

New Irish Anti-Apartheid Campaign calls on Ireland to take action on Israeli apartheid against Palestinians

Senator Frances Black says: “The Irish Government must publicly recognise that the State of Israel is committing the crime of apartheid against the Palestinian people.”

The new Irish Anti-Apartheid Campaign for Palestine has called on Ireland and the international community to publicly recognise that the State of Israel is committing the crime of apartheid against the Palestinian people, and to take concrete measures to end this crime against humanity.

The coalition, made up of 18 civil society organisations, trade unions and academic experts committed to working collaboratively to end Israeli apartheid against Palestinians, was launched today in Dublin by Independent Senator Frances Black, a long-time campaigner for Palestinian rights.

Through shared actions, campaigns and advocacy initiatives the group has pledged to engage members of the Irish public and political representatives on the situation of Palestinians, and to build political support for effective measures by Ireland and the international community to condemn Israel’s actions and to end the crime of apartheid against Palestinians.

According to Senator Black Israel has, over decades, instituted and built a regime of racial discrimination and oppression amounting to apartheid against Palestinians living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as Palestinian refugees and those in the diaspora.

“Apartheid is a crime against humanity, recognised in international law, including in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and in the United Nations Convention Against Apartheid. The nature of this institutionalised discrimination and oppression has been outlined in detail for years by Palestinian human rights organisations and has been more recently identified and described by Israeli and international human rights organisations, as well as by UN bodies and experts,” she said.

Speaking at the launch of the coalition, which took place in Merrion Square at the ‘Tribute Head’ – unveiled in 1983 in honour of Nelson Mandela for his leading role in the struggle against South African apartheid – Senator Black added: “Ireland has a proud history of challenging apartheid in South Africa and Namibia. The coalition will draw on the rich vein of individual activism, public advocacy, and political action in Ireland in the 1980s that was so successful in drawing international attention to the situation there that ultimately helped bring about an end to the South African apartheid regime.”

“As a first step we are asking that Dáil Éireann and the Irish Government publicly recognise that the State of Israel is committing the crime of apartheid against the Palestinian people. Secondly, we are calling on the Irish Government to support efforts at the United Nations to re-establish the Special Committee Against Apartheid to investigate all practices of systematic discrimination and oppression purportedly amounting to apartheid anywhere in the world, including the occupied Palestinian territory.”

The launch of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Coalition, which follows the United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, has been warmly received by Palestinian civil society. The Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Council (PHROC) said:

“Israel has created a regime of institutionalised racial discrimination against the Palestinian people between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. It is a regime of apartheid the purpose of which is to deny the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, including millions of Palestinian refugees. Its aim is to fragment and isolate us, to imprison us in bantustan-like enclaves, to steal our wealth, to remove us from our homeland, and to deny our right to self-determination.

“A new world-wide movement is emerging to challenge these injustices. We congratulate Ireland for, once again, being at the forefront of the movement to end apartheid as it has done in the past.”

The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network (PNGO) also welcomed the establishment of the new anti-apartheid campaign in Ireland. “We fully support and endorse the launch of this campaign which will soon be joined by many other such campaigns around the world. This awful regime of apartheid continues to expand its control over our people, land and resources. As the international community does little to help, we now call on the people in countries around the world to come together in our support and to say to their governments that they want action to end Israel’s brutal and decades-long regime of apartheid and occupation.

Mary Manning, the first Dunnes Stores worker to refuse to handle apartheid South Africa’s fruit in July 1984, said: “I fully support the launch of this Ireland-Palestine anti-apartheid campaign. I hoped, after South Africa, that the world was finished with apartheid. Unfortunately, and sadly, that is not the case. Apartheid was not acceptable to the Irish people in the 1980s when we made our stand and it is not acceptable to them in 2022.”

Notes to the editor

1. The coalition comprises the following members;

- Academics for Palestine
- Action Aid Ireland
- Afri (Action from Ireland)
- Amnesty International Ireland
- Centre for Global Education
- Comhlámh/Comhlámh Justice for Palestine
- Gaza Action Ireland
- Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)
- Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)

Irish Council for Civil Liberties
Jews for Palestine
Kairos Ireland
Sadaka-the Ireland Palestine Alliance
SIPTU
TCD BDS
Trade Union Friends of Palestine
Trócaire.

2. Through their legal research and documentation of human rights violations it has been clearly stated for a number of years by Palestinian organisations [Al Haq and Badil](#) that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid against Palestinians. The Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem [have also come to the conclusion](#) that the State of Israel has imposed a regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Former Attorney General of Israel, Michael Ben-Yair, [writing in The Journal](#) also concurred that “it is Israel that is permanently depriving millions of Palestinians of their civil and political rights. This is Israeli apartheid.” Respected international human rights organisations [Amnesty](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) have also released detailed reports that come to the same findings. The UN Special Rapporteur’s [Report to the United Nations Human Rights Council](#) in March 2022 has added to the growing consensus that Israel has established a rule of apartheid over Palestinians. His report follows a previous [report published by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia \(ESCWA\)](#) that came to the same conclusions.
3. The three recognised tests for the crime of apartheid are: i) an institutionalised regime of systematic racial oppression and discrimination; ii) established with the intent to maintain the domination of one racial group over another; and iii) which consists of inhumane acts as an integral part of the regime.
4. For further information about the coalition please contact Samuel Rowe, Communications Officer, Amnesty International Ireland, 085 814 8986, media@amnesty.ie