



OCTAGON 2025

**Post-Gaza Politics:
A Prelude for a Global Solidarity**

Madrid, Spain | 28 November 2025

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PRESENTATION

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DISCLAIMER

This publication incorporates content derived from a forum where participants expressed their own ideas and thoughts on a specific theme. The views and opinions expressed by the participants are their own and do not necessarily reflect the official position or endorsement of the organisation that hosted the event. The organisation takes no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or validity of any information provided by participants. Readers are advised to independently evaluate and verify the content for themselves. The organisation disclaims any liability for any loss, damage, or inconvenience caused as a result of reliance on the information provided in this publication.

ABOUT CAF

Common Action Forum (CAF) is an independent transnational foundation based in Madrid, Spain. CAF acts as a think-tank, sustaining a global network of prominent and emerging intellectuals, politicians, journalists, and activists from diverse backgrounds. Fostering dialogues to consolidate a progressive agenda, CAF facilitates spaces to design solutions to critical issues of our times. We aim to promote multilevel cooperation and in- depth, structural-oriented analyses of global challenges. As opposed to cynical, panicked, and pessimistic accounts of our world's dysfunctions, CAF seeks alternative narratives and constructive proposals that address root causes, not only the symptoms. We are driven by the vision of an empowered, cosmopolitan, and democratic global citizenry, conscious of a common ground that unites and overcomes differences. In a time of noise, we focus on the existential questions humanity

faces: ever-increasing inequalities, environmental collapse, the social impact of technology, and the rise of neo- fascist/xenophobic policies.

THE OCTAGON

The OCTAGON is a yearly private round-table discussion in which over 32 top intellectuals, activists, and experts join to address particular vital issues of our time. Despite being our youngest, the OCTAGON is CAF's most intensive and focused initiative. Comprised of four main workshops and functioning under the Chatham House Rule, it aims to gather sound analyses and grounded innovative proposals that can be further developed into political action and policy recommendations.

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For more detailed information about CAF's work, mission, vision, and values, please visit our website,

www.commonactionforum.net

INTRODUCTION

Rather than collapsing without a trace, the global order is shifting at an unprecedented pace, revealing the urgent need to transform global institutions and protect the values that underpin international law. In the face of delusions of power and growing fear of anomie, there is room for revolutionary optimism. When complex systems fracture and falter in the face of uncertainty, it becomes much easier to slip through the cracks and refine, or even radically transform, many of their features.

Hopelessness is leaving the margins and paving the way for those who have been mistreated by decades of hegemonic oppression to take the reins, especially the Global South and the middle powers, once comfortable with an increasingly unresponsive order. Global civil society will play an indisputable role in this transformation, not only because of its legitimacy and its struggle for justice and equity, but also because of its instincts and organic nature—essential for accelerating it and ensuring readiness for tomorrow's challenges.

Just as the Palestinian question in general is a touchstone for testing the fundamental contradictions of the international system and its values, the genocide in Gaza, in particular, has exposed its advanced state of decay and the increasingly insurmountable distance between the elites and the global majority. Today, challenging Zionism means challenging the system's most important economic, geopolitical and conceptual asset, but also, paradoxically, its Achilles heel.

Let us not be fooled. Gaza has been destroyed. It lives on in the spirit of liberation of its survivors and in the solidarity of its allies. The genocide continues, and the darkest hours still lie ahead for global society. In the face of despair, however, we cannot forget these last three years. Gaza is the epitome of resistance against tyranny, against crude and oppressive power, against greed and the uncontrollable thirst for wealth, life, territory and resources, which places it at the natural epicentre of all the existential struggles that unite humanity.

01_ THE REBIRTH OF THE PALESTINIAN NARRATIVE



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The magnitude of the genocide of the Palestinian people has exposed how the traditional discourse of liberation and the categories that structure it are now incapable of responding to the reality of the circumstances. The principles of statehood, traditional sovereignty and diplomatic recognition not only seem to fail when it comes to realising and articulating Palestinian collective aspirations, but, all the way from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Palestinian Authority (PA) to the Oslo Accords themselves, they have conceived structures that remain largely co-opted.

With the breakdown of the credibility of Israeli propaganda and the narrative monopoly of the Western media, Palestinian voices are beginning to be heard around the world. While the mobilisation seeks to overcome the paralysis of a false ceasefire that aims to return control of the narrative to Israel, the exclusively national character of this struggle has given way to a vision of liberation capable of resonating with universal experiences, linking the Palestinian cause to a global struggle against colonialism, for the rooting of communities and the care of the land.

This session addressed the need to abandon factional narratives, outlining the main challenges to building a unified and proactive framework for justice, and asking: How have the reception and reach of the Palestinian narrative of self-determination changed over the last three years? What unifying discourses have been articulated beyond social movements and borders? What discourses, both international and national, are shaping the immediate political goals of Palestinian liberation?

A CRUCIBLE OF BATTLES FOR HOPE

The wave of extreme nationalism, reactionarism and supremacism sweeping the world is bringing to power a set of forces skilled at capturing and capitalising on democratic disillusionment. Political forces that propose reductive and rapid adjustments that the masses embrace not so much out of ideology as because they reject reality. Confronting these movements and the other challenges that accompany them demands the construction of a counter-narrative capable of envisioning the future. Perspectives of hope that do not need to present racism or violence as necessary evils to overcome the tribulations of humanity.

The narrative of the Palestinian question has naturally broadened over the last three years, consolidating into large mobilisations, although the question of how to translate these into political action remains open, with many of the civil fronts slowly being co-opted by organisations and politicians more complacent with current asymmetries. Despite everything, we cannot give up on this enormous progress.

Those who fight for the Palestinian cause fight for the same things as those around the world who champion social justice or the protection of nature, and it has become imperative to join forces and critical masses. Although at its heart, this struggle remains rooted in the relationship between a historical community and its land, it is not only affected by the same geopolitical and neoliberal dynamics as the others but also embodies them. Moreover, to the same extent, **Palestine has also become a testing ground for the limits of citizen resistance and global complacency with brutality.** Just as liberation in the 20th century was part of the anti-colonial struggles, as was the fight against apartheid, so too must it be part of a narrative capable of connecting it to those of

the global majority. It must leave suffering as a trait behind and embrace a vision of the future, a purpose that transcends borders, even as a project of nation-building.

BROADENING THE PRO-PALESTINIAN SPECTRUM

At the heart of the problem lies the nature of Israel's supremacist state project, a country whose excesses have become globalised in just half a century and which, although people refuse to talk about it, has attacked five countries with impunity in a span of just a few months.

As Israeli cruelty and cynicism are exposed, thanks in large part to digital and alternative media, the global left and the populist right are beginning to find common ground on the issue of liberation. This is the case with a growing number of figures on the US alt-right, such as Tucker Carlson and Marjorie Taylor Greene, who seem to be taking advantage of growing social discontent with Israel's political influence to establish positions ahead of a post-Trump America.

