

REPORT

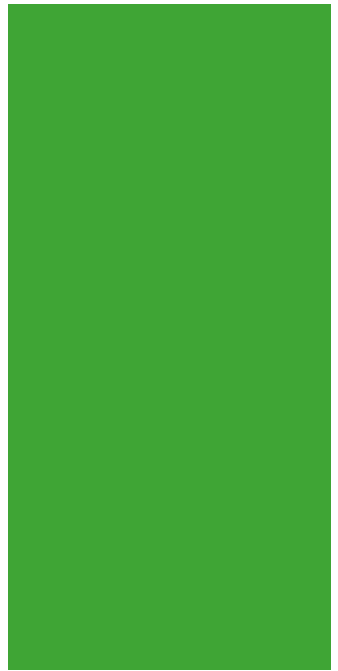
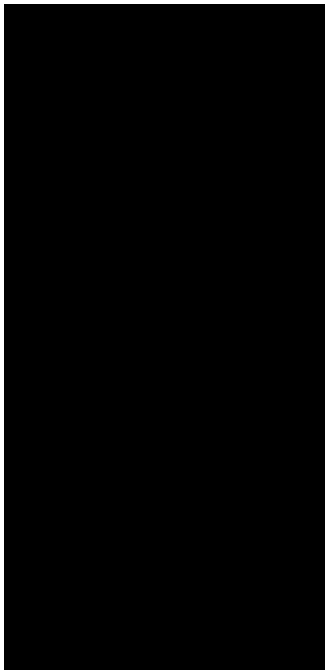
*carried out from August 8-13, 2014*

# WPC Solidarity Mission to Palestine



**W.P.C.**





REPORT

**WPC Solidarity Mission to Palestine**  
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## The struggle to end the occupation continues

The delegation of peace movements of the WPC from Greece, Cyprus and Turkey arrived on Friday 8 August in Ramallah, Palestine after facing many difficulties and delays, closed checkpoints to the West Bank, military roadblocks and barricades set up by the Israeli army (with corresponding checks) but also with many changeovers of transport means, resulting in the trip from Amman, Jordan to Ramallah lasting 11 hours instead of two! All this is a manifestation of the special circumstances confronted by the Palestinians in a period when the Israeli war machine, as an occupation force, shells and slaughters civilians and children in the Gaza Strip, while at the same time having arrested 2000 Palestinians on the West Bank, making incursions into their homes day and night.

Just in the first two days of the delegation's visit to the West Bank, two youths were murdered near the towns of Ramallah and Nablus for having thrown stones at Israeli military patrols in the town suburbs. Demonstrations and marches were held nearly every day in West Bank towns, while as a sign of mourning for the victims in Gaza, weddings and celebrations had been postponed. The Palestinians' anger can be seen on the faces of ordinary people in the street, while the heavily armed Israeli army is beefing up its presence in the suburbs of Palestinian towns, thus encircling them and deliberately

exacerbating the already tense climate night and day.

The WPC delegation, made up of Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace (EEDYE), the Cyprus Peace Council (CPC), the Peace Association of Turkey (PA) and the neighboring Peace Committee of Israel (PCI) accompanying them, organized the mission in order for its members to witness the situation from close up, listening to and talking with Palestinian mass organizations and authorities, conveying the undivided support and solidarity of their peoples and movements to the sorely tried people of Palestine.



At the first meeting on Friday evening in Ramallah, the **Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity (PCPS)**, welcoming and thanking the WPC delegation, stated that, *“with your visit you have shown that in difficult times it is clear who true friends are”*. The situation described by the Palestinian representatives **Hasib Nashashibi, Ghassan Abdullah, Daoud Talhouni and Akel Takaz** is dramatic: *“the Palestinian Gaza Strip, an expanse of 360 square kilometers, constitutes a big “open air” prison, a huge concentration camp with 1,8 million people in it, where our people were suffering with a 50% unemployment rate of more than 50% even before Israel launched its barbaric, unilateral attack on the people, on civilians and children, destroying schools, hospitals, power plants and homes. This could not have happened if Israel did not have the full*



