

## 2021 Call for Solidarity

As we watch the continuing destruction and devastation occurring in Palestine, we cannot stand by in silence. We urge you to consider the values we cherish and how we can translate them into meaningful action.

The disproportionate violence that Israel is currently waging on Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel is indiscriminate, inhumane, and illegal. Israel is a nuclear superpower, with the fifth largest military in the world. Palestinians are a stateless, almost entirely unarmed, civilian population. We thus refuse to describe this situation as a 'conflict' between 'two sides', a language which obscures the grossly unequal death toll, destruction, and devastation that Palestinians are inevitably forced to endure.

We also call on you to take note of [Human Rights Watch's recent report](#) which concluded that Israeli authorities "*have dispossessed, confined, forcibly separated, and subjugated Palestinians by virtue of their identity to varying degrees of intensity*", such conduct amounting to crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution.

As cultural institutions, we are deeply disturbed by the violent targeting of our Palestinian partners and colleagues who are critical of Israeli oppression and by the destruction of Palestinian schools in Gaza and [the ransacking of cultural spaces, including the Dar Yusuf Nasri Jacir for Art and Research](#) in Bethlehem. Wala' Sbeit, a musician, was beaten and put under house arrest in Haifa for taking part in a demonstration; Mohammad El-Kurd, a poet and resident of Sheikh Jarrah, detained for no other reason than speaking publicly against Israeli threats to his family home.

We also note the power of language, its ability to gloss over state-sanctioned violence, and its role in normalizing occupation, institutionalizing colonialism, and erasing history. A case in point is the use of 'evictions' in reference to the removal of Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah in occupied East Jerusalem and how it deliberately misdirects from the reality of the Israeli occupation and the illegal displacement and dispossession of Palestinians from their homes.

As we have stood in solidarity with the protests for black lives over the past year, as we have called for the decolonisation of our institutions, we must surely now extend our struggle against racism and colonialism to the defence of the Palestinians. It is morally incumbent upon us as artists and cultural workers to do so.

**Now actions, as well as words, are needed. As an artist, writer, thinker or worker in an institution, you have the agency to share information and to implement change. We therefore ask you to commit to the following actions in support of the Palestinian people:**

– Learn: read and share resources on Palestine. For example: [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights Gaza \(PCHR Gaza\)](#), [Al Haq Palestinian human rights organisation](#) based in Ramallah, [Adalah legal centre for Arab minority rights in Israel](#), [Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre](#).

- Refuse: funding from the Israeli government and from private funders who support its illegal occupation.
- Language: use terms which make visible the Palestinian experience, including Palestine, occupation, dispossession, ethnic cleansing, settler colonialism, and apartheid.
- Lobby your MP or local representatives to pressure and sanction Israel until it adheres to international law.
- Open: your programme and your collection to artists, collectives, initiatives and galleries who are led by non-mainstream or radical voices, including artists in Palestine, and fund and support their participation.
- Solidarity: share this letter and your public statement (personal and institutional) with your networks; if you are an artist, ask the institutions who hold your work or with whom you work to support it, and share it with your institution's audiences as widely as possible.
- Write: cover work by marginalised or radical voices, including Palestinian ones.