The Palestinian question may resonate with the traditionalist values of the conservative elements of our societies, and there are many **foundational narratives, especially in the West, that mythologise episodes of armed resistance against the invading enemy and appeal to sovereignty and territorial roots as ultimate values.** On the other hand, it is becoming clear to many that the security argument put forward for Israel's continuous aggression is, in fact, part of a strategy to perpetuate violence, the diametric opposite of the right's commitment to security and austerity. However, although it is indisputable that the influence of Israeli interests has marked the shift towards policies of securitisation, regional

destabilisation, and restrictions on fundamental rights, we must be careful with reactionary and reductionist messages that seek to mobilise democratic disenchantment.

Classic anti-Semitism, in the anti-Jewish sense, underpins many of the conspiracy theories and xenophobia that, like The Great Replacement, mobilise these sectors through neurosis. While it is strategic that support for Israel's international isolation grows across our societies—opening up isolationist right-wing actors to support Palestinian liberation—it is also key not to conflate our readings of the conflict and our readings of a reality that needs to be global and interconnected in order to achieve justice and true liberation. Some of the opponents of this position claim that it is a strategic mistake to limit Palestinian liberation exclusively to the causes of the global left, but that is where the mistake lies. **Liberation, sovereignty, social justice, and the struggle for environmental preservation are not the exclusive domain of the left; they are universal in nature, which is why it is futile to apprehend them separately and selectively.** Disillusionment with the powers that be is the same, from left to right, even if different actors capitalise on it with varying degrees of sincerity. We must aspire to overcome false dichotomies without de-essentializing the struggles. Until then, we should remember that these coalitions may arise from practical and democratic consensus, but they are doomed to clash.

On the other hand, Israel will not be defeated by military means, but its state of permanent internal crisis also offers essential opportunities to seek alliances with more progressive and open elements of Israeli society, which can have a considerable impact—as the meetings between the African National Congress (ANC) and the first Afrikaner delegations that made history. A new narrative must also transcend the fragmentation and cultural alienation between Muslims, Christians,

and Jews in Palestine. **A charter of liberation that contemplates the repeal of supremacism and offers a future of peace and security, regardless of race, religion, ideology, or culture.**

ON THE “CEASEFIRE” AND THE BOARD OF “PEACE”

To a certain extent, the last two years can already be considered a success for the liberation narrative. Millions of people around the world have seen through Palestinian eyes and have heard their experiences without intermediaries. They have seen the problem of Israel not only in terms of its social model, but also as a military and regional power, and the collateral threat of its actions, as well as the weapons, ideologies, and espionage tools it exports.

We are, however, at an extremely delicate moment. **The ceasefire signed between Hamas and Israel is allowing the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) to continue their hostilities against the civilian population with impunity, while also endorsing media silence.** In the process, the partition of Gaza under the pretext of security and military corridors threatens to give way to a new episode of permanent colonisation and displacement. This language and the silence that surrounds it have had a substantial impact on mobilisation, slowing it down.

The so-called Board of Peace, in charge of its reconstruction, by virtue of the controversial Resolution 2832, has been set up as a clientelist structure to channel the political and real estate interests of the US presidential family and their cronies. **Its existence and primacy pose serious dilemmas, as it is essential to understand what decisions take shape in its deliberations, who participates in them, and what processes characterise them.** These will set the pace for social mobilisation inside and outside Palestine.

From the outset, this body introduces a new dimension of submission, not only because of its blatant arbitrary nature, but also because its language, through omission, openly rejects Palestinian statehood and sovereignty. At the same time, the lack of Palestinian representation, the evident pro-Israeli bias, and the overall institutionalised corruption it represents make interacting with it a gesture of enormous political and moral cost. Despite the Security Council mandate, its nature and disposition make it impossible to normalise.

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY: BEYOND THE NARRATIVE

Now that awareness has peaked, many of the political establishment figures who had assimilated part of this narrative are reverting to negotiation frameworks that equate the positions of Israel and Palestine, assuming that they can be made in good faith. The most important challenge, in this regard, for public debate is to make the leap from mere awareness to a pedagogy that is resistant to civil fatigue and demobilisation. A large part of the global population, including civil society, has become aware of the situation in Palestine. However, this awareness has not translated into concrete action.

Much of the global population, including civil society, especially in Western societies, lacks the critical tools not only to identify colonialism as a problem, but also to frame Zionism and the Palestinian question itself as a neocolonial issue. However, beyond its particularities and characteristic severity, the history of this conflict is no different from that of nations such as Sudan, Congo, and most of Latin America. **The key to universalising this narrative lies precisely in finding common ground, in education based on shared experiences of sovereignty and self-determination.**

This means investing in digital communication, especially on platforms such as Discord, Twitch, and YouTube, which, despite their different audiences and censorship issues, are open to new generations. We must take up the baton from organisations such as the Palestinian Institute for Public Diplomacy, which have devoted themselves to designing communication guides to counter the constant stream of Zionist propaganda, but it remains crucial to update and expand these initiatives, especially into languages such as Mandarin, Spanish, Portuguese, and French.

Finding this common ground will help resolve one of the major dilemmas that currently hinders the emergence of this narrative, namely the feeling that approaches that Palestinians identify as legitimate—such as armed resistance and the aspiration to dismantle the Zionist state—seem internationally unacceptable, while internationally acceptable approaches are illegitimate to the Palestinian majority.

LESSONS FROM TRADE UNION MOBILISATION

An example of an unmitigated narrative victory is the participation of several trade union movements in the pro-Palestinian strikes of 2025, with the most significant strike taking place during this forum. The Genoese dockworkers' unions and many others in Italy and the rest of Europe identified their own complicity in the genocide in their professional activity, as they provided direct support for the international arms shipments that fuel the killing. They thus combined their commitment to justice with the affirmation of their capacity for mobilisation, the vindication of the dignity of their profession, and the internationalist spirit of the labour movement.

This is the perfect narrative strategy: **to promote a counter-colonial narrative that works in and with many other struggles, identifying the interests and vulnerabilities that these struggles share and encouraging ever-greater solidarity mobilisation.** For this to crystallise, however, it will remain essential to lead by example. To settle for speeches and appeals to the solidarity of these movements, many of which are organic and decentralised, is to give up on activating their potential. Promoting active participation, gatherings and spaces for socialisation, activism, and education is the best weapon against demobilisation, but also against the misinformation of those who are exclusively exposed to the noise and propaganda of increasingly intervened digital spaces.

around the world. **The success of the formula is not perseverance itself; it is the continuity of a decentralised structure, capable of coordinating, but above all of channelling, the energies and dedication of people from all over the world,** eager to feel that they can finally do something against the worst injustices.