*backing of the US imperialists and its European allies. Israel left the Gaza Strip officially in 2002 with its army, but in reality it never left either Gaza, which remains under siege by land, air and sea, or the rest of Palestine. Today, indeed, when natural gas and oil have been found off the coast of Gaza, it has every interest in staying and being involved, using every means. On the Palestinian West Bank Israel has, in recent years, built settlements with 600,000 residents and correspondingly in East Jerusalem with 200,000 settlers. Their goal is to gradually change the demographic map of the region. The Oslo Accords of 1994 have not been implemented except in a few points, which have been crudely violated as time has gone by. For example, the agreements provided that 135,000 Palestinian workers would have the right to work in Israeli industries, while today not even 15,000 do. The Palestinian people are the victims both of the occupation and of the imperialists who support and arm the occupiers, while neighboring countries either act in harmony with the imperialists or have their own agendas and interests.”*

The PCPS representatives continued, saying that “the people in Gaza have the right to resist, but the objectives of the Islamist forces do not always serve this right only, in view of the events in Syria, Iraq and in the broader region.”

Finally, satisfaction was expressed regarding the great solidarity movement with the people of Palestine in dozens of countries as well as the superb activity of the peace movement in Israel, which is struggling within an increasingly reactionary society in a terrorist state, where at the same time 60% of the country’s wealth is under the control of 13 families and where the exploitation and authoritarian behavior towards its own people is growing constantly.

**Iraklis Tsavdaridis**, Executive Secretary of the WPC and member of the EEDYE Secretariat, stressed “our categorical condem-

*nation of the unprecedented barbarity of the Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people, but also the hypocrisy of the imperialists, who recently armed and re-supplied Israel with weaponry and ordnance worth more than \$ 300 m. but neither the US and nor even one of the 28 governments of the EU member-states dared even to call an Israeli ambassador and protest the savagery in Gaza against vulnerable children, women and the elderly, and certainly not to freeze or stop the military and economic agreements of their countries with Israel. They constitute the silent accomplices to a crime against humanity, the slow genocide of a people”.*

The WPC delegation underscored that there could be no just and viable solution without the recognition of an independent Palestinian state, as a full member of the UN with the borders drawn on 4 June 1967 and with East Jerusalem as its capital. The WPC demands the release of all the political prisoners from Israeli jails and the Palestinian refugees’ right of return to their homes.



The second meeting was held in the offices of the **Party of the People of Palestine (PPP)** with a delegation of that party composed of three members of its Political Bureau, **Ghassan Khatib, Rida Awadala and Fadwa Khader**, who stressed their great esteem for the WPC and its members, followed by a detailed briefing on the situation prevailing in the Gaza Strip. The data seem unbelievable. The third war launched by Israel in just a few years in the Palestinian Gaza Strip exceeds every such preceding offensive in both inten-

sity and duration, but first of all as regards consequences.

Specifically, in one month Israel fired 59,200 bombs and shells on Gaza, 7,000 from the air, 15,000 from warships and 36,000 from tanks. They struck 13 hospitals and 12 health centers, killing 16 doctors and nurses. 188 schools and 6 universities were hit. 152,000 pupils now have no school and 10,000 students no university. By 8 August, the dead toll reached 1960, of which 435 were children, 79 elderly people and 256 women, 9,600 people had been wounded, of whom 2,870 are children and 1,900 women. 10,000 dwellings have suffered destruction, of which 1724 are completely ruined. 475,000 people have had to leave their homes. Of these 310,000 had received the cynical warning from the Israeli army by telephone just a few minutes before. The Israeli side had just 65 fatalities, 63 of which were Israeli soldiers who had invaded Gaza.

The Party of the People of Palestine's delegation stressed that the firepower used by Israel on Gaza as a whole exceeded that of the atomic bomb dropped by the US on Hiroshima. The PPP underscored that along with the talks on a truce being held in Cairo and the need to stop the slaughter of the people in Gaza, pressure must be mounted on all levels with solidarity in practice, putting forth the basic demand for AN END TO THE OCCUPATION.

Conveying the solidarity of the Cypriot people, the General Secretary of the Cyprus Peace Council, **Christos Kourtellaris**, stressed that *"in Cyprus we are well acquainted with the plans of imperialism, both before and-especially-after 1974, with Turkey's invasion and occupation of 37% of our country, but also as neighbors in the same part of the Middle East. The government of Cyprus calls the civilian victims in Gaza "collateral casualties", which is also an insult to the memory of those who were killed 40 years ago with the invasion"*.

