

THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE – A WORKERS ISSUE

Scottish PSC Trade Union Network Newsletter August 2025

This month: FM Finally Calls It Genocide - Thought Crime Is Here - Trade Union Statement - Miners Gala - No Pasaran - Conferences - No Trust

ESCALATING REPRESSION WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED

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JOHN SWINNEY - "Critical Friend" of Genocide

"It's quite clear that there is a genocide in Palestine – it can't be disputed" - John Swinney

The First Minister has studiously avoided answering our questions, and those of the Scottish people. However, left with nowhere to hide when he took to the stage at the Stand Club in Edinburgh he finally accepted that [genocide is taking place](#).

This is one in which his government is complicit.

Public money continues to flow to companies which arm the genocide, whilst the SNP MPs in Westminster all abstained from the vote on proscribing Palestine Action.

The FM has failed to deliver on promises made to us, and ignored hundreds of letters from the public regarding enforcement of the [ICC \(warrant\)](#) and support for the [ICJ \(Genocide case\)](#). Though time was found to enjoy the "*pleasant company*" of Donald Trump.

The [Scottish Government](#) has presented itself as a "*critical friend*" of Israel - friendship with a state the FM now publicly accepts is committing genocide. People pressure has now forced the government to acknowledge what we could all see long ago. We must escalate - to move them further, and to cease complicity.

[Please Write to the First Minister](#), our letter sets out key steps that can be taken towards meeting obligations & responsibilities under international law.

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CALL TO ACTION!



**The Scottish Government has FINALLY stated its position:
Israel is committing GENOCIDE in Gaza
NOW DEMAND THEY TAKE ACTION!**

- **CALL for SANCTIONS against Israel**
- **JOIN the South African case at the ICJ**
- **END Scottish Government and institutional complicity in the genocide**



**Write to First Minister
John Swinney:
<https://qrco.de/swinney>**



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THOUGHT CRIME IS HERE

Since last month's issue, it has become illegal to express sympathy for the non-violent direct actions of Palestine Action. Police Scotland have wasted no time, and used the authoritarian legislation to [arrest and charge our members](#).

The democratic facade has slipped. We are now witnessing the blatant criminalisation of ideas, including expressions of solidarity with non-violent protest. This moment lays bare the extent to which dissent is no longer tolerated by those in power. A government wielding draconian anti-terror powers not to protect public safety, but to suppress political opposition.

As we warned last month, when these attacks on free expression are normalised, they will not stop with Palestine Action. The same laws and political tools will be turned against climate activists, anti-racist organisers, anti-war campaigners, and trade unionists.

We must take this threat seriously. Trade Unions have a proud history of standing up to state repression.

A legacy that demands that we defend the right to protest, organise, and speak out.

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THE RIGHT TO PROTEST

In a welcome development 22 senior Trade unionists have expressed their deep concern over erosion of the right to peaceful protest.

In a [Joint statement](#) the general secretaries have condemned the police over the handling of anti-genocide demonstrations.



Credit: Carlos Latuff

This includes the Met Police's decision to arrest and charge trade unionists who took part in a [peaceful protest on 18 January](#).

Whilst its disappointing that the statement does not directly address the proscribing of Palestine Action, the repressive measures are correctly identified as an attack on our right to protest, stating that the freedoms to organise, of assembly and speech matter; and that we must defend them.

Please defend the right to protest against genocide by [signing the open letter](#) & pressure your trade unions leaders to do same.

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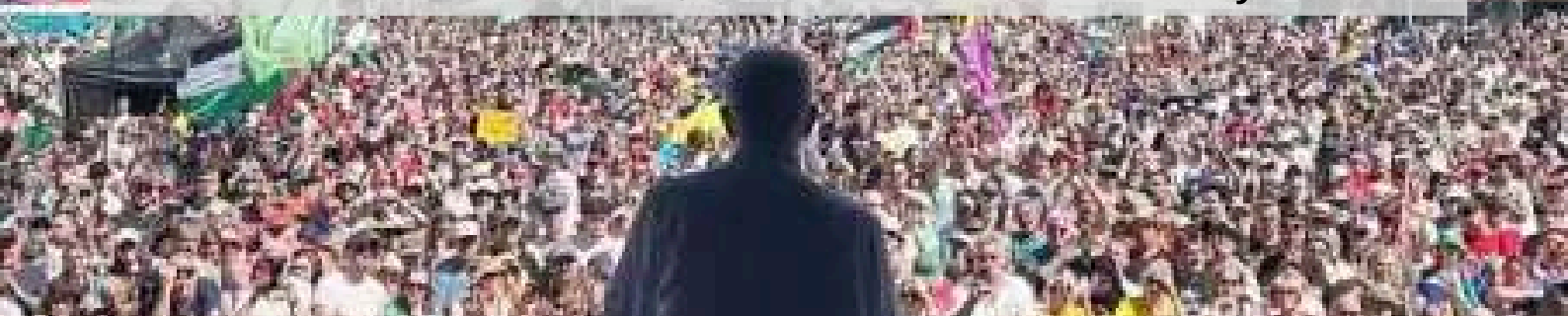
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Durham Miners Gala

The [Durham Miners' Gala](#) - an annual gathering of trade unionists and activists took place in the former mining heartland of North East England on Saturday 14 July. As ever, many Trade Unionists from Scotland were present.

[Dr Husam Zomlot](#) became the first Palestinian to be invited as a platform speaker, addressing the vast crowd. Husam praised the solidarity of the trade union movement.

The unprecedented, symbolically powerful presence of a keynote Palestinian speaker reinforces the bond between our unions and Palestine, this must be matched by action.



