifa.

"The recent Israel-state sanctioned violence follows decades of systemic discrimination and violation of human rights of all Palestinians, including militarily enforced restrictions of movement for over 4.7 million Palestinians; a brutal blockade on Gaza; confiscation of land; economic exploitation; and suspension of basic civil liberties. These actions and more are deplorable and are flagrant and inhumane and a violation of all basic human rights."

Whereas, many other unions nationwide have issued statements supporting the Palestinian people and opposing the Israeli State's violations of the basic human and democratic rights of Palestinians. UNITE HERE Local 23 – representing 25,000 hospitality workers across southern and southwestern U.S. – issued a statement in solidarity with the *"Palestinians in their struggle against oppression and injustice."* Teamsters Local 804 in New York City, which consists of 8,000 workers who are mostly United Parcel Service (UPS) drivers, issued a similar statement.

Whereas, the NewsGuild-CWA – the union of 24,000 journalists across North America – called the May 15 Israel Defense Forces intentional bombing of a Gaza tower housing the offices of the Associated Press and Al Jazeera a *"blatant attack on press freedom that was clearly intended to prevent independent reporting on the [Israeli] government's actions."*

Whereas, at Google, members of the recently formed Alphabet Workers Union-CWA are circulating a petition by Jewish employees calling on the company to support Palestine and reject equating opposition to Zionism with anti-Semitism.

Whereas, a resolution adopted by UPTE-CWA 9119 on June 2 affirms that, this *"conflict would not be possible without the United States' weapons and support,"* noting further on that, the United States has signed an agreement with the Israeli government in which the U.S. pledges to allocate \$38 billion in military aid to Israel over the next 10 years, or \$3.8 billion each year. This does not include the \$2.96 billion in yearly economic aid to Israel.

Whereas, the resolution by UPTE-CWA 9119 further affirms that, *"Our current social and economic gains, achieved by labor struggle, are on the chopping block as our unions are under attack under the*

premise of austerity, while our government sends \$10 million a day to support the Israeli military apparatus.”

Whereas, the May 19 resolution adopted by the Assembly of United Educators of San Francisco (UESF) affirms that, *“as residents of the United States, we have a special responsibility to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people because of the \$3.8 billion dollars annually that the U.S. government gives to Israel, thus directly using our tax dollars to fund Apartheid and war crimes.”*

Whereas, the UESF resolution continues, *“Since 2005 over 170 Palestinian organizations of civil society – modeled on the movement to end South African Apartheid – have asked the international community to join the campaign to boycott, divest, and call for sanctions against Israel. Since then, many national trade union federations throughout the world have endorsed that call.”*

Whereas, Roofers Local 36, a union that represents roof repair workers in Los Angeles, issued a statement condemning Israel's human rights violations against Palestinians and called on U.S. President Joe Biden to halt both economic and military assistance to Israel. *“Organized labor must step forward to defend the democratic rights of oppressed people everywhere,”* the union's statement concluded.

Whereas, eight prominent healthcare workers from around the world published an opinion article in *Scientific American* (June 2, 2021) exposing the many ways in which Israel has *“decimated Palestinian healthcare systems.”* In Gaza, in particular, *“Israel continues to deny essential care and resources, obstruct access, and actively bombard healthcare infrastructure and roadways.”* Moreover, *“only 5% of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories are vaccinated.”* The healthcare workers conclude: *“This violence, doesn't end with a ceasefire so long as the devastating economic blockade of Gaza continues.”* The alarming situation has prompted the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) -- the international labor body to which the AFL-CIO is affiliated – to call repeatedly *“for an end to the blockade imprisoning 1.9 million people.”*

Whereas, following the successful May 18 general strike across the entire territory of historic Palestine, Palestinian trade unions issued an international call signed by major official and independent trade union federations, representing the vast majority of organized Palestinian workers. It stated, in part: *“In the spirit of internationalism and solidarity, we are calling on trade unions the world over to take immediate and concrete steps to ensure that unions themselves are not complicit in supporting and sustaining Israeli oppression.”*

Whereas, in response to this call by the Palestinian independent trade union federations, on June 4, ILWU Locals 10 and 34 members and port truckers honored the picket lines set up by the ZIM Action Committee, the Arab Resource Organizing Committee (AROC), and the Block the Boat Coalition. The Volans — a ship operated by ZIM Corp., Israel's largest and oldest shipping company, left the Port of Oakland with the ship unworked.

Therefore Be it Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council expresses our solidarity with the Palestinian people and calls for Israel to end bombardment of Gaza and stop the displacement of people from their homes at Sheikh Jarrah.

Be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council calls on the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden to stop aid to Israel.

Be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council endorses the international campaign for boycotts, divestment, and sanctions against Apartheid in Israel.

Be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council joins with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and other union federations worldwide in calling for an end to the economic blockade of Gaza.

Be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council denounces unequivocally anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and all other forms of racism and discrimination – and the resulting violence, death, and suffering.

Be it Further Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council stands in solidarity with dockworkers in Italy, South Africa, the U.S. West Coast, and elsewhere, who have refused to handle military equipment and weapons and other cargo destined for Israel.

Be it Finally Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council will submit this resolution for concurrence to its affiliates and to the California Labor Federation.

Respectfully submitted by the following delegates to the San Francisco Labor Council's Delegates Assembly on June 14, 2021 (titles for id only):

- Meghann Adams, President, SMART 1741
- Brenda Barros, SEIU 1021 San Francisco General Hospital Chapter President
- Alan Benjamin, OPEIU 29
- Galina Gerasimova, AFT 2121
- Maria Guillen, SEIU 1021
- Vernell Hawkins, APWU retired
- Martha Hawthorne, SEIU 1021
- Robert Irminger, IBU-ILWU
- Ed Kinchley, SEIU 1021
- Gloria La Riva, 1st Vice President, Pacific Media Guild, CWA
- Tom Lacey, OPEIU 29
- Alice Lindstrom, APWU
- Micheál Madden, IATSE Local 16
- F. X. Martin del Campo, SF-LCLAA
- Elizabeth Milos, UPTE-CWA 9119 Local 7
- Ann Robertson, California Faculty Association
- Rodger Scott, AFT 2121
- Richard Stone, Sergeant at Arms APWU SF Local 2
- Dave Welsh, NALC Golden Gate Branch 214

Also supported by (titles for id only):

- Trent Willis, President, ILWU Local 10
- Christopher Christensen, Vice President, Northern California District Council, ILWU
- Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local 10 pensioner
- Marcus Holder, ILWU Local 10 pensioner