The President of the Turkish Peace Association, **Zuhal Okuyan**, expressed the view that the overwhelming majority of the people of Turkey stand at the side of the Palestinian people, in contrast to Prime Minister Erdogan and his government, who try to play with people's feelings, while in reality supporting Israel and playing a leading role with the USA, the EU, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in war crimes committed in Syria.



at the Headoffice of PPP

The peace movements of Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and Israel also took part in the opening of the 21st International Festival in Farkha (a village in the Ramallah region), where they held speeches of greetings.

From the time of the delegation's arrival in Ramallah until its travel to and from Israel and its movement around the West Bank and up to its departure for Amman in Jordan, things were not always easy. This is, of course, the experience undergone by Palestinians nearly every day, with their dignity and pride offended at every military check-point they come to.

The information given and discussions held were shocking everywhere, the data and numbers overwhelming with regard to the unprecedented barbarity with which the Israeli army has attacked the Palestinian Gaza Strip, with its civilian population of 1,8 million, isolated on a narrow piece of land of 360 square kilometers, the mostly densely populated area on the planet.



at the PLO Head Office

### Meeting with the PLO - The demand for the blockade of Gaza to be lifted

On Saturday August 10, the delegation made up of the four peace movements met at the PLO headquarters with **Taisir Khaled**, member of the PLO Executive Committee, who expressed warm thanks to the WPC and its members for their wholehearted support of the sorely-trying people of Palestine. He stressed that: *“Over all these years, both before and especially since the Oslo Accord, the Palestinian side has patiently tried to cooperate for the implementation of the objectives agreed upon, but the only things it got in return have been lies, authoritarianism, 3 wars in the Gaza Strip with thousands of victims, the siege of Gaza and its having been cut off from the West Bank, a rampant increase in settlements and the seizure of Palestinian land”*, and the PLO official went on to say that : *“there is no other state that can commit such crimes against humanity with impunity. In essence, the victims of the Nazis behave like Nazis today”*. When asked about the stance taken by the USA and the EU, he replied that without them Israel could not carry out these operations and that those who do not denounce the genocide of the Palestinian people in practice are guilty as well. Finally, the PLO representative spoke of the great solidarity movement worldwide, which recalls the beginning of the movement against the war waged by the US in Vietnam.

In connection with the objectives of the negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel in Cairo, Taisir Khaled set out the Palestinians’ basic demands for a truce to be agreed upon, such as the immediate lifting of the siege with the checkpoints being opened, the right to use the port and airport, the right of farmers to access and farm the 24% of their land which they have been prohibited from doing by Israel for reasons of security and the right to fish up to 12 miles from the shores of Gaza.



meeting with the PLO

### Visiting East Jerusalem

The increased aggressiveness of the terrorist state can also be felt in Jerusalem vis-à-vis the Palestinians of the eastern, Arabic-speaking part of the city. The Jewish settlements are constantly spreading and taking up Palestinian land, and the wall separating the West Bank from Jerusalem is becoming consolidated, while the restrictions imposed on the Arab citizens of Jerusalem as regards the acquisition of real estate for their families and their right to live there is becoming more and more difficult. The WPC delegation had the opportunity to visit families Arab families of African descent in the historical center of East Jerusalem, who described the daily harassments of their children in the streets by Jewish settlers. There is an increase in the seizure of houses for reasons of debt or the buying up and compulsory expropriation of dwellings in



Al-Makassed Hospital Jerusalem



the historical souk (market) which leads to the Al-Aqsa mosque ( a religious symbol for the Palestinians and all Moslems). This is an obvious attempt to change the demographic character of Jerusalem and to make it “more Jewish”, showing thus that Israel does not intend to make concessions or to implement older agreements. On the contrary, it abets extremist neo-fascist groups that persecute Palestinians in Jerusalem, culminating in the torture and murder (by burning alive) a 13-year-old, a month ago, by racist settlers in Jerusalem.

### The Al-Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem.

Under special conditions and with special permits, a small number of the thousands of wounded from the Gaza Strip massacre have been taken to neighboring countries for treatment. Amongst the hospitals that admitted wounded children mainly is the “Al-Makassed”, a historic and well-known one in the Arab sector of Jerusalem. Forty-four wounded patients from Gaza, the majority

children who have lost nearly their entire families in the Israeli bombings are hospitalized there. It is typical of the cynicism and barbarity of Israel that the relatives and in general persons accompanying the patients have only a 24-hour permit to travel from Gaza to Jerusalem and then must stay in the hospital (being forbidden to stay with relatives or at a hotel) for the duration of the treatment, sleeping on the floor, until the patients are discharged, at which time they are given another one-day permit to return to Gaza from Israel!