As noted in these conversations, GSF and other upcoming global initiatives have much to gain by increasingly becoming melting pots of cultures and perspectives, with representatives from as many nations as possible, highlighting alliances and the universal nature of the struggle itself.

LESSONS FROM THE FLOTILLA

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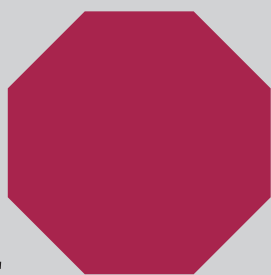
The experience of the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) has been a turning point, not only in promoting civil initiatives to break the blockade of Gaza, where international organisations and states are failing, but also in reminding the world of the power of independent action. After the harassment of the *Madleen* and in a matter of just two months, this international coalition has managed to secure donations and hundreds of activists to prepare and coordinate a fleet of boats that would surely face harassment and violence from the Israeli navy.

Its own members acknowledge the many logistical challenges and internal chaos they faced, with advocacy groups that had never worked together before. However, GSF, which is currently preparing a new, even more ambitious flotilla, symbolises resilience in the face of repression and intimidation, and its philosophy of constant updating and learning is already a model for social movements



Mosque of Said Hashem, in ancient Gaza, in the Neo-Mameluk style of the late Ottoman period. 1922 - Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

02_ **FROM THE GENOCIDE TO THE DAWN OF A NEW LEADERSHIP**



With Hamas and the armed resistance movements isolated and lacking political prospects, and the PLO and the entire Palestinian Authority discredited, the crisis of representation of the Palestinian people presents itself as both an obstacle and an opportunity. Where collaboration, self-censorship, paralysis, and structural pressures have given rise to a fragmented self-government that has hindered the emergence of a new generation of leaders—even in the face of genocidal aggression—its collapse also opens the way to entirely new forms of deliberation and listening.

The global solidarity movement has exposed new horizons for the organisational morphologies of the cause, illustrating more democratic and inclusive models and paving the way for emerging forms of leadership for Palestine that have a historic opportunity to transcend factionalism and fragmentation. This decentralised moral leadership of global civil movements, however, carries with it the well-known vulnerabilities inherent to technological platforms, from digital censorship to intangibility and lack of formal structure.

Seeking to transcend the boundaries characteristic of the contemporary Palestinian political landscape, this session explored the dilemmas, obstacles, names, and possibilities for an essential refounding, posing questions such as: How can global connectivity and the legitimacy of grassroots movements promote new unified forms of leadership in Palestine? And what civil and diplomatic alliances are opening up in an increasingly multipolar international environment?

THE DILEMMAS OF PALESTINIAN POWER

At the moment, three key forces are at play in Palestinian politics. The first force is politicide, a concerted attempt to end all forms of Palestinian political autonomy, especially in Gaza. The Peace Board, that body led by Kushner and probably Tony Blair, will make decisions on behalf of the Palestinians, without any Palestinian representation. In the West Bank, French President Emmanuel Macron is pressuring Mahmoud Abbas to push forward a tutored constitutional project, which no ordinary Palestinian has yet seen. Israel, as is its custom, remains focused on its project of territorial plunder and demographic and political engineering, seeking to co-opt business actors within the West Bank. **There is, therefore, a concerted effort to destroy the Palestinian political fabric, with the aim of turning the entire national leadership, including the diaspora, into puppets.**

The second major force is none other than the decaying status quo: Mahmoud Abbas, Hussein al-Sheikh, and a very significant and ageing part of the PLO's factional leadership. In short, a group that is hardly up to the task at this moment, seen by the majority of society as a treacherous subcontractor of the Occupation. The third force, the real engine of change in Palestinian society, is civil mobilisation itself. An immense pool of dynamic young professionals whose main vocation is to transcend factionalism, whatever the cost. In the words of many Palestinians: "The new generations are so capable that it is practically a miracle that the current leaders are so incompetent."

The question remains, however, one of organisation. In the opinion of the Palestinian majority, the only faction that has demonstrated remarkable operational capacity is Hamas, whose structure, especially in civil terms, has been weakened to the

point of practical irrelevance. The other independent factions are too small to have any real presence, and their diversity continues to materialise as one of the most serious obstacles to the emergence of new leadership: the lack of cross-party support. The absence of resources and a unifying narrative to articulate it adds to this. **Despite everything, the main challenge remains the lack of credibility of these leaders among the Palestinian population itself**, a people so characteristically marked by sacrifice, disappointment, and the manipulation of their public life that they require tangible proof from those willing to take the reins on their behalf. Faced with a political and intellectual elite that has been unable to achieve unity and action even during a genocide, this discredit has reached levels that are difficult to counteract.

A LEADERSHIP BESIEGED

In a context of selective and targeted persecution like that of Palestinian politics, there are many voices lamenting a deliberately designed, draconian difficulty: Palestine is a physically, socially, and politically fragmented space as a result of the policies of occupation and apartheid, and anyone who aspires to new leadership for their people must be able to fight without being instantly struck down. **Unfortunately, this reality, represented by imprisoned leaders such as Marwan Barghout, which has intensified since the beginning of the genocide, continues to require time and clandestine work, as well as the participation of international allies willing to protect new leaders from Zionist aggression.** On the other hand, it is not trivial to think that organisations such as the Palestinian Authority are victims of their own status as employers and of the inertia of the privileges they uphold, but it remains crucial to investigate the economic ties and dependencies that strangle the possibility of internal solidarity.

There continue to be major disagreements regarding the priorities, or even the vision, of a Palestinian national liberation project, with a political process that is as stagnant as it is fragmented. In the eyes of many Palestinians, Oslo, the dream of statehood, and the Palestinian Authority project have become a means of legitimising and minimising the political cost of the Zionist occupation. The attacks of October 7, 2023, materialised as a response to this lack of political solutions, but in just a few years, the situation in Gaza has also illustrated the limits of an armed resistance project. **This impotence has led to a widespread sense of disenchantment and lethargy, and a problematic lack of leadership and vision at the most crucial moment,** even in the irony of a world that is tearing its hair out over the collapse of international law itself, which has lain dead in Palestine for decades.

It is worth mentioning that the advent of unified leadership does not mean abandoning ideological or practical diversity, but rather factionalism. **Palestine is a complex, modern, and diverse society of more than 14 million people, and unification cannot be expected to simplify these characteristics, but it can lay the foundations for common aspirations.** One of the main current initiatives for defining a common agenda is an independent survey that has already interviewed more than 10,000 Palestinians of all ages, situations, and geographies, seeking to elucidate what shared vision and values they aspire to realise as a vision for national governance.