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Spain to Palestine: ¡No pasarán!

SPSC provided a speaker at Motherwell's annual [No Pasaran](#) commemoration. The service is held by the North Lanarkshire Memorial Committee to remember the local volunteers who went to fight in Spain as part of the International Brigades.

To Scottish socialists, the Spanish Civil War wasn't just about Spain, it was about the fight against fascism, and the defence of working-class communities worldwide. It was stressed that the same spirit of solidarity is urgently required now in support of Palestine.

Today, the oppression of Palestinians, backed by Western powers demands global resistance. Where we once sent volunteers to Spain, now we are merely asked to do no harm, and end our complicity.

Both struggles symbolise a broader fight against imperialism and authoritarianism, in both cases solidarity is not optional, but necessary.

The questions faced in 1936 remain today:

Will we stand by as fascism or apartheid takes hold?

Will we support the oppressed, even when it's inconvenient?

Will we organise, resist, and speak out?

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CONFERENCES - Unite

At its 2025 Policy Conference, [Unite the Union](#) voted overwhelmingly in favour of a comprehensive [Statement on Palestinian solidarity](#), as presented by the Executive Council.

After several revisions, the final version of the statement reaffirms and strengthens Unite's longstanding commitment to [Boycott, Divest and Sanctions](#) and justice for the Palestinian people. Unite will encourage and support members who refuse to build, handle or transport weapons destined for Israel, as well as making a public statement in support of such embargo.

Unite has upheld Palestinian solidarity since its formation in 2007, and each policy conference has reaffirmed and deepened this position. This year's motion continues that legacy with clarity, purpose, with an unflinching commitment to justice, international law, and peace.

Trade unions are lay member led organisations, the members have repeatedly spoken.

It is time for Unite to take the lead and enact BDS.

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WORKERS CONFERENCE on PALESTINE

Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign will shortly be announcing details of an autumn Workers Conference on Palestine.

Our strategy has always been to build grassroots support for worker action, including by creating pressure for unions to enact existing policies, made by **Us The Members**.

After nearly two years of genocide, sadly many of the leaders of the trade union movement have barely raised a whimper, and BDS policies still sit on the shelf gathering dust.

Just as many others have been exposed for their fair weather solidarity, trade unions are under scrutiny. It is clear that if credibility is to be restored it will be grassroots activists taking the lead.

The gathering will include Palestinian trade unionists and bring together activists interested in moving beyond words to effective action.

Do you want to get involved?

Please get in touch

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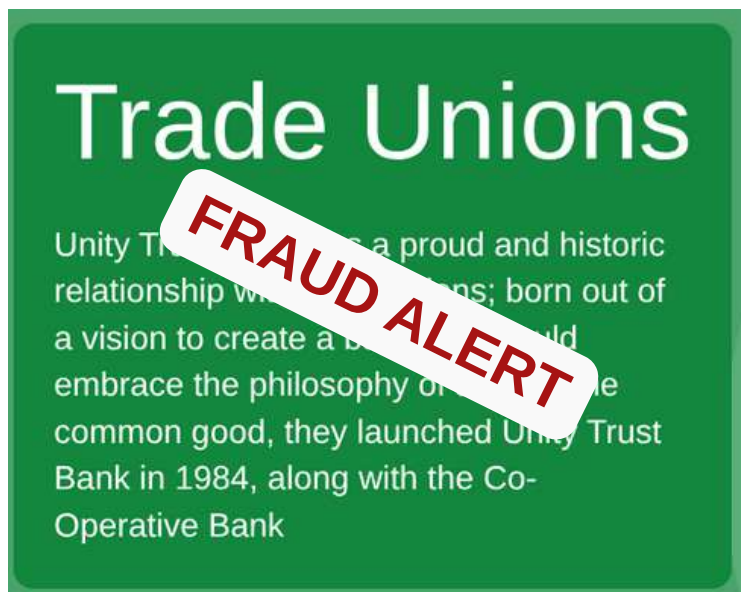
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NO UNITY - NO TRUST

Whilst we have seen our members arrested, harassed, and charged, another attack on our ability to speak out has been the freezing of our bank account. Part of a wider attempt to silence our voices, SPSC have had access to funds cut off indefinitely by Unity Trust bank.



Unity Trust Bank of course promotes itself as "[The Trade Union Bank](#)" and a friend of progressive organisations, and has something of a monopoly on trade union accounts.

Unions cannot trust Unity Trust with our money if we cannot be sure it operates independently of political influence in its decision-making.

Unions must apply pressure on Unity.

Please raise your dissatisfaction directly with Unity, [sign the open letter](#), and encourage others to do the same.

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CURRENT CAMPAIGNS



The Jewish National Fund (JNF) serves as a global fundraiser for Israeli ethnic cleansing, occupation and apartheid. Despite this role in institutionalised racism and apartheid, the JNF enjoys charitable status in over 50 countries including Scotland!

This comes with financial privileges including tax relief, Canada has led the way by revoking this status, the [regulator in Scotland](#) must do the same.

It has been [STUC policy since 2012](#) to campaign to have charitable status revoked.

WRITE TO - Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)

Signatures continue to be added to our [Statement of Solidarity with Palestinian Workers](#) these will soon be published on the website. Have **you** signed yet?

READ & SIGN in Solidarity NOW

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KEY CONTACTS

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Contact SPSC Trade Union Officer -

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Join our Trade Union Network -

<https://qrco.de/TUnetwork>

Join SPSC -

£10 for an individual membership and £25 to affiliate.

Become a
member



Donate
to SPSC



Visit our website to find out about coming events
and BDS campaigns - www.scottishpsc.org.uk

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