It is not easy to describe the scenes the WPC delegation saw and the feelings it had during the visit to the rooms of the little patients from Gaza. Four-year-old Yamen, with multiple fractures and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns, lost 10 members of his family in the relentless shelling lasting an hour in their neighborhood, in Gaza City. The boy’s grandfather, Abu Jaber, Yamen’s sole surviving relative, embraced the members of the delegation and expressed with deep feeling his appreciation for their visit, saying: “I don’t know



*you personally but just the fact that you left your families and went to the trouble to be here today, makes me place you over my head like a crown. Make the truth known; break the mendacious silence about the abhorrent crimes against our people!"*

The WPC delegation then went to Tel Aviv, capital of Israel. During their entire stay in Israel the delegation was accompanied by the competent member of the Peace Committee of Israel, **Aida Touma**, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the CP of Israel.

### Meetings with conscientious objectors in Tel-Aviv

The WPC delegates met with two organizations of Jewish Israeli conscientious objectors and one representative of the Jewish-Arab NGO of the families of victims. One of the organizations named: "Refusers Letter" is made up mainly of young men and women (draft age 18) who refuse to serve in the Israeli occupation army, facing repeated imprisonment and the smear of being called "traitor". The other organization, called "Combatants for Peace" is made up of former officers and soldiers who have rejected their callup as reserves.

Both organizations are against the Israeli offensive on Gaza and the occupation, and support the establishment of an independent Palestinian State alongside Israel. The WPC delegation was accompanied in the meeting by **Ofer Cassif** and **Tamar Gozanky**, members of the Political Bureau of the CP Israel who described the deterioration of the harassments against leaders and intellectuals oppose the Israeli offensive in Gaza in an atmosphere of polarization and fascism with growing neo-Nazi tendencies in society, under a slogan: *One Country – One Nation – One Leader*



### CP of Israel: "The Palestinians have been on the defensive since 1948"

An important point in the delegation's program was their meeting on 11th August with **Mohammed Nafaa**, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel and **Mohammed Barrakei**, member of the Political Bureau of the CP of Israel and chair of the Parliamentary Group of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash), the bi-communal electoral front of Arabs and Jews which is supported by the CP of Israel. The meeting was held in the offices of the Central Committee of the CP of Israel in Haifa, which had been recently targeted again by "indignant" Jewish extremists, who threw stones and other objects, shouting: "Kill the Arabs! Send the communists to the crematorium!"

In welcoming the WPC delegation, Mohammed Nafaa stressed the significance of their visit under the special circumstances of the one-sided war being waged by Israel then in the Gaza Strip, but also the WPC's crystal-clear and consistent positions on the Palestinian issue. The General Secretary of the CP of Israel presented an analysis of his party's positions, saying that *"the Palestinians have constantly been on the defensive since 1948. They have never attacked or done anything more than to defend their right to a homeland, freedom and territory, next to Israel, while Israel, on the other hand,*



*has committed many crimes, persecutions, land-grabbing, a slow and constant genocide, and the most recent phase of which was the massacre in Gaza. The Israeli government does not intend to discuss a just and viable solution and is using the talks to gain time, expanding its settlements around Jerusalem and on the West Bank. The 123% increase in settlements in 9 months is telling”.*

The General Secretary of the CP of Israel continued his briefing of the WPC delegation, saying that the Netanyahu government, but also the Labour Party opposition disorient people from the true situation, talking of “Security for Israel” in a nationalistic delirium, making use of Hamas’s mistaken positions on the issues of Syria and Lebanon but also the deterioration of the situation in Iraq. But this is the first time in its recent history that Israel has come up against such opposition. It is essentially the Israeli government that is sending its citizens into the bomb shelters, because the shelling in Gaza constitutes the objective, not the instrument.

