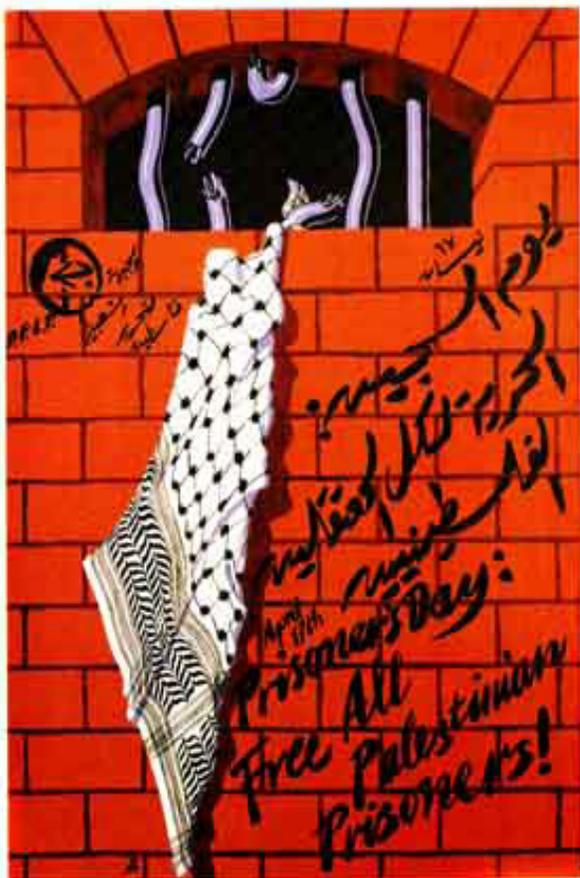


APRIL 17, PALESTINIAN PRISONERS' DAY:

Thousands of Palestinian prisoners enter hunger strike

Global call for action



April 17, 2012 marks Palestinian Prisoners' Day, an international day of action for Palestinian political prisoners. Over 4,600 Palestinian prisoners are held in Israeli jails. Prisoners' Day marks the anniversary of Mahmoud Hejazi's release in a prisoner exchange with the Palestinian resistance in 1974, and has been since then a day of struggle for rights and freedom for Palestinian prisoners.

This year, thousands of Palestinian prisoners are following on the heroic hunger strikes by Khader Adnan, Hana Shalabi, and hundreds of others, to demand their rights. They are calling for international solidarity and action to support their demands, and call for their freedom.

Karameh hunger strike launched for April 17, Prisoners' Day, throughout Israeli jails

The following statement has been issued by Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli jails. Prisoners from a number of different political currents have organised the 'Karameh' (Dignity) Hunger Strike. Protest action will be stepped up on a daily basis until the 17th of April (Palestinian Prisoners Day) when an indefinite hunger strike will be launched.

The statement has been translated from Arabic, and appeared on the Ajnad news website:

The various political currents in the prisoners movement who are held in the Zionist jails have reached an agreement to escalate the ongoing hunger strikes in order to achieve the human rights which Israel have denied prisoners for many long years.

Prisoners will begin an indefinite hunger strike this month. This means they will refuse all forms of food and liquid (with the exception of water) until their demands are met. The hunger strike has been initiated because this is the only tool that the Palestinian prisoners have to achieve their rights. We must pressurise the occupying government and force it to negotiate on the demands the prisoners movement has been striving to achieve. The hunger strike is supported by the prisoners movement as a whole, with agreement amongst all member parties.

The demands of the Karameh Hunger Strike are:

1. An end to the policy of solitary confinement and isolation which has been used to deprive Palestinian prisoners of their rights for more than a decade.
2. To allow the families of prisoners from the Gaza Strip to visit prisoners. This right has been denied to all families for more than 6 years.
3. An improvement in the living conditions of prisoners and an end to the 'Shalit' law, which outlaws newspapers, learning materials and many TV channels.
4. An end to the policies of humiliation which are suffered by prisoners and their families such as strip searches, nightly raids, and collective punishment.

The aim of the hunger strike is to shift local, regional and international public opinion. It aims to put pressure on the occupying government and hold it responsible for the health of all prisoners.

Palestinian Prisoners are calling on free people across the world to do everything in their power to support them in their struggle for rights.

The world must heed Khader Adnan's call: Make Palestinian Political Prisoners' Day, 17 April 2012, A Day of International Action

Organizational endorsements are welcome for this statement. Please click [here](#) or email april17@palestinianprisoners.org to endorse.

"I hereby assert that I am confronting the occupiers not for my own sake as an individual, but for the sake of thousands of prisoners who are being deprived of their simplest human rights while the world and international community look on," Sheikh Khader Adnan wrote from the bed that Israeli soldiers chained him to in the Ramleh prison hospital on 11 February.

"It is time the international community and the UN support prisoners and force the State of Israel to respect international human rights and stop treating prisoners as if they were not humans." (Ma'an News Agency, "Hunger-striking prisoner not backing down," 11 February 2012)

Sheikh Khader Adnan's hunger strike has inspired millions and infused the Palestinian national and solidarity movements with new energy, and we must reflect on his call to the world and prepare a meaningful international strategy to support Palestinian prisoners' struggle for freedom, justice, and equality.

Khader Adnan is fighting for rights that should be guaranteed to all prisoners, including due process, fair and equal treatment, and freedom from torture and other coercive methods. Palestinian prisoners from the West Bank face a military justice system that is entirely separate from that for Jewish Israelis, including settlers, who are instead part of the Israeli civil justice system; this military justice system for Palestinian political prisoners includes systematic and arbitrary detention without charge, the acceptance of torture, an almost complete lack of due process, vague charges, very low standards of evidence including the use of secret evidence, and widely disparate and harsher sentencing than the civil justice system. In Israel's domestic criminal justice system exists a system of apartheid Palestinian citizens of Israel charged with political offenses are deemed 'security prisoners' and treated very differently from Jewish citizens. Palestinians are subject to unjust and unequal trials using secret evidence, gag orders, and evidence obtained through torture.

As of January 2012, 4,417 Palestinian political prisoners are held in jails in Israel, including 170 children and 6 women. Just like Khader, 310 prisoners are held – without charge or trial – under administrative detention including over 20 lawmakers. In solidarity with them, and to broaden Khader's struggle, we will actively oppose their imprisonment and any detentions without fair trials.

We demand the immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. They have been targeted by an unfair and unequal legal system. Their imprisonment reflects Israel's inherent system of injustice and racism. In addition, Israel must immediately halt its practices of:

- Administrative detention.
- Torture and ill-treatment of detainees.
- Solitary confinement and isolation.
- The use of military courts in the occupied Palestinian territory that illegally try civilians.
- Undermining a fair trial by using secret evidence against the accused.
- Arresting vulnerable groups, such as children, disabled, elderly and ill people.

On Palestinian Prisoners' Day, Tuesday, April 17, we ask that all supporters of the Palestinian political prisoners' movement bring Khader Adnan's spirit of resistance to the doorsteps of his captors and would-be killers:

- Organize a protest in front of your local Israeli embassy, consulate or mission.
- Write letters to protest the violations of rights of Palestinian political prisoners and to call for an intervention to the International Committee of the Red Cross, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and your government or parliamentarians.
- Raise awareness on your University campus or in your community about Palestinian political prisoners
- Picket and protest G4S, Motorola, the Volvo Group, and the Israeli Medical Association – all providing services to Israel's prisons – as well as other targets of the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which challenges the Israeli policies of occupation, colonization and apartheid these repressive institutions maintain.
- Write letters to Palestinian prisoners expressing your support.
- Let Khader Adnan's hunger strike mark the beginning of a revitalized global movement for Palestinian prisoners, their rights, their families, and their struggle. Together, we can make it so.

ENDORSERS:

Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association
Defence for Children International – Palestine Section
UFree Network
Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
Free Ameer Makhoul Campaign
Campaign to Free Ahmad Sa'adat
Friends of Detainees and Prisoners Association, Nazareth
One Democratic State Group-Palestine
14 Friends of Palestine
AberPSC
Adalah NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel
Al-Awda New York, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition
Arab Organization for Human Rights
Badil Resource Center
BDS Belgium et Bienvenue en Palestine (Bruxelles)
Brigade di solidarietà e per la Pace-Solidarity and peace brigades
Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association
CCIPPP (Campagne Civile Internationale pour la Protection du Peuple Palestinien)
Canada Palestine Association
CAPPJO-EuroPalestine
Chicago Movement for Palestinian Rights
Coalition for a Free Palestine – South Africa
Coalition of Women for Peace
Collectif 69 de Soutien au Peuple Palestinien
Comité de lutte contre la barbarie et l'arbitraire
Comité Saintonge Palestine
Educators for Peace and Justice
ÉGALITÉ / Bruxelles / Belgique
Existence is Resistance
Forum Palestina – Italy
Frantz Fanon Foundation, France
Freedom Road Socialist Organization
French Jewish Union for Peace
Grupo Ação Palestina
Intal
International Solidarity Movement – France
Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Jews for Justice for Palestinians
Justice for Palestine Centre – Scotland
Justice for Palestinians
Labor for Palestine
Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights
Leeds Palestinian Solidarity Campaign
Miranda Alliance
Mouvement Citoyen Palestine
National Lawyers Guild International Committee/Free Palestine Subcommittee
Netherlands Instituut Palestina-Israel (NIPI)
Netherlands Palestine Committee
New York City Labor Against the War
Palestina Digital
"Palestina nel cuore" Committee
Palestine Committee of Norway
Palestine Solidarity Alliance–South Africa
Palestine Solidarity Campaign (UK)
Palestine Solidarity Thailand
Palestinian Youth Movement-USAPennBDS
Plataforma de Solidaridad con Palestina, Sevilla, Spain
Prisoners' Family & Friends Association (PFFA)
Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Siegebusters
Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights – UBC
Soutien Palestine
Students for Justice in Palestine National
Students for Justice in Palestine- University of Nebraska at Omaha
"Tanweer" Palestinian Cultural Enlightenment Forum
Tlaxcala, the international network of translators for linguistic diversity Tower Hamlets Jenin Friendship Association
United 4 Palestine
US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
US Palestinian Community Network
Vermonters for a Just Peace
Vrede VZW
Women in Black San Luis Obispo
Women in Black, Westchester County, NY
Yousef Alsedeeq Institute for Prisoners' Protection