



ICAHD

The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions
الحركة الإسرائيلية ضد هدم البيوت
הוועד הישראלי נגד הריסת בתים

Resisting Apartheid, Building a Shared Democracy

ICAHD CONDEMNS ISRAEL'S DESIGNATION OF PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS AS "TERRORIST GROUPS"

The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) joins dozens of other Palestinian, Israeli and international human rights organizations in condemning the Israeli government's alarming designation of six prominent Palestinian human rights groups as "terror organizations" affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), classified by Israel, the United States and the European Union as a "terror group." The irony of a state that uses terrorism routinely against a civilian population held under conditions of imprisonment, robbed of their human and civil rights, robbed of their lands and lives, victims of a relentless policy of home demolitions labelling a legitimate part of a liberation movement as "terrorist" is not lost on us.

Israel's abrogating to itself the legal "right" to make such determinations is yet another of the myriad ways it controls Palestinian life and *their right* under international law to resist occupation, apartheid, and colonialism. Thus the Israeli Defense Ministry October 19, 2021, military order outlawing Al-Haq, Addameer, Defense for Children International – Palestine, The Union of Palestinian Work Committees, The Bisan Center for Research and Development and The Union of Agricultural Women's Committees as "terrorist organizations" activates a 2016 Counter-Terrorism Law that has real and chilling implications not only for Palestinians but for all those who support Palestinian national rights.

Under the Counter-Terrorism Law, not only may the activities of these human rights organizations be summarily outlawed, but the heads of these organizations, prominent Palestinian human rights figures all, may be tried and sentenced to 25 years – and potentially life – in prison. Their staff are liable to 10 years in prison time. By extension, these penalties also apply to organizations and individuals affiliated or working with these organizations. This includes UN agencies, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Federation for Human Rights, Defense for Children International, and many human rights and political organizations in Palestine, Israel, and abroad such as ICAHD, B'Tselem, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty, and the Red Cross, as well as such grassroots organizations as La Via Campesina and hundreds of activist groups.

Designated by Israel as "terrorist organizations," any person publishing reports by these organizations or even hosting their members on zoom conferences, speaking tours or in academic conferences may be held criminally accountable for "assisting a terrorist organization." Nor can funds be raised for these groups. "Those funds," says the Israeli Defense Ministry, "served the Popular Front for payments to security prisoners' families and martyrs, wages for activists, enlistment of activists, promotion of terror activity and strengthening, promotion of the Popular Front activity in Jerusalem, and distribution of the organization's messages and ideology." Indeed, the Counter-Terrorism Law silences not only Palestinian organizations resisting occupation and exposing Israel's own myriad acts of state terrorism, but it gives it the power to

detain activists coming from abroad, further isolating the Palestinians and pulling a curtain over Israeli crimes.

Representatives of the now-outlawed organizations have denied the charges made by Israel. The very designation of the PFLP as a “terrorist organization” is an attempt by Israel to criminalize a political organization, thereby denying the legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle itself. This is a tactic commonly used by colonial regimes: France over the Algerian FLN, Britain over the KFLA in Kenya, Portugal over the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, and apartheid South Africa over the ANC, just to name a few. Over decades of work, these organizations have demonstrated their dedication to the larger Palestinian struggle and their own independent political and human rights agendas. Affiliated with the UN, international governments, and other human rights groups the world over, their work is recognized as professional and essential.

Indeed, it is Israel that stands accused of terror acts against a civilian population under its control. In blatant violation of virtually every article of the Fourth Geneva Convention intended to both protect people living without rights under hostile occupation, Israel stands accused of crimes against humanity. It is no coincidence that several of the groups targeted have been active in bringing Israel to account at the International Criminal Court, including Israeli officials such as Minister of Defense Benny Gantz, who issued the order against the six and who stands accused of war crimes for his involvement as IDF Chief of Staff during the 2012 and 2014 assaults on Gaza.

ICAHD calls on the international community to defend and protect the Palestinian organizations targeted by the Israeli government and to hold Israel itself to account under international law and norms supposedly governing the international rule of law.