Mohammed Barrakei recalled the historical figure of the CP of Israel, Tawfik Toubi, who for 41 years (until 1990) was a leading cadre and MP of his party and who had served as Vice-President of the WPC, stressing the ties binding the peace movement in Israel with the WPC. He mentioned the strong tendencies towards the growth of fascism in intimidation of society and institutions, the militarization of society, self-censorship of the media, the deepening of capitalist restructuring and a judicial system willing to help the prevailing political agenda. Mohammed Barrakei described the conditions experienced by the Arab population of Israel, where authoritarianism is on the rise and the people’s rights are being trampled on in many facets of life. The motto dominant everywhere is the “Jewish nature of the state”, in which Israel is to be the state of all Jews and not of all of its citizens. At the same time there is the effort to connect citizenship with the military service (as is well-known, the Arabs of Israel do not serve in the army). The





government is planning, what's more, to give every Israeli soldier a plot of land from that confiscated from the Palestinians of Israel. It should be noted that in 1948 the Palestinian Arabs of Israel possessed 82% of the land, while today they hold just 3,5%. In addition, the Israeli government is planning to change the electoral law with an increase of the minimum threshold required for entry to the Knesset (parliament) from 2% to 3,25%. Note that the percentage won by Hadash in the last elections was 3%! Particular concern was expressed regarding the rise in fascist tendencies in society, among both Jewish citizens and with Islamist tendencies in Arab citizens inspired by the increase in these trends in the region.

Another meeting was held at the Emile Touma Institute for Arab and Jewish Studies, which, among other subjects, deals with the issue of Israel's nuclear weapons. The President of the Institute, **Eissam Makhoul**, explained to the WPC delegation that there is no doubt whatsoever that Israel has nuclear arms. Specifically, it already possesses six submarines carrying such warheads, while another three are in the process of being delivered by Germany. It was stressed that the demand for Israel's nuclear weaponry to be eliminated should be included amongst the struggle objectives for the settlement of the Palestinian issue.



The WPC's meetings in Israel concluded with one held with the **Arab Druze Peace Initiative**, referring to a population within the Arab community of Israel, which the establishment has distinguished from the rest for the last 40 years, calling up the men to serve in the Israeli army, which it does not do with the other Arab Israelis. The Druze representatives in the meeting, men of all ages who had been imprisoned 7-10 times for refusing conscription in the occupation army of Israel, proudly explained why they keep this stance, despite all the pressure and consequences (their imprisonment for weeks or months every year until they reach the upper age limit for the draft).

They said that neither their religion nor their patriotism allowed them to serve an inhuman regime which occupies the land of the Palestinians and kills them. The head of the Initiative underscored that *"they want to divide us so that they can control us. We have not allowed this and we shall not, which is why the percentage of Druze in Israel who refuse conscription is more than 72%"*. The basic tool and means for division and discrimination in the population is education. Based on official data, the Israeli state spends ¼ of the Israeli average for the education of Arabs, and 1/7 of what it spends for the education of settlers. At the same time, the fact that an attempt is under way to lift the exemption from the draft for the Christian population of Israel was condemned.

Following their return to Palestine, the WPC delegation held important meetings in Ramallah on the West Bank, bringing a fruitful program of contacts and visits to a close.

## Meeting with Al-Fatah

The WPC delegation had a friendly meeting with Fatah representatives. **Nabil Shaath**, former Foreign Minister of the Palestinian Authority for 14 years and today in charge of foreign relations for Fatah, and **Abdallah**

**Abdallah**, Deputy Head, received the WPC delegation at the Fatah offices. The Palestinian representatives noted the interesting and symbolic composition of the WPC delegation (Turkey-Cyprus-Greece-Israel), which reflects its positions and principles. After describing the situation, with the entire destruction of Gaza and the murder of civilians and children, Nabil Shaath explained how the timing of Israel's attack was not accidental, since for two years efforts had been under way for an internal dialogue between the main political forces of Palestine, and as soon as an agreement was reached to form a transitional government of national unity the abduction of three settlers near Hebron (for which no Palestinian organization has assumed responsibility) was used as an excuse to start the shelling. What happened then is well-known, and once the Palestinians had responded with rockets, which hit practically no civilians, the Israel army invaded Gaza with tanks and troops, spreading death and destruction. Special mention was made of the negative stance of the US and the UN General Secretary, but also of the EU governments, which did not diverge at all from the line of Israel, which claims that it is defending itself, while "regretting" the collateral casualties, which number thousands of civilians. When asked about the Turkish government's role, he explained that everyone knows about everyone else's commitments and alliances, but also about the role each plays in neighboring countries. The General Secretary of the Cyprus Peace Council, **Christos Kourtellaris**, noted the unacceptable, reactionary position taken by the Anastasiadis government in Cyprus, which not only supports the Israeli slaughter in practice, thus changing positions traditionally held by the Cyprus Republic, but also endangers the positions traditionally held by Arab countries and Palestine in the Conference of Islamic States as regards the non-recognition of the pseudo state in northern Cyprus.