This project echoes the survey conducted by the ANC and several of its collaborators throughout 1955, interviewing thousands of people to identify common features of their views on liberation. This research would be the source of the South African Freedom Charter, articulated around ten demands, from education, legal equality, and economic

freedom to land redistribution. **This document would be banned and circulated clandestinely for decades, but it would become the powerful political foundation for the ANC's actions.**

A NEW HORIZON?

Faced with the representation trap that forces international allies of the cause to be led by the priorities of a PA lacking legitimacy, it is necessary to transcend political and diplomatic formalities. Another fundamental reason why it is essential to move from mere awareness to education, as we have already explained, is the need for a global society that understands these representation dilemmas faced by the Palestinian people. **The Palestinian Authority, besides being seen as a servile and stagnant institution, governs less than 20% of Palestinians and can be said to watch over the particular interests of the political elites of that fraction.** For a unity of struggle that can give rise to national unity, Gazans and the millions of Palestinians in the diaspora must be involved in both nation-building and the consolidation of unified leadership. Escaping the two-state paradigm, which, in addition to being designed for failure, excludes millions of people from the Palestinian national project, is essential to this end.

In this context, and although the electoral process is also of interest, it is not necessary to aspire to replace the PLO at the head of the Palestinian Authority. The institutional design, inertia, and internal pressures inherent to this institution would most likely force the capitulation of any reform project, emptying it of legitimacy and burning the political capital and credibility of those responsible for it. **It is more important to establish a platform for dialogue capable of listening to and organically raising the profile**

of the Palestinian people's demands, gradually building legitimacy while waiting for the moment when a change in the institutional balance allows it to establish itself as an alternative. Initiatives such as the cross-cutting conference of the Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad (PCPA), the 14 Million Movement, and many other civil groups are beginning to give shape to this necessity, proposing alternatives to the PLO that involve a large part of the diaspora.

With sufficient traction and a world better informed about the difficulties of Palestinian leadership, **proposing a transnational digital and organic election to establish a national organisation is not only possible but also desirable.** Of course, there are inherent challenges in designing a registration and validation process for millions of people, many of whom will have difficulty proving their ancestry, but the challenge is worth it. A successful call for participation, coupled with a transparent, open-source system, would give the resulting leadership enormous political legitimacy to potentially redirect the world's attention to them, a body capable of representing Palestinians and sowing the seeds of a true national project.

STUDENT MOBILISATION

In terms of alternative forms of international organisation, student mobilisation has been a key factor not only in communicating and promoting the Palestinian cause, but also in highlighting the servility of the rule of law and the lack of protection for fundamental rights of expression and demonstration, especially in the Global North.

The Palestinian narrative on university campuses has been captured by the influence of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), a state-linked organisation that has signed

agreements with academic, legal, and political institutions around the world, establishing a spurious definition of anti-Semitism that encompasses any criticism of the State of Israel. This has not only promoted self-censorship in university settings, but has also succeeded in blocking pro-Palestinian students and professors from key positions, even in organisations such as the British National Union of Students, which were instrumental in the fight against apartheid and protagonists in the campaign to boycott Barclays.

Identifying its promoters and defenders, and especially their connections with third-party organisations—particularly in terms of funding—is crucial not only to mitigate the impact of the IHRA, but also to organise student mobilisation against an internal foe and around immediate and tangible goals. Other campaigns should also focus on investments and *partnerships* that fuel or profit from Israeli colonialism, emphasising not symbolic acts, but every small victory.

At this moment, the pro-Palestinian student movement faces the challenge of operationalising its vision around a clear and practical strategy that unifies the cause internationally in the academic sphere. Its first priority, in this regard, is to establish a transnational infrastructure with a sustained impact, which also includes formalising networks with Palestinian students, whether in the West Bank, the diaspora, or Gaza. These networks should aim to support collective decision-making processes, share resources, and develop coordinated campaigns for academic boycotts, divestment, and sanctions. To this end, it is essential to build digital platforms and archives that allow for organisation, sharing of experiences and information, and documentation of actions. These efforts should also be strategically directed toward cultivating the public profile of activists and student

leaders capable of making the leap into the political arena, whether within university life or even in institutions.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOMS

Outside of strictly student-run organisations, mutual aid and resource distribution must transcend the fragmented model that characterises non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Fundraising campaigns face the challenge of escaping pro-Israeli control and third-sector neoliberal funding schemes, and must strive to channel their resources directly to affected communities—linking them to independent monitoring systems—but also to support courageous campaigns and the legal defence of their activists. **In the face of co-optation by established organisations and conditional funding from public and private entities, this model strengthens resilience and political autonomy, although it leaves many questions unanswered about viable alternatives—especially in economic terms.**

The last three years have revealed a significant generational gap in the practice of civil action, with young people calling for the replacement of technocratic leadership and radical transparency in the sector. This, too, is their main contribution to changing the narrative. This call for horizontality and a more anti-colonial approach requires regular intersectoral meetings and assemblies to renew collective commitments, align priorities, and decentralise decision-making. In this regard, there is growing mistrust of social organisations that have prioritised funding and co-optation of major actors over their commitments to civil society and transparency, and calling for their reform is a guarantee of action focused on the general interest.





Photo_ **DYKT Mohigan**_ CC BY 2.0

03_ WHO DEFENDS THE DEFENDERS?



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Since Palestine's genocide started, we've seen hundreds of journalists murdered while wearing their "press" vests, and hundreds of doctors and healthcare workers killed even inside Gaza's operating rooms, while working to save the lives of so many wounded and maimed by that same ongoing genocide. We have seen Israel directly attack the facilities of United Nations (UN) agencies and humanitarian aid organisations, and how hundreds of activists and lawyers have been silenced throughout the Middle East and Europe. In short, we are witnessing a total assault on human rights defenders on a scale never seen before. It **is not just physical persecution, but a whole surveillance regime that controls every facet of human life**—with facial recognition technologies that have also been put at the service of war.

This session sought to provide answers to some of the most pressing questions in the field of human rights defence: How can we build transnational protection networks? How can we strengthen institutional firewalls? How can we prevent states from using regulatory agencies, immigration systems, funding controls, and professional complaints as weapons to silence dissent? And, especially, how do we integrate solidarity with Palestine into broader struggles? If the tactics used against defenders of Palestine are also being applied to environmental activists or racial justice movements, then strategies and systems of collective support must be based on the integrated efforts.

ATTACKING DEFENDERS: THE FIRST STEP WHEN STATES FEAR ACCOUNTABILITY

Throughout the session, many testimonies spoke of the ruthless sanctions, raids, surveillance, and political persecution currently being endured by defenders around the world: protesters and

activists who have been stigmatised—and in many cases, tried—as terrorists. Even UN experts such as Francesca Albanese and officials from the International Criminal Court, such as Karim Khan, are constantly targeted by Israeli smear campaigns and US economic sanctions. The list of reprisals against anyone who supports the global solidarity campaign with Palestine is simply endless.

