



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Los Angeles rally declares: Black and Brown solidarity with Palestine!

written by John Parker
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Photo: Melis Bug

Los Angeles — On May 22, Black and Brown organizations joined forces with the Palestinian movement across the world, demanding that Israel end the seige of Gaza and Sheikh Jarrah, an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine and to all U.S. funding and arming of Israel.

Palestinian organizations, including Al-Awda: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition and the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), which led massive demonstrations in the city a week prior, were invited to speak at the action.

Initiators of the rally, march and car caravan included the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, Unión del Barrio, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Black August Los Angeles, American Indian Movement Southern California, Central American Resource Center, All-African People's Revolutionary Party, Puerto Rican Alliance, National Young Lords Organization and members of the Socialist Unity Party Black Caucus.

These organizations, responding to Israel's catastrophic war crimes, felt the need to highlight and activate the power coming from the fundamental role historically played by Black and Brown organizations in the U.S. in fighting injustice, racism and white supremacy, with an understanding of the potential power those battles can have in building solidarity with other victims of U.S. imperialism abroad.

Many in the Palestine movement note that the current shift towards solidarity with the Palestinian people is partly a result of the recent struggles for Black lives here in the U.S., helping to build the consciousness necessary to emphasize that Palestinian lives and the lives of all oppressed peoples subject to racism and genocide matter.



SLL photo

Uplifting show of unity

At MacArthur Park in downtown LA — in a community predominantly made up of oppressed people of color — a large rally drew at least six television crews covering the event.

It began with many speakers addressing the need to highlight the historic bond between Black organizations and the Palestinian right to self-determination, and their dedication to continue to call out and fight against racism and imperialism there and here.

Many rally participants were uplifted by the show of unity between the many Black and Brown organizations that came together and spoke in one united voice of support.

Regarding the horror of the most recent Israeli war crimes, Harold Welton, former Black Panther and member of Black August Los Angeles, said: “Over 60 Palestinian children have been killed and the corporate news seems to dance around that fact. Our tax dollars are being used to send precision-guided missiles and high-tech bombers targeting civilians.”

Ron Gochez of Unión del Barrio, addressing the rally participants and the Palestinian people, declared: “The leftist movements of Latin America, of Nuestra America, the movements in Africa, the movements all over Asia and all over the world, are with you. The only people that side with Israel are those aligned with the colonial imperialist U.S. government.”

Speakers from Al-Awda and the PYM conveyed the reality of the continued siege in Gaza and Jerusalem’s Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and pledged their support to fight racism here against Black and Brown peoples.

This action also had a very natural feel with speakers whose experiences paralleled the situation of Palestinian people. Xochilt Sanchez, organizer with the Central

American Resource Center said: "As a Salvadoran American, I empathize with the pain and loss of the Palestinian people. I see my own family's pain reflected in their struggle against land occupation, state violence and forced displacement.

"I stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people because, as a Central American, my people have also been massacred and driven off their lands. Historically and throughout modern history, Central Americans have suffered bombardments and mass killings by the hand of the police and military, backed and funded by the United States."



Rebecka Jackson Photo: Chris Lee

Palestine and Black liberation

That sentiment was reinforced by Rebecka Jackson of the Socialist Unity Party Black Caucus, who had visited occupied Palestine: “The struggle of Palestine is the struggle for Black liberation. Occupied Palestine is a place where Afro-Palestinians are treated as second-class citizens or subjected to apartheid. Our struggles are inextricably linked. We are being systematically exterminated by the same poison of white supremacy and capitalism.

“The struggle for Palestine is one of Indigenous rights, of native Semitic peoples, Muslim, Jewish and Christian, who had lived in peace and solidarity before Western intervention,” Jackson explained.

“This is not a struggle of religion. This is a struggle against white supremacy. Israel is a white supremacist, capitalist state that viewed the indigenous people of Palestine as less than human and sought to eliminate them as they fulfilled the same ‘master race’ philosophies originated by Jim Crow and then by Nazi Germany.

“In Israel Black people are met with the same brutality and genocide as in the U.S. The Israelis have their own word for n*****, though they won’t hesitate to adopt the English term when they just want to say it either.

“When African Jewish refugees arrive, they keep them in cages like animals, calling them ‘terrorists,’ and they are often held without food, water or facilities. Sound familiar? The Israeli state is the apartheid state — and so is the U.S. state. They are an echo of the same anti-Blackness and anti-Brownness.

“As Palestine has always supported our liberation struggles, as they sent us solidarity to Ferguson and Minneapolis and Louisville let us send the same support back,” said Jackson.

“As people around the globe have lifted up the names of Michael Brown, George

Floyd and Breonna Taylor, let us today lift up the names of Haftom Zarhum and Babikir Ali Adham-Abdo, who were beaten to death by racist Zionists. And Solomon Teka and Yehuda Biadga, who were murdered by Israeli police.

"Why do we love Palestine, why do we fight for Palestine? When we are united in struggle we beat with the same heart and fight with the same fist. If we can free Palestine, we can free us all.

"From Mandela, to the Black Panther Party to Che Guevara — we are all revolutionary socialists dedicated to smashing imperialism and capitalism and liberating the world. None of us are free until we all are free," she concluded.



Photo: Insook Lee



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