## Meeting with Hamas

The delegation of the World Peace Council also met with a representative of the Political Bureau of the Hamas movement, who spoke of the imprisonment of hundreds of Palestinians without trial in abominable conditions of detention, but also of the fact that nearly all of their MPs from the West Bank have been arrested and detained. He noted that the enemy of Hamas is not the Jews, but rather the occupation and the settlers. "We want to live peacefully with all those who live in this historical land on an equal footing and without discrimination", he stressed. The WPC delegation stressed the demand for the release of all political prisoners and in particular of all elected representatives of the Palestinian people and expressed its satisfaction for the common stands of the Palestinian delegation in the Cairo talks.

## A live connection with the Gaza strip

One high point was a one-and-a-half hour video teleconference held with the Gaza Strip. At the office of the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC) an audiovisual bridge was set up, connecting it with the scene of the crime of Israeli savagery in Gaza. Indescribable emotion flooded the two rooms in the two Palestinian cities, when the representatives of mass organizations in Gaza and their families greeted the WPC delegation in Turkish, Greek, Arabic and English, wishing they could shake hands with them and hug them.



Human rights organizations, the coordinating body of social movements, the Union of Gaza Women and the Chamber of Engineers of Gaza presented the data which make up a humanitarian crisis. A unanimous demand was made for the Gaza Strip to be considered a disaster area, as happened with the tsunami. After 8 years of blockade and three wars, the destruction is biblical. 6000 houses have been completely destroyed; another 6000 can be repaired with some difficulty but are temporarily uninhabitable, while 27,000 have sustained damage but are habitable. 150 factories (mainly food processing) have been shelled. It is estimated that 5 million tons of construction material will be required to repair the damage, as stated by **M.Nabil**, civil engineer, who also said that 2/3 of the 10,000 wounded will suffer long-term repercussions and disabilities and will thus need special assistance. The women's representative, **Amal Siam**, spoke of the traumatic experiences undergone by the women who delivered their babies in bomb shelters and schools, the loss of any sort of privacy, their humiliation and fear, the pain of those who had lost their children and the shouts and cries of frightened children. With emotional pain and weeping, this mother of four told how she had survived a bombing lasting several hours in a building, with 40 people running for their lives to escape the drone strikes which took turns with the tanks. Scenes from hell!

**Amzad Shawa**, General Secretary of the coordinating body of social movements, stressed that even before the barbaric assault life had been very difficult in Gaza, with only 5-6 hours of power supply a day. Now it is even worse. Of the total of 450,000 people who have become homeless, only 150,000 have been aided by the UN (UNRWA), while the rest remain in schools and shelters. The representatives unanimously put forth the demand for the siege on Gaza to be lifted and for the longed for humanitarian aid to arrive, but also for human dignity.

The representatives of the mass organizations of Gaza asked the WPC to contribute in three ways by intervening, including through its member-organizations:

- To stop the Israeli attacks and for the truce to hold
- For relief of the victims and the people
- For the siege to be broken and for Israel to be condemned in international tribunals

The WPC delegation undertook the commitment to fight for the above objectives and in the near future to organize a new and bigger international mission made up of movements that will include doctors to visit the Palestinian Gaza Strip.



### Meeting with the Palestinian Minister of Social Affairs

The WPC delegation met in Ramallah with the Minister of Social Affairs, **Shawqi Al Aissa**, who is also temporarily in charge of the Ministries of Agriculture, Political Prisoners and Refugees. The reason for his multiple responsibilities is the fact that although a cabinet made up of 16 members was agreed upon by the political parties on 23 April 2014, three withdrew without their positions being filled yet by new people. The Palestinian Minister, who is also in charge of managing and coordinating the humanitarian aid for Gaza, explained the measures taken by the Palestinian Authority under adverse conditions for the population of the Gaza Strip, which has been totally ruined. He spoke of the strong

