

# London Transport Regional Council Political Report

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## PALESTINIAN TRADE UNION CALL FOR... BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT, SANCTIONS (BDS)



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In commemoration of the first of May – a day of workers struggle and international solidarity – the first Palestinian trade union conference for boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel (BDS) was held in Ramallah on 30 April 2011. Delegates to the conference came from the entirety of the Palestinian trade union movement, including federations, professional unions, and independent trade union blocks.

### PTUC-BDS formed

The conference marked the formation of the Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS) as the largest coalition of the Palestinian trade union movement. We hope through PTUC-BDS to provide the most representative Palestinian reference for the international trade union movement in promoting support for and endorsement of the BDS Call launched by Palestinian civil society, including all Palestinian trade unions, in 2005.

Trade unions today are taking the lead in defending the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, justice, freedom and equality. For decades, Israel has enjoyed impunity while continuing its gradual ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, its 44-year-old occupation; its theft of land and natural resources; its colonization and construction of illegal colonial settlements and walls. Over 1.5 million people in the Gaza Strip – most of them working families — have literally been imprisoned behind an illegal and immoral military siege in one of the cruelest examples of collective punishment witnessed in recent history.

### Apartheid Wall

In the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Palestinian workers continue to face daily humiliation at checkpoints and due to the illegal apartheid Wall, suffer from a crippling economic situation that leaves them at the mercy of Israel.

This year marks 63 years since the original mass ethnic cleansing of the majority of the Palestinian people from our homes and lands as Israel continues to deny refugees the right to return. Israel's systematic destruction of the Palestinian economy, expropriation of the most fertile agricultural land, as well as humiliation of and racist discrimination against Palestinian workers have all become part of its apartheid reality that should never be tolerated by the world today.

### Trade union call

Palestinian trade unions are calling out to fellow workers internationally to support us in ending Israel's system of

apartheid, colonialism and occupation over our people. The military brutality of the Israeli regime and its control of the daily lives of Palestinian working families through a system of checkpoints, Israeli-only roads, and an apartheid wall constitute institutionalized discrimination against Palestinian workers.

The Palestinian trade union movement has collectively set up a boycott "picket line" against Israel to hold it accountable for its violations of international law and more specifically of Palestinian workers' rights. PTUC-BDS calls upon RMT to implement boycotts of Israeli and international companies that are complicit with violations of Palestinian rights and divest trade union funds from Israeli and international companies and institutions complicit in Israel's occupation, colonialism and apartheid.

We recognize the proud history of RMT in standing against South African apartheid and urge union members to stand on the right side of history once more.

Finally, we take this opportunity to extend our solidarity to you and state that we unequivocally support efforts by the RMT to wage an effective fight against policies such as privatization, lay-offs and union-busting.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with you in your fight and thank you for the solidarity you continue to show to the struggle for Palestinian workers rights.

*Comradely,*

Palestinian Trade Union  
Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS)

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**The Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS) is the broadest and most representative body of the Palestinian trade union movement, and includes the following organisations:**

General Union of Palestinian Workers, Federation of Independent Trade Unions (IFU), General Union of Palestinian Women, Union of Palestinian Professional Associations (comprising the professional syndicates of Engineers, Physicians, Pharmacists, Agricultural Engineers, Lawyers, Dentists and Veterinarians), General Union of Palestinian Teachers, General Union of Palestinian Peasants and Co-ops, General Union of Palestinian Writers, Union of Palestinian Farmers, Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUJPE), Union of Public Employees in Palestine-Civil Sector; and all of the trade union blocks that make up the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU): Central Office for the Workers Movement, Progressive Labor Union Front, Workers Unity block, Progressive Workers Block, Workers solidarity organization, Workers Struggle Block, workers resistance block, Workers Liberation Front, Union of Palestinian Workers Struggle Committees, National Initiative (al-Mubadara) Block.

### RMT Palestine Solidarity meeting now on youtube!

Five distinguished speakers and activists recently addressed a Palestine solidarity meeting hosted by London Transport Region. Click on the links to hear each individual speaker's address in the order they spoke.

**Prof. Moshé Machover, Israeli socialist:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MI0H79zlxYE>

**Hugh Lanning, deputy General Secretary PCS:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INjkEyg7fJY>

**Prof. Ilan Pappé, author the ethnic cleansing of Palestine:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ucMLuqWpfdw>

**Dr. Adam Hanieh, Development studies dept SOAS:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mivJjLE7e8>

**Dr. Anne Alexander, MENA Solidarity Network:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVLrZov4i60>