In countries such as the United Kingdom, the ban on pro-Palestinian activism has led to the arrest of no fewer than 2,300 British citizens under anti-terrorism legislation for holding banners in support of Palestine Action. This telling figure, in addition to demonstrating the extent of censorship, points to an interesting shift in the narrative: **these 2,300 British citizens were not particularly interested in Palestine before 2023; they are not necessarily Muslim or Arab**. However, they have been arrested under anti-terrorism legislation—and could be prosecuted as such.

This example leads to two conclusions: the positive one is that the campaign of solidarity with Palestine is reaching segments of the population that have never before been involved in activism and is therefore becoming broader and more cross-cutting. The negative one is that the persecution and criminalisation of defenders has been absolutely fierce and disproportionate. The message is so unequivocal that **many defenders continue their work today, knowing they will be arrested at some point**. Today, they are forced to redouble their already tremendous efforts, as they must not only fight against all odds to carry on their activism, but also protect themselves from these attacks.

This attrition strategy leads to the paradox that gives this session its title: today more than ever, **lawyers and legal experts who previously defended protesters and activists now need someone to defend them**, as they face all kinds

of problems and difficulties at the legal, financial, labour, and professional levels. This extends to NGOs, not only in terms of the external attacks already described, but also in terms of the internal assaults they suffer at the hands of their own trustees, donors, or funders. Many of them denounce the presence of players within their own organisations who appear to be receiving instructions or pressure from outside to block campaigns of solidarity with Palestine.

In this context of intimidation, most of the session participants agreed on the urgent need to create digital security systems, media defence alliances, cross-border solidarity structures that cannot be isolated, and, above all, rapid response legal teams.

RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS: IMMEDIATE, INTERSECTIONAL, STRATEGIC, AND GLOBAL DEFENCE

When a defender is targeted, whether they are a UN expert, a doctor, a journalist, a student, or an activist, the response must be immediate, coordinated, and international. **If there is one thing that the Palestine solidarity movement is currently lacking, it is the ability to connect frontline defenders with legal teams that can defend their rights**, or activists on the ground with entities or individuals who can provide the necessary funds.

Thus, one of the most urgent demands is to organize an immediate response office or team that, when an activist is arrested or charged for exercising their freedom of expression, for example, can set up a financial mechanism—perhaps in the form of crowdfunding, so as not to depend on institutional funds—that can support the activist in question in facing their legal proceedings.

The prohibitive cost of lawyers, especially in Europe, means that activists or defenders prosecuted for their solidarity with Palestine lack the necessary resources to face their legal proceedings. This is particularly difficult for students, who are being arrested for their pro-Palestinian demonstrations but do not have the means or money to fight the lobby. Thus, it is clear that there is a need for a structure that connects young people, activists, and defenders who need support with groups or organisations that can provide the necessary resources to continue their activism.

Of course, there is already an entire ecosystem of organisations performing this role, but most of them are overworked and under-resourced. Much of the advocacy work being done today is at the expense of lawyers and advocates who work overtime and are unable to give each case the attention it merits. Therefore, **providing more financial resources to these legal support networks is vital to improving the existing infrastructure for the defence of defenders.**

In addition, investing in and working with this type of rapid response teams would also benefit other groups, such as climate action movements and feminist groups, thus proving extremely useful for the unification of struggles that we discussed in the previous section. Rapid response teams not only offer a collective shield to defenders who are being targeted for their pro-Palestinian activism but also help to convey the message that this is a common struggle for liberation.

Finally, digital solutions are also necessary to serve defenders, as digital security remains a major weakness within advocacy movements and organisations. Most defenders lack the training or tools to use their own phones without exposing themselves to risks or giving away sensitive information to their persecutors, and they communicate daily via platforms such as Zoom.

Thus, it is necessary to assemble and promote a small army of “tech gurus” capable of building the systems that allow them to operate and avoid being attacked. In other words, a group of experts in artificial intelligence (AI) or the deep web could build a digital infrastructure that defenders around the world could use to connect securely.

A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY: THE WEAPONIZATION OF ANTI-SEMITISM

The climate of persecution outlined above has been exacerbated by a factor that is both amplifying and complicating: spurious accusations of anti-Semitism. In countries such as Germany, where this issue is particularly sensitive, there are lawyers who refuse certain cases, journalists who are afraid to speak out, and public figures who are reluctant to openly support Palestine... for fear of being labelled anti-Semitic. The exploitation of anti-Semitism to silence dissent, criticism, or support for the Palestinian people is reaching such extremes that several protesters have been arrested in Europe simply for chanting “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.”

Behind this criminalisation lies a perverse distortion: in Germany, when protesters chanting this simple slogan are arrested, these arrests are included in anti-Semitism statistics, even though they clearly do not qualify as such. **This misleading interpretation inflates the official figures for anti-Semitism** in Germany; the media presents them as if they were a major problem; public opinion becomes convinced that there is a rise in anti-Semitism in the country, and this ultimately serves to tighten legislation and change the rules. All this in the name of a supposed surge in anti-Semitism that is not real.

A phenomenon closely related to this type of statistical manipulation is known as “strategic

lawsuits against public participation” (SLAPP). These are lawsuits that are filed knowing that they have no merit and will not succeed, but with the intention of wearing down anti-Zionist voices—financially, psychologically, and time-wise—until they withdraw from public debate. In other words, **it is a type of “lawfare” that relies on anti-racism laws** in countries such as Brazil, where anti-Semitism is included according to the IHRA definition. This definition is misleading in origin because, by identifying Zionism with Judaism, it allows any expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people to be labelled “anti-Semitic.”

The SLAPP phenomenon also applies to Jews who, in addition to facing legal action, are abandoned and completely exiled from their communities. The fact is that **Zionism is instrumentalising Jewish communities, and Jews themselves, in the service of defending what would otherwise be indefensible.**

All of this makes it imperative to run large-scale campaigns to educate and raise awareness of the differences between Judaism and Zionism. At the same time, any campaign of solidarity with Palestine initiated by the Jewish community or led by Jewish figures would be of great value, as **every Jew who opposes Zionism poses a problem for the Zionist narrative.**

The collective Jewish imagination is so overwhelmed by fear, by the idea that without Israel, the Jewish people would be doomed, **that three generations after the Holocaust, Zionist public life and discourse remain as if it were still happening.** This kind of manufactured trauma gives rise to a self-fulfilling prophecy: while the Zionist state claims to protect Jews from anti-Semitism, it is actually fostering anti-Semitism in areas and places where it did not previously exist—for example, in the Islamic world, Arab countries, and the Global South.

In this regard, **it is worth remembering that anti-Semitism is an eminently European phenomenon** and that, without the guilt that stems from Europe's historical responsibility, the decisions that Western governments are currently making—or failing to make—would be incomprehensible. In fact, naming and shaming European countries as accomplices in this ongoing oppression and colonisation is as important as supporting Jewish groups that are breaking with the Zionist narrative.