response of movements and organizations which organize dispatches of material aid and medicines. The Minister said that after the agreement had been reached to form a unified government, putting an end to the division of the land and people, Israel found itself relatively isolated, seeking pretexts to exacerbate the animosity. While no incursion of troops by land was needed, Israel carried this out so as to smash everything in Gaza. Information given by the Palestinian government gives the death count of Israel soldiers as exceeding 500, while according to Israel only 67 were killed! In Cairo the Palestinian side is asking for the siege to be lifted, for use of a port and airport and for the release of all 2.000 prisoners who were arrested over the past two months. Finally, the Minister provided information about the international, intergovernmental donors' conference to take place in Cairo this September in order to support Gaza. At this point the President of the Turkish Peace Committee, **Zuhal Okuyan**, noted the hypocrisy of the Erdogan government, which once again appears to be a friend of the Palestinians, while behind all the bluster has not dared to freeze a single agreement with Israel and, on the contrary, supports both bilaterally and within NATO all of the Israeli and imperialist plans for the Middle East.

## Meeting with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

The last meeting of the WPC delegation was that held with the leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), represented by **Abdul Rahim Mallouh**, member of the Political Bureau of the organization and of the Executive Committee of the PLO and **Omar Shada**, member of the Political Bureau and editor of the organization's newspaper. The WPC delegation was briefed on the PFLP's positions as regards the reaching of an agreement between the Palestinian parties, which had been estranged after 2007. It was considered to be positive that a unified Palestinian delegation participated in the Cairo talks, vexing Israel, which for years had claimed that the Palestinian President did not represent the whole of the Palestinian people. Israel's future objective is for a Palestinian state entity to be established on the Gaza Strip only, since it will have gradually taken over the territory on the West Bank and in Jerusalem in various ways, pushing the Palestinians towards Gaza. For the PFLP the basis for a solution with a viable and independent state must include not less than 22% of the territory of historical Palestine, with Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem but also with the release of all political prisoners and the right of return of the refugees, based on UN Resolution 194.

The WPC delegation expressed its solidarity and the demand for the immediate release of the leader and General Secretary of the organization **Ahmad Sa'adat**.

Before the delegation's departure from Palestine, **Iraklis Tsavdaridis**, Executive Secretary of the WPC and member of the Secretariat of the Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace (EEDYE) made the following statement to the Palestinian media:



Meeting with the PFLP



*“After a five-day visit to Palestine and Israel and more than 12 meetings with political parties, organizations and movements of both peoples, and having witnessed the crimes committed by the Israeli army against the civilian Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip, we reconfirm our undivided solidarity and the demand for an end to the slaughter of the Palestinians, for the way to be opened to end the occupation, with the immediate lifting of the blockade of the Gaza Strip so that movement between Gaza and the West Bank will be possible. The Israeli occupation of Palestine is barbaric and cruel, because it is supported and armed by the US and EU imperialists, who have their energy and geopolitical interests in the Middle East. They are accomplices in this daily crime. The rise of extremist religious forces is particularly worrying, as besides the religious hatred they spread, they prevent people from seeing the true causes of their misery, which lie in the system that exploits them and generates wars and poverty.*

*The WPC will steadfastly continue to organize the peoples’ solidarity with the Palestinian people, supporting the sole viable and just solution for the establishment and recognition of an Independent State of Palestine with the borders set on 4th June 1967 and with East Jerusalem its capital. In connection with all the aforesaid, the World Peace Council will hold an International Conference for Solidarity of the Peoples with Palestine on 28-29 November in Goa/India. This will also constitute a symbolic response to governmental “donors’ conferences”, which, when they don’t cover up or tolerate the crime, shed crocodile tears while preparing their construction companies to grow rich in the rubble left by the Israeli savagery.”*

### Recommendations of the delegation:

- **To prepare, publish and send to all members and friends a comprehensive report of the mission to Palestine**
- **To send the Report to the UN agencies on Human Rights, Refugees, UNRWA**
- **To thank the Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity and the Peace Committee of Israel for their precious hospitality and cooperation**
- **To consult within the WPC Secretariat and prepare a solidarity Mission to the Palestinian Gaza Strip, including doctors**
- **To call upon the members and friends of the WPC to organize campaigns for the relief of the Palestinians in the Gaza strip**

*Prepared by Iraklis Tsavdaridis  
on behalf of the delegation*





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