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# Chris Smalls comes home as Palestinian protests continue in NYC

written by Stephen Millies  
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Founder of Amazon Labor Union Chris Smalls was welcomed by activists in New York City's JFK Airport. Smalls, who had been onboard the Handala, a ship carrying aid to Gaza, was detained and beaten by Zionist forces. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

Chris Smalls, founder and former president of the Amazon Labor Union, was welcomed by over a hundred supporters at New York City's JFK airport on Aug. 1 after being kidnapped by the Zionist genocidal regime.

Among those welcoming the hero were members of the New Jersey-based People's Organization for Progress, including its chairperson, Larry Hamm.

Smalls was one of the crew members of the Handala, which was seized in international waters by Israeli forces as the ship was trying to deliver food to Gaza. This was the second vessel belonging to the Freedom Flotilla Coalition that Zionist war criminals hijacked.

The labor leader and activist was the only Black member of Handala's crew and the only one who was beaten by his Israeli kidnappers. Zionism is racism.



New York, Aug. 1 - Activists with Shut it Down for Palestine hold up a “stop starving Gaza now!” sign outside the Egyptian mission to the U.N. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

The same day, in New York City, demonstrations were held against the deliberate U.S.-Israeli starvation of two million people in Gaza. Organizers included the Shut It Down for Palestine Coalition, the Palestinian Youth Movement and PAL-Awda.

In a morning action organized by PAL-Awda, activists chained themselves to the doors of the Egyptian mission to the UN as supporters chanted “Starving children can’t wait, open up the Rafah gate.” It took the NYPD nearly two hours to cut the chains and arrest the protesters.

The action was one of many around the world demanding that Gaza’s Rafah gate on its border with Egypt be opened for food and medical supplies. In a statement, PAL-Awda also called on Egypt to stop buying stolen Palestine gas from the Zionist regime and Chevron and stop buying arms from U.S. corporations that arm the Zionist war machine.

At noon, Palestinian solidarity activists joined community activists from Texas and Louisiana to protest outside the global headquarters of Citibank in lower Manhattan. The Youth Climate Finance Alliance was an organizer of the action.

The marchers focused on Citi’s financing of fossil fuel projects in the U.S. Gulf South as well as the bank’s direct involvement in Zionist genocide in Gaza. Citi loaned the racist state of “Israel” \$2.5 billion to purchase the U.S. F35s now bombing the children of Gaza. That loan is being repaid with U.S. taxpayer money.





Gulf South activists chained themselves together, blockading the doors to the luxury condo of Citicorp CEO “Genocide Jane” Fraser. Photo: PAL-Awda

Speakers, including elders and children, described the environmental poisoning, lifelong illnesses and premature death Citi-financed fracking projects inflict on their communities. They then marched to the luxury condo of Citicorp CEO “Genocide Jane” Fraser, where other Gulf South activists had chained themselves together, blockading the doors. The NYPD, always eager to serve the bankers, sent its brutal Strategic Response Group to make arrests. But the condo building was shut down for at least two hours.

The Manhattan condo is one of several residences Fraser owns around the country.

She pulled down \$34.5 million last year while Citicorp – with \$2.5 trillion in assets – is the biggest U.S. bankster in Israel and is vital to its war purchases.

Later that day, protesters led by the Palestinian Youth Movement rallied outside the consulates of Egypt and Jordan before marching from the UN to “Columbus” Circle.

Earlier in the week, on July 29, activists protested outside a conference of states led by imperialist France and the lackey Saudi regime, calling for a “two-state” solution sometime in the distant future. The conference made no demands on the Zionist state or the U.S., but demanded that Palestinian freedom fighters surrender. Gaza needs food and urgent medical assistance – not Bantustans like those in apartheid South Africa.

Outside the Saudi mission, protesters confronted Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Sarhan bin Said, who was there for the conference. Just three months ago, the Saudi Kingdom hosted Donald Trump and 30 U.S. CEOs, including Genocide Jane Fraser. The Saudi royals pledged nearly \$1 trillion in contracts to Citi, Boeing, Palantir, Nvidia, BlackRock, and other U.S. corporations directly involved in the Gaza genocide.

Also on Aug. 1, Jewish Voice for Peace elders held a sit-in at the office of pro-genocide New York Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer.

On Saturday, Aug. 2, a demonstration called by Within Our Lifetime marched from City Hall to Grand Central Station. And a Sunday rally for Gaza by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) drew a large crowd to Brooklyn’s Grand Army Plaza.

All the marches were greeted with visible and audible support from pedestrians and drivers as they marched through the streets. Millions are outraged at the starvation in Gaza.

Stop starving Gaza! Palestine will win!

