

THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE: A WORKERS ISSUE

Scottish PSC Trade Union Network Newsletter | November 2025

THIS MONTH: TRUMP'S PEACE DEAL; GHASSAN ABU SITTAH; BLACK WORKERS; WORKPLACE DAY OF ACTION; DEMAND BETTER



NEW UNIONS:

**“The ceasefire did not stop the genocide
or the annexation of the West Bank”**

Photo: The New York Times

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BUILDING EFFECTIVE SOLIDARITY

NEW UNIONS POSITION ON TRUMP'S "PEACE DEAL"

**The "ceasefire" did not stop the genocide or the
annexation of the West Bank**

PNFTU Team

From the Occupied West Bank

The ceasefire deal brokered by Trump is an agreement between the sponsor of genocide and its perpetrator, wanted for arrest by the International Criminal Court (ICC), forced upon the Palestinian people under the pressure of famine, the ongoing genocide, and forced displacement. Israel is itself admitting it is a **global pariah**, and the ceasefire deal came as an attempt to rescue Israel itself from international isolation and continuous official and public international pressure.

Nearly two weeks after the agreement was signed on October 9, the famine continues, and Israel continues to close the **Rafah border crossing** and refuse the delivery of the goods agreed upon and specified in the ceasefire deal. Only 986 trucks carrying humanitarian aid had entered Gaza since the ceasefire took effect, out of a **total of 6,000 trucks** that should have entered the Strip. Intermittent bombing continues, and the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip remain forcibly displaced. Israel has not yet allowed the entry of tents, medicines, and hospital supplies. In other words, Israel continues to occupy and besiege Gaza and control everything that enters it. This is evidence that Israel's goal of exterminating and ethnically cleansing Palestinians still remains.



NEW UNIONS POSITION ON TRUMP'S "PEACE DEAL"

In the Occupied West Bank, Israel has escalated its [silent genocide](#) on Palestinian villages and agricultural communities. Dozens of [daily attacks](#) are being launched by violent settler militias against farmers with the support of the occupation army during the olive harvest season. These attacks aim to fully control the so-called Area C, which comprises 62% of the West Bank. Israel's plan has long been to [annex the West Bank](#), confine Palestinians to a system of ghettos, and deprive them of their natural resources, just as Gaza was besieged twenty years ago.

We, in the Palestinian New Federation of Trade Unions, highly appreciate the effective solidarity demonstrated by workers and trade unions, particularly by closing ports and preventing arms shipments to Israel from docking at their ports. We salute the workers and trade unions from Greece to Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the United States, as well as their participation in leading and organizing general strikes in Italy and Spain, as well as massive marches and protests around the world.

The hypocrisy of countries claiming democracy and commitment to international law and human rights has been exposed by their blatant support of and connivance with Israel's genocide and horrific crimes against humanity, carried out in partnership with the US and European imperialism. The global conscience of the people has been awakened by the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, their resilience in preventing displacement plans, their refusal of imperialist hegemony over the region. As people we have to stand together and rise up.

Hundreds of cultural institutions, dozens of universities, and tens of thousands of writers, musicians, artists, and directors (including many in Hollywood) have also declared their refusal to be complicit by severing their ties with Israel and its institutions complicit in its crimes.



NEW UNIONS POSITION ON TRUMP'S "PEACE DEAL"

This isolation and shift in policy direction are largely due to the active, sustained, principled, and strategic solidarity demonstrated by tens of millions around the world, including labor unions, students, farmers, artists, and academics, along with movements for climate, social, economic, racial, and gender justice. The collective power of our people is closer than ever to a critical turning point to end complicity and halt Israel's impunity.

Countries from Malaysia to Colombia, from Slovenia to Spain, from Turkey to Antigua and Barbuda, and many more are finally starting to fulfil their legal obligation to end complicity by severing military, trade, energy, and other ties with the genocidal Israeli regime. Companies and investments are increasingly either abandoning the Israeli economy or paying a heavy price for their continued criminal complicity, as the boycott campaigns against Microsoft, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Carrefour, and others demonstrate. "BDS and boycotts have changed Israel's global trade landscape," **said Avi Balashnikov**, Chairman of the Israel Export Institute, already months ago.

BDS works and we need to persist on this path. Trade unions have to play their crucial part in this global movement that is slowly turning the tide. Now more than ever.



The Palestine New Federation of Trade Unions

New Unions

AFTER THE LABOUR CONFERENCE AND THE “PEACE DEAL”



Hussein Ezzedine
Scottish PSC TU Officer
Edinburgh Branch

When delegates at the recent Labour Party conference voted to recognise that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, it sent a powerful message: that the party's grassroots were finally tiring of the slaughter and would no longer be silent in the face of systemic violence.

Since then, Donald Trump's so called “Middle East Peace Deal” has been signed – a plan that entrenches apartheid, strips Palestinians of their rights, and rewards decades of occupation and settlement expansion, excluding Palestinians entirely from determining their own future. It is the diplomatic equivalent of demanding that the victim bless their own imprisonment.

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AFTER THE LABOUR CONFERENCE AND THE “PEACE DEAL”

Of course, Keir Starmer has sung the praises of this obscene piece of theatre which comes after two years of genocidal war. A trail of unprecedented destruction has been left, but remarkably Israel, along with its US and Western backers have failed to crush the people of Palestine whose resistance has remained steadfast and firm. Whilst globally governments have failed to fully crush dissent in workplaces and on the streets despite unprecedented repression.

The halt to the bombardment of Gaza is urgently needed to save lives and allow humanitarian relief — but has only come about because, from the Israeli point of view, despite unprecedented killing, all else has failed. Rather like the Labour Party membership, Israel’s backers are tiring of the slaughter, the endgame remains the same, but amid growing isolation they have been forced to try another strategy.

