

# **ACTIONS for PALESTINE**

Here are 6 actions that can be supported by letters, phone calls, Email, and money etc. Some for Canada & others are international.

1. UN General Assembly President
2. Canadian Ambassador to UN
3. United Church of Canada
4. Peace boat
5. Medical Aid for Gaza – still urgently needed
6. Boycotts

## **1. UN General Assembly President**

The text of the speech by **H.E. FATHER MIGUEL D'ESCOTO BROCKMANN**, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE: <http://bdsmovement.net/?q=node/221>

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK 24 NOVEMBER 2008**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Brothers and Sisters,

1. It is with mixed emotions that I join you today to observe the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People at this event organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. As you know, Solidarity is a concept that is central to my work as the Assembly President. I want to thank the Committee for its dedicated efforts to rally our solidarity with the Palestinian people, pursuing the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

2. Today we recall that, 61 years ago this month, the General Assembly adopted the historic resolution 181, calling for the creation of a Jewish State and an Arab State. The State of Israel, founded a year later in 1948, now celebrates 60 years of its existence. Shamefully, there is still no Palestinian State to celebrate.

3. As I stated in my first address to the General Assembly last September, I believe that the failure to create a Palestinian State as promised is the single greatest failure in the history of the United Nations. It has been 60 years since some 800,000 Palestinians were driven out of their homes and property, becoming refugees and an uprooted and marginalized people.

4. We cannot avoid the bitter irony that next month we mark the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrines the right to self-determination of these very same people.

We are witness to decades of the terrible conditions endured throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, yet the promise - the right -- of the Palestinian people to a homeland remains as elusive as ever.

5. As I speak here today, almost 1.5 millions Palestinians are enduring an unprecedented blockade (*this blockade is still in effect*) of the Gaza Strip. All border crossings into Gaza are closed, blocking even the delivery of emergency humanitarian relief supplied by the United Nations. Lack of fuel is plunging the population into darkness and cold; basic medicines are running out; malnutrition is chronic and peoples' coping mechanisms are being exhausted.

6. In solidarity, I urge the international community to raise its voice against this collective punishment of the people of Gaza. We must call for an end to this massive abuse of human rights. I call on Israel, the occupying Power, to allow humanitarian and other supplies to enter the Gaza Strip without delay.

7. The situation in the West Bank is often overshadowed by the humanitarian crisis facing Gaza. We cannot overlook, however, the existence of over 600 checkpoints and other obstacles to freedom of movement within the West Bank.

We must denounce the resumption of house demolitions during the cold months and the unabated settlement expansion that is still being officially authorized. The unprecedented rise in violent attacks by settlers against the Palestinian population must also end. Although different, what is being done against the Palestinian people seems to me to be a version of the hideous policy of apartheid.

8. This untenable situation highlights the urgent need for the resumption of a genuine peace process that can yield tangible results in the foreseeable future. So far the endless negotiations between two very unequal partners have not borne fruit. What we need is a renewed sense of solidarity to inspire political will, courage and a broader perspective of the conflict. This should include the revival of the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002.

9. The international community should spare no effort in assisting both Israelis and Palestinians to reach a solution that will fulfill the goal of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

The United Nations has an ongoing responsibility to resolve the question of Palestine in all its aspects and in accordance with international law. Let us be sure that this not become a permanent responsibility.

10. The enmity between our Palestinian and Israeli brothers and sisters is a bitter and self-perpetuating tragedy. We must find new ways to defuse this enmity, to enable both peoples to reassert their historic bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood. I urge the international community to defuse the political deadlock that cynically perpetuates this hatred, isolation and abuse. Our solidarity must prompt concrete action to realize those elusive rights that most of us can take for granted. Thank you.

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**Please write letters of support to H.E. Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,**

President of the United Nations General Assembly, United Nations, New York,  
NY, 10017 USA Tel: (212) 963 7555, fax (212) 963 3301.

(he has been receiving death threats since making this speech)

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**2. Also write to John McNee, Canadian Ambassador to UN, United Nations, New York, NY, 10017 USA Ask him what Canada is doing to implement UN resolutions & call on Canada to support freedom for Gaza & all Palestinians.**

### **3. UNITED CHURCH**

#### **Moderator Calls on Prime Minister to Help End Gaza Siege (support his letter)**

Toronto: In a letter sent yesterday to Stephen Harper, the Moderator of The United Church of Canada has called on the Prime Minister to use the weight of his office, and the influence of Canada's strong relationship with Israel, to call on the Israeli government to end the siege of Gaza.

In the letter, the Right Rev. David Giuliano urges the Government of Canada to \* request that the Israeli government end the siege of Gaza \* work with all parties concerned to negotiate a just resolution of the conflict that has caused so much suffering to people on both sides \* uphold respect for international human rights and humanitarian law in its votes on United Nations resolutions

"It is particularly the innocent who are suffering now. The siege has increased violent attacks against civilians on both sides. It has cut the people of Gaza off from adequate supplies of food, medicine, electricity, and fuel, and crippled essential health and sanitation services in one of the most densely populated places on earth," comments Giuliano.

The Moderator's letter also expresses shock that on January 24, 2008, Canada was the only country that voted against a resolution passed at a special session of the United Nations' Human Rights Council. That resolution \* called for an end to the siege in Gaza, \* expressed grave concern for the loss of lives and injuries \* urged "all concerned parties to respect the rules of human rights law and international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population"

"These are Canadian values which we have stood in defence of in other places in the world," says Giuliano. "They are values which I expect the government of Canada to uphold in all situations, wherever violations of international human rights law occur."

For further information, please contact: Mary-Frances Denis Communications Officer, The United Church of Canada, Tel: 416-231-7680 ext. 2016 Toll-free: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2016

E-Addresses for Members of Parliament:

[Harper.S@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Harper.S@parl.gc.ca) ; [pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca) ; [Duceppe.G@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Duceppe.G@parl.gc.ca); [james.emerson\\_parl@yahoo.ca](mailto:james.emerson_parl@yahoo.ca); [Wilfert.B@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Wilfert.B@parl.gc.ca)

[Ignatieff.M@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Ignatieff.M@parl.gc.ca); [Layton.J@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Layton.J@parl.gc.ca)

Link to all MPs:

<http://webinfo.parl.gc.ca/MembersOfParliament/MainMPsCompleteList.aspx?TimePeriod=Current&Language=E>

### **4. PEACE BOATS NEED your Support with messages and \$\$\$**

**Here is a message from the FREE GAZA movement that sends peace boats loaded with medical supplies. Several succeeded & carried medical aid to Gaza. Recent efforts have been forced back. More peace boats are planning to sail soon.**

**"Israeli Gunboats Came out of the Darkness and Rammed us Three Times"** (Lebanon, Tuesday 30 December) -

Today the Free Gaza ship "Dignity" carefully made its way to safe harbour in Tyre, Lebanon's southern-most port city, after receiving serious structural damage when Israeli warships rammed its bow and the port side. Waiting to greet the passengers and crew were thousands of Lebanese who came out to show their solidarity with this attempt to deliver volunteer doctors and desperately needed medical supplies to war-ravaged Gaza. The Lebanese government has pledged to provide a forensic analysis of what happened in the dark morning, when Israel rammed the civilian ship in international waters, and put the people on board in danger of losing their lives.

The Dignity, on a mission of mercy to besieged Gaza, was attacked by the Israeli Navy at approximately 6am (UST) in international waters, roughly 90 miles off the coast of Gaza. Several Israeli warships surrounded the small, human rights boat, firing live ammunition around it, then intentionally ramming it three times. According to ship's captain Denis Healy, the Israeli attack came, ""without any warning, or any provocation."

Caoimhe Butterly, an organizer with the Free Gaza Movement, stated that, "The gunboats gave us no warning. They came up out of the darkness firing flares and flashing huge flood lights into our faces. We were so shocked that at first we didn't react. We knew we were well within international waters and supposedly safe from attack. They rammed us three times, hitting the side of the boat hard. We began taking on water and, for a few minutes, we all feared for our lives. After they rammed us, they started screaming at us as we were frantically getting the life boats ready and putting on our life jackets. They kept yelling that if we didn't turn back they would shoot us."

Cynthia McKinney, former U.S. congresswoman and Green Party presidential candidate, was traveling to Gaza aboard the Dignity in order to assess the impact of Israel's military onslaught against the civilian population of the Gaza Strip. According to McKinney, "Israeli patrol boats...tracked us for about 30 minutes...and then all of a sudden they rammed us approximately three times, twice in the front and once in the side...the Israelis indicated that [they felt] we were involved in terrorist activities." The Dignity departed from Larnaca Port in Cyprus at 7pm (UST) on Monday 29 December with a cargo of over 3 tons of desperately needed medical supplies donated to Gaza by the people of Cyprus. Three surgeons were also aboard, traveling to Gaza to volunteer in overwhelmed hospitals and clinics. The ship was searched by Cypriot Port authorities prior to departure, and its passenger list was made public.

Israel's deplorable attack on the unarmed Dignity is a violation of both international maritime law and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which states that "the high seas should be reserved for peaceful purposes." Delivering doctors and urgently needed medical supplies to civilians is a just such a "peaceful purpose." Deliberately ramming a mercy ship and endangering its passengers is an act of terrorism.

**CALL the Israeli Government and demand that it immediately STOP attacking the civilian population of Gaza and STOP using violence to prevent human rights and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people.**

**Mark Regev** in the Prime Minister's office at: +972 2670 5354 or +972 5 0620 3264 [mark.regev@it.pmo.gov.il](mailto:mark.regev@it.pmo.gov.il) **Shlomo Dror** in the Ministry of Defence at: +972 3697 5339 or +972 50629 8148 [mediasar@mod.gov.il](mailto:mediasar@mod.gov.il) **Major Liebovitz** from the Israeli Navy at: +972 5 781 86248  
\*\*\*\*\***For more information, please contact:**(Gaza) **Ewa Jasiewicz**, +972 598 700 497 / [freelance@mailworks.org](mailto:freelance@mailworks.org) (Cyprus) **Lubna Masarwa** +357 99 081 767 / [lubna@gmail.com](mailto:lubna@gmail.com) (Lebanon) **Caoimhe Butterly** +961 70 875 727 / [sahara78@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sahara78@hotmail.co.uk) For more information and how to make \$ donations see: <http://www.FreeGaza.org>

**The Free Gaza Movement, a human rights group, sent two boats to Gaza in August 2008. These were the first international boats to land in the port in 41 years. Since August, four more voyages were successful, taking Parliamentarians, human rights workers, and other dignitaries to witness the effects of Israel's draconian policies on the civilians of Gaza.**

## **5. SEND \$\$\$\$ for medical AID**

**As the death & suffering increases - here is suggestion for sending money for medical aid to Gaza which comes from the Canadian Arab Federation & is another example of how good people work together: all donations for medical aid to Gaza will be forwarded through this Israeli group: Physicians for Human Rights – Israel - for the Gaza Emergency medical campaign. You can donate to Medical Aid for Palestine through their website at <http://mapcan.org/english.html>. When you are on the donation page, specify Gaza Emergency. You can call MAP at: (514) 843-7875 to donate\$.**

## **6. BOYCOTTS**

**Boycotts** are one of many means used to raise awareness and create economic problems for companies & countries involved in injustice & oppression. These strategies are used to support justice and human rights in regions or countries where other non-violent efforts and international appeals, including UN resolutions, to overcome actions that are internationally recognized as morally reprehensible, have so far failed to change the oppressor. Boycotts give individual consumers political power and choice; boycotts are even more effective when an organized campaign by social movements and other organizations – like church & labour - creates public awareness about and support for the issues. Retailers can be educated about the products they sell, both privately and publicly. Some will accept the necessity for the action; others may respond only when economic pressure is exerted.

It is also important to act in solidarity, to know that ours is a cooperative response to those most affected; many groups inside Palestine/Israel have called for international boycotts.

These websites have long & extensive lists of products to boycott – many of which are sold in Canada.

[http://www.caiaweb.org/files/nov26\\_2006bdsboycottlist.pdf](http://www.caiaweb.org/files/nov26_2006bdsboycottlist.pdf) & <http://www.boycottisraeligoods.org/modules11748.php> **ALWAYS check the compulsory** (in Canada) **"MADE in ....."** label. **Israeli produced goods should have a barcode beginning with 729.** There are loopholes in the use of barcodes and re-labelling is not unknown in Canada; these are not 100% certain checks.

## **Possible boycott focus for Canadians**

**Mountain Equipment Co-op** (a membership organization) carries clothing, equipment and Nike shoes made in Israel. See its online catalogue: [www.mountainequipment.coop/Products/product](http://www.mountainequipment.coop/Products/product) The Ethics Director, Harvey Chan can be reached at: [harveychan@mec.ca](mailto:harveychan@mec.ca) & 604 707 3300

**Ontario, BC & maybe other Liquor Boards carry a line of Israeli wines.** There are wines from Galil Mountain Winery, one from Dalton Winery, and three from the Golan Heights Winery, under their Yarden label. More are reputedly on the way. (Gamla, Golan and Yarden wines are made in the Golan Heights illegally occupied territory.) BC Liquor Board CEO Jim chambers, 2625 Rupert St. 604 252-3000

**Naot Shoes** are a favourite of many – even progressive people wear them. They are sold in widely in good shoe stores.

**Educational Toys & musical equipment for children.** These brands are sold in Canadian shops. They tend to be well made, wooden & sturdy like European toys: HABA Toys, Sophie the Giraffe, Kathe Kruse, Selecta Toys, Grimm's Spiel und Holz, Plan Toys, Skuut Balance Bike. For more toy information: <http://www.ape2zebra.ca/toys-made-in-israel.asp>

**CHAPTERS/Indigo** There is a country-wide boycott & picket of this large Canadian book chain because the owners have a foundation that finances any would-be soldier from anywhere in the world who wants to join the Israeli military. Call CEO Heather Reisman: 1-866 899 4636