Ultimately, it is crucial to understand how the Zionist narrative operates and to encourage our Jewish allies to expose it. They, better than anyone, can work to make the public understand that the greatest danger to the Jewish people today is not influencers like Nick Fuentes or Candace Owens: **the greatest danger to Jews around the world, and what can truly lead to an upsurge in anti-Semitism, is the unparalleled injustice being perpetrated by Israel, supposedly, in the name of Jewish security.**

NAMING AND SHAMING: GOING ON THE OFFENSIVE

Beyond naming and shaming Western governments for their inaction and complicity, it is essential to go on the offensive and have civil society itself monitor Zionist organisations. In addition to continuing to use anti-Semitism as its main shield, the Zionist regime has infiltrated its organisations into all spaces and is very effective in launching malicious accusations against activists or defenders. These accusations are completely baseless, yet they succeed in defaming defenders, with dire consequences for their reputations and work.

Unlike pro-Palestinian organisations, which have too much work to do and insufficient resources, the Zionist movement's great influence has a lot to do with its abundant funding. Even university

organisations, such as the Jewish Student Union, can have around \$2 million in their bank accounts. This is key to the Israeli *hasbara* and propaganda machine, which uses fear as one of its main tools.

It is time to go on the offensive, demand accountability, and expose how Israeli organisations operate to demonise Arabs and destroy the reputation of anyone who speaks out in favour of Palestine.

A TOOTHLESS TIGER: THE UN AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

The genocide in Palestine has exposed how, since its inception, international law has been used as a tool to promote Western interests over the rest of the world. This makes the UN and the human rights system a “toothless tiger”: it sounds good on paper, but it has no real capacity to “bite.” **It is not designed to enforce its own resolutions effectively.**

However, the mere fact that they can be invoked or used as an argument of authority is crucial for all defenders, lawyers, and activists working in the field of human rights. Although they are often reduced to nothing more than dead letters or advisory opinions and verdicts, they remain absolutely essential for the international community—at least as a tool for awareness.

So, rather than just criticising, we should try to capitalise on the impact that the UN and the international framework still have, while also addressing their shortcomings. One of these is that the UN human rights system is state-based, even though history has proven time and again that states cannot be trusted. **Apartheid in South Africa was not abolished by state decisions, nor did the Berlin Wall fall due to pressure from any government.**

These history lessons urge us to move beyond the UN's state-centric framework and instead support civil society movements and initiatives, such as the Global Flotilla to Gaza or the Global March to Gaza. These internationalist campaigns are succeeding in raising awareness among the international community and exerting more pressure on Israel than states or supranational bodies. The path is clear: **an internationally supported colonial genocide can only be fought with international cooperation.**

A CRACK IN THE WALL

The genocide in Palestine is exposing, as never before, the hypocrisy, racism, oppression, and colonial structures on which the current economic and social systems are based. These systems depend on fragmentation and isolation, but **Western countries no longer hold a monopoly on global legitimacy.**

This is a crack in the wall, adding to the small cracks that open up every time a grassroots initiative achieves its goals, every time a university somewhere decides to cut off its financial ties with Israel, or every time a local boycott and divestment campaign succeeds. And that is how, little by little, crack by crack, we are getting closer to bringing down the wall.

We must hold on to that hope, and to the hope that the Palestinian cause and the struggle for liberation have never before **achieved such widespread global relevance.** Seizing the great opportunity that this represents, channelling and leveraging the potential of the solidarity campaign is undoubtedly our main task. The challenge lies in undertaking this task by integrating the Palestinian struggle into broader causes, without losing sight of the fact that it is the people—not the states—who will ultimately bring down the wall.

04_ SHIFTING THE MULTILATERAL ARCHITECTURE

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The multilateral architecture is currently in tatters. While people, large segments of humanity, individuals, and **private citizens have assumed their historical responsibility in the face of the Palestinian genocide, states have failed to do so.** States have been largely absent.

The fact is that **the nation-state has proven to be, in the midst of this conflict, the most basic, fundamental, and restrictive structure of the postcolonial** order. This has been particularly apparent in regions such as the Middle East and West Asia, where, despite their populations watching live on their devices, the genocide that has been taking place over the last two years, the ruling elites have continued to put the so-called "national interest" first. This is a remarkably narrow definition of national interest, which is limiting the action of states to stop the genocide and which is proving —although many appear not to realise—radically detrimental to their own stability.

This session addressed the need to move beyond the framework of the nation-state while working within the existing power structures of today's international society. Through an analysis of the current geopolitical landscape, the session sought to elucidate how to neutralise the worst forms of the existing power structure in the denial of Palestinian rights and, at the same time, how to create new structures that can assume a degree of power.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH: TRANSLATING SOLIDARITY INTO POLITICAL POWER

With regard to the inaction of states in the face of genocide in Palestine, we must admit that the role of the Global South has been particularly disappointing. While the majority position of the

Global North is not surprising, **the Global South has not lived up to its own history, nor the legacy of Third Worldism, nor its historical achievements, such as the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.** Of course, the so-called Global South covers a broad spectrum—we cannot even speak of Arab countries as a monolithic bloc—but, in general terms, the reaction of Southern nations to the genocide perpetrated in Palestine has been utterly lacking.

One reason for this failure to respond is security cooperation with Israel, which has been strengthened over the last 20 years, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and other regions of the Global South. These bilateral agreements promoted by Israel in many vulnerable states have made those Southern states reliant on espionage and security, and are one of the factors that undoubtedly explain the resounding silence of these countries in the face of the Palestinian genocide. The importance of these cooperation agreements should not be underestimated. Combined with threats of sanctions from the United States, they have caused many countries to become prey to fear of Trump.

However, **while many states succumb to intimidation, we are witnessing the emergence of a generation of people politicised around Palestine.** People who have pressured their governments to, for example, recognise the Palestinian state. This contrast between citizen mobilisation and state paralysis leads us to categorically affirm that citizen pressure on public authorities must be maintained and intensified. But to have a real impact on existing structures, we face an even greater challenge: translating that citizen solidarity into political power.

BEYOND THE DOLLAR: SHIFTING THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY

How could we attract that global bloc of the South, or that Arab bloc, to a space that could favour Palestine within and outside existing institutions? The answer that emerged during the session was: shift the centre of gravity of world power.

This not only refers, in “macro” terms, to global geopolitics, but can also be applied, in “micro” terms, to organisations and movements in solidarity with Palestine, which must stop directing their activities exclusively at citizens of Western countries. When these organisations always focus their campaigns on the same type of target audience, they are not taking into account the potential impact they could have, for example, in China, and how that impact could shift power structures. Campaigns targeting the Palestinian diaspora in the West or Muslim communities in Europe or the United States could similarly filter, little by little, the geopolitical changes that must become our advantage.

In other words, the Palestine solidarity movement must have a global strategy, one that knows how to work with indecisive states and can identify those that can serve as a bulwark for defenders. States that can be safe havens, for example, for holding bank accounts —given that the United States is using the dollar as a weapon.

This is something we must not lose sight of: the Palestinian cause has a strong interest in moving away from the dollar's dominance, because **the dollar will increasingly become a weapon.** The dominance of the US system could turn against us at any moment, so our strategy must necessarily look to middle powers such as India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Indonesia, etc., seeking alternatives to the US-dominated global economy.

Many countries—including those in the Gulf—are in some way hiding behind their dependence on the dollar and the financial economy so as not to take a stand in favour of Palestine. And, as already mentioned, **we must not underestimate the coercive power of the United States, but neither can we resign ourselves** to Israel's echo chamber continuing to spread and amplify its punitive messages around the world while Arab countries settle for the argument that the only ones who can control the Israelis are the Americans.

Shifting the centre of gravity, therefore, means bringing together a bloc of countries around the defence of international law. The United States and China are not at all interested in this, as it would limit their power, but the emerging countries of the Global South and the middle powers can be mobilised around reaffirming international law. Even the Gulf countries and other predominantly Muslim nations, which will never speak with a single voice, can be pushed to radically change their mindset and think beyond the interests of the United States and Israel.

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PORTS, EXPORTS, AND MIGRATION MEASURES

Another important line of action at the international level is already underway to implement migration, naval, and trade measures. **The Hague Group has succeeded in getting a significant group of countries to impose an arms embargo on Israel**, not only by preventing ships carrying arms to Israel from docking in their national jurisdictions, but also by stripping the flags of states that used their fleets to transport arms.

This initiative, inspired by the arms embargo imposed on South Africa in 1976, represents a commitment by states not to be complicit,

through their exports or goods transiting through their ports, in the crimes being committed in Palestine. The example of South Africa's struggle against apartheid continues to shed much light on the Palestinian cause, and although the arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council during the Ronald Reagan era was **only an external contribution to the internal struggle that ultimately brought down the regime**, it was undoubtedly significant and inspiring.

In other words, just as it was not pressure from states that ended apartheid in South Africa, we cannot expect this type of sanctions or measures by a group of countries mobilised by Palestine to be a miracle fix in itself. But initiatives such as the Hague group are showing that exerting state pressure through procurement, purchasing or public investment measures—by boycotting any company involved in genocide or occupation—can yield positive results.

State power remains absolutely crucial because, beyond calls for the arrest of Netanyahu and Gallant in compliance with ICC arrest warrants, it can implement all of the measures described above and others for accountability, as well as activate mechanisms of universal jurisdiction.

In addition, states can implement immigration policies to let the world know that we have not forgotten that the Israel Defence Forces have committed crimes against humanity. One proposal is that any Israeli travelling and attempting to enter any country—whether or not there is a visa waiver agreement—be required to sign a declaration stating whether they have participated in the commission of war crimes and acts of genocide in Gaza. This would affect all citizens who have served in the Israeli army, but the question could even be extended to whether they have participated in incitement to genocide—which would further

broaden its scope—preventing any Israeli citizen linked to the crimes committed in Gaza in the last two years from entering a number of countries.

However, when promoting this type of coalition of states, we must bear in mind that we will continue to face the threat of sanctions, which will be the main obstacle to most countries agreeing to join. **The weakest states will be the most vulnerable to intimidating calls from the White House**, and many will drop out along the way because of the pressure.

This difficulty will always be there, but on the other hand, one advantage of this series of steps is that they can be coordinated by foreign ministries. That is, they can be implemented without parliamentary approval, which makes them much easier to put into practice.

ORGANISING SOLIDARITY: THE VITAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALLIES AND COMRADES

While the international system remains largely driven by states—which is why the state pressure measures outlined above are crucial—the solidarity movement with Palestine is demonstrating that it is the struggle of peoples that moves states. It is the civil action of the mobilised masses that changes the narrative and ultimately leads states to change their policies.

We saw in the previous session that defenders are being fiercely harassed and excluded at all levels, and that there is an urgent need to expand the room for civil society groups to operate and remain present, each in their own trench. But it is not just a matter of providing legal or financial support to defenders: solidarity must be organised through an effective division of labour that enables defenders

to take full advantage of the favourable shift in the global narrative around Palestine.

This division of labour could be broken down into four layers: activists, organisers, fundraisers and lawyers. Four levels of advocacy work that would need to be coordinated to support one another. We have already seen that financial sustainability and the source of funding are among the main weaknesses of the solidarity movement, but its fragmentation is another. Many social movements have become entangled in the sectarianism of identity causes, losing their capacity for unity. Thus, understanding the difference between allies and comrades and organising an efficient division of labour within the pro-Palestinian movement is vital in order to gain a foothold in Jewish spaces and take advantage of Israel's vulnerability, which is also caused by its own internal fragmentation.

Furthermore, it is essential to understand that **young people are currently the driving force behind this movement. They are not an accessory, they are not a backdrop**: young people in Gaza, Europe, the United States... are the ones who are mostly carrying out public and clandestine action in favour of Palestine. They are the ones who have taken the struggle to social media, to universities, to the streets, to culture, to everyday conversations. And we must trust that they will also be the ones who will succeed in building a new kind of relationship with power. Unlike the previous generation, which has become accustomed to living with sociopathic—if not psychopathic—leaders, today's youth seem to be shaping a new kind of leadership.

A youth that has stepped forward not because **it has been invited to do so, but because it has had no choice but to take the reins to do what neither diplomatic institutions nor government bodies were willing to do**. Contrary to the statistics, this

Panorama of Tell Harubah. The city of Gaza developed on this tell from the Middle Bronze Age, occupying its summit and slopes. 1922



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youth, fed up with the complacency of academics and the silence of politicians, decided to take to the streets and occupy all available civic spaces, spearheading the global solidarity movement. It is primarily young people who have managed to change the global narrative around Palestine and who are sustaining this struggle.

A COMMITMENT WITH THE FUTURE FOR A LONG STRUGGLE

Lastly, it is essential to understand that the struggle for Palestinian liberation is a lengthy one. Its roots run deep into the fabric of what has been woven over the last two or three centuries, so it is not a struggle that can be resolved immediately.



Any liberation struggle must have a kind of contract between those who died fighting and those who currently fight, between those who are still alive and those who are yet to come. This is because liberation struggles are about defending principles that endure across generations. This is what happened in South Africa, Algeria, Vietnam... in all the places that finally managed to eradicate colonialism. And it is happening in the same way in Palestine. Therefore, this new type of leadership we mentioned cannot be limited to managing the current moment or dynamics: it must defend the principles, ideals and **collective contract that unite all those who fought since the beginning of the cause until its victory.**

This requires us to look back on the past decades with perspective. Instead of thinking that 30 years have been wasted since Oslo, we must recognise

that this struggle is long. It demands time, patience, determination, willpower and consistency. We must adapt to this, **accept the idea that the journey itself is necessary and significant**, and continue along it without losing hope.

We must be clear that the Palestinian struggle is a very complex, multi-layered endeavour, but that anyone who gets involved from the right side can be proud to have left their mark on this journey. Even if it is others who see the final outcome. The fact is that, as this is a long-term, intergenerational conflict, when the battle is won, it will likely be our children or our grandchildren sitting around the table. This should not rob us of the certainty that one day we will prevail, but rather reaffirm that collective contract with our predecessors and with the future.



RECOMMENDATIONS

01. TRANSFORMING THE NARRATIVE AND MOBILISING SUPPORT

- **Universalising the cause**, linking the Palestinian struggle with global movements for social justice, environmental protection, and decolonisation to broaden the cause's appeal and the global majority's ability to identify with and mobilise around it. Trade unionism is a strategic ally for Palestinian liberation, not only because of shared values, but also because of its capacity for organisation and mobilisation and its expected prominence in the coming years, given the cost-of-living crisis and the increasing digitalisation and automation of traditional industries.
- **Overcoming ideological factionalism** between progressivism and conservatism, highlighting the importance of narratives of resistance, territorial rootedness and civil security in the conservative tradition and its proximity to the Palestinian question. This, however, entails avoiding the pitfalls of conspiratorial and explicitly anti-Jewish rhetoric with which many global right-wingers communicate their rejection of Israel, muddying public awareness. In this regard, it is crucial to continue combating the weaponisation of accusations of anti-Semitism. Likewise, an alliance with like-minded Jewish and even Israeli insider forces is as essential as it is timely, given the intense social and political crisis in the country.
- **Move from awareness-raising approaches to lifelong learning** that, in addition to information, provides critical tools for analysis, allowing social struggles to be contextualised within broader historical and structural trends, such as colonialism and neoliberal tendencies. Promote mass education and awareness campaigns on the difference between Judaism and Zionism, preferably led by voices from the anti-Zionist Jewish community itself.

- **Continue to support alternative social media** despite increased censorship and as a means of counteracting the continuous updating of Zionist propaganda, prioritising key platforms for younger generations such as Discord, Twitch and YouTube, and producing strategic guides and materials in key languages with high reach, such as Mandarin, Spanish, Portuguese and French.
- **Avoid validating the actions or constitution of the so-called "Board of Peace" as well as the supposed "ceasefire" in Gaza, while understanding that it is essential to be aware of its developments, deliberations, actions and members**, as they are setting the stage for the next phase of the genocide, especially with regard to the expulsion of survivors and the destruction of evidence.

02. TOWARDS A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF LEADERSHIP

- **Continue to support independent and financially autonomous civil organisations**, promoting models of learning, work and decentralised decision-making such as the Sumud Flotilla and the most established student movements. This means emphasising transparency, calling for an end to conditional funding and co-optation by third parties, including public and private actors, as well as large third-sector organisations. The creation of independent platforms and repositories can enhance the organisation and communication of experiences, contributing to integration and coordination between grassroots movements.
- **Promote a strategic leap by Palestinian and pro-Palestinian social leaders into decision-making bodies**, especially in civil

and academic organisations. The demand for transparency in these candidacies can also enhance democratic legitimacy and promote accountability in these positions with respect to social justice more broadly. This point, however, also requires a strategic assessment and dismantling of ideological firewalls, which, like the IHRA agreement, are preventing the development of these profiles.

- **Transcending the factionalism of Palestinian politics** by fostering decentralised moral leadership that overcomes divisions between key actors, whether established or emerging. This does not necessarily mean aspiring to regain control over the PA, as its internal inertia and institutional design make it prone to co-optation and inherently unrepresentative. The Oslo formulas have lost their validity not only because of active contempt on the part of Israel and its allies, but also because Palestinian society has rejected the conceptual framework of partition and the marginalisation of the millions of people who make up the diaspora.

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- **Working from the framework of social legitimacy rather than officialdom** to overcome political deadlocks and the crisis of representation. Instead of directly confronting the PA/PLO, it is possible to promote popular surveys to define a fundamental charter of collective aspirations and to establish an independent representative organisation, with elections open to 14 million Palestinians and open-source registration and voting systems. With sufficient support and legitimacy, the constitution of this parallel structure can prepare and raise the profile of a new generation of leaders, ready to make the leap into institutional politics when the time comes, while at the same time attracting international allies, especially from civil society, as an informal but legitimate alternative to the PA/PLO.

03. LEGAL DEFENCE AND SAFETY FOR ACTIVISTS

- **Establish rapid-response teams**, create international offices to support activists and defenders, and launch crowdfunding systems to cover legal costs. These structures would connect young people, protesters, and dissidents who need support with groups or organisations that could provide the means to continue their activism.
- **Consolidate technological sovereignty** through digital security systems, media defence alliances and cross-border solidarity structures that cannot be isolated. Design digital solutions that allow defenders to operate and communicate securely, without relying on vulnerable commercial platforms where sensitive information is easily exposed. Recruit AI and cybersecurity experts to build secure communication infrastructures for the solidarity movement.
- **Launch a reputational offensive ("Naming and Shaming")**, singling out and shaming Western (and several non-Western) countries as accomplices to the ongoing oppression and colonisation of Palestine, reminding them of their historical responsibility. Scrutinise the funding of Zionist organisations and publicly denounce the Israeli hasbara machine.
- **Leverage the impact that the UN and the international frameworks still have**, while attempting to correct their shortcomings.

04. STATE PRESSURE AND GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE

- **Shift the centre of gravity** beyond the West and seek alliances with middle powers and countries of the Global South (Brazil, India, South Africa, China, etc.). Design a global strategy for the Palestinian cause, identifying undecided states and those that could potentially be protective. Address governments in language they understand, in terms of "national interest," to shift their positions toward a collective interest that integrates the Palestinian struggle into broader causes.
- **Promote strategic de-dollarisation** by using financial systems and bank accounts outside the US dollar's control to avoid sanctions and blockades.
- **Promote state accountability measures**, implementing arms embargoes and vetoing companies involved in the Occupation. Activating universal jurisdiction mechanisms against those responsible for crimes. Requiring immigration declarations from citizens who have served in the Israeli army regarding their participation in war crimes.
- **Maintain and intensify public pressure** so that the momentum of solidarity movements translates into state-level gains. Moving beyond the state-centric framework of the UN by supporting civil society movements and initiatives, such as the Flotilla or the Global March to Gaza, while at the same time promoting trade and immigration policies within states.

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