The brutal project of ethnic cleansing continues, we know that freedom for Palestinians can only come about through dismantling the settler colonial project and the apartheid structures that have oppressed them for 77 years.

Trump’s deal imposed on the Palestinians offers no justice, no sovereignty, no future and denies the right of return to millions of refugees, the killings go on, just at a reduced rate.

As trade unionists committed to international solidarity, we recognise this for what it is: a blueprint for permanent oppression, dressed up in the language of diplomacy. For working people around the world, this model is not unfamiliar. It mirrors the logic of colonialism; keep communities divided, suppress resistance, and call it peace. This is not a far away foreign issue — but part of the same global system that exploits workers, criminalises dissent, destroys the planet and uses state violence to maintain inequality.

That is why trade unionists must stand with the Palestinian people — not out of charity, but out of shared struggle, our role is not to manage injustice, it is to resist it.

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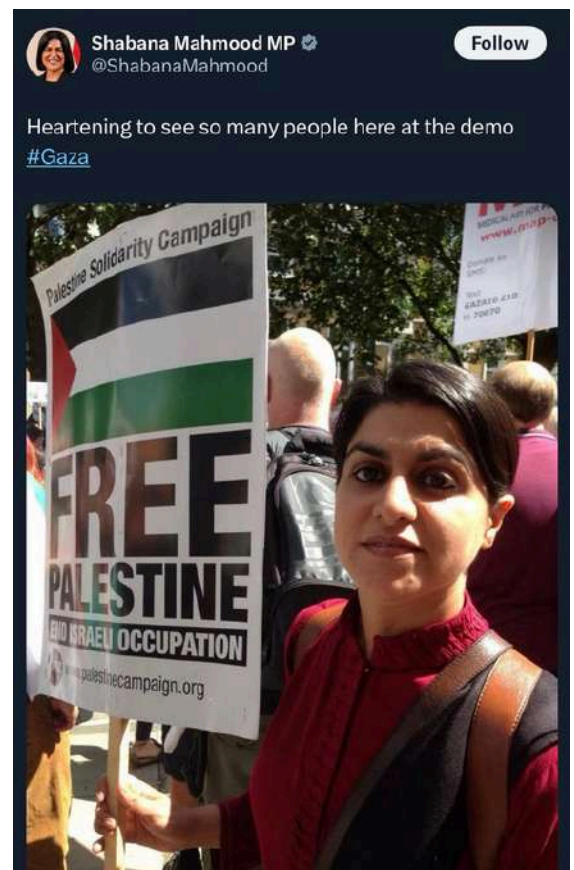
AFTER THE LABOUR CONFERENCE AND THE “PEACE DEAL”

Both the vote acknowledging the genocide, and the ceasefire are steps forward — but the question remains: what has actually changed for those of us working to resist? Labour MPs have already begun the familiar dance of evasion around both.

Some figures on front and back benches, who spent the last two years defending Israel’s atrocities, now pose as neutral arbiters — “balance,” “complexity,” “yearning for peace”. But there is no balance to be found between oppressor and oppressed; no moral equivalence and no middle ground between occupation and liberation.

This utterly absurd posture of even-handedness is an ugly mask, a desperate attempt to obscure a record of enabling the very violence their own party’s conference has now condemned — and that the “peace deal” purports to end.

No one should be fooled by this repositioning; these are the same parliamentarians who opposed our calls for a ceasefire while entire neighbourhoods were reduced to rubble; who continue to vilify those marching for Palestine as extremists; “un-British” in the words of UK’s Home secretary, Shabana Mahmood, a muslim woman who once marched with a placard herself.



Whilst thought crime is taken to new ludicrous extremes with the Arabic word “intifada” said to have “no other interpretation than a call to attack Jewish communities around the world”.

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Credibility cannot be salvaged by a few carefully worded statements and photo-opportunities with ambassador Husam Zomlot. This charade is intended to provide a distraction from unwavering support for Israel’s actions.

At this crucial time we must not allow such manoeuvres to dilute the struggle, effective movements refuse to be co-opted and domesticated. The strength of the solidarity movement lies in its moral clarity, this is not abstract, it is the practical application of solidarity – the same principle that led dockers to refuse to load arms for fascist regimes, and that built international support for the struggle against South African apartheid.

Sustained pressure from below can shift policy – even when facing those entrenched in complicity and political cowardice. When workers act together, we can bring change.

Isolated and in trouble, the collapse of the Zionist narrative has more than ever exposed to the world the true nature of Israel. The world now sees the truth unfiltered; there has been a global awakening, the cause has become a universal symbol of resistance to oppression. Advocates of the “Peace Deal” will seek to use it to halt our momentum, but as with the repression and continued attacks on freedom of speech – we must resist in the spirit of International Intifada and not allow this impetus to dissipate.

Labour will continue to stall, deflect, and rebrand but can no longer pretend not to see. The question now is whether it will continue to look away – or finally act as though Palestinian lives truly matter.

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AFTER THE LABOUR CONFERENCE AND THE “PEACE DEAL”

That will largely depend on us; if our movement and allies intensify the pressure now, expanding BDS campaigns, and bringing Palestine into the workplace to truly disrupt business as usual, we can force a change of direction.

We need to understand that this shift will not happen through a change of heart, but will come when the pressure becomes too much to bear. We have seen this at the Labour Conference and is exemplified in the resistance and Sumud of the people of Gaza who have endured unimaginable horrors, defied all odds and forced their oppressors to try a different route, in a desperate effort to complete the genocidal project.

We must all escalate to ensure they fail.



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GHASSAN ABU SITTAH'S JIMMY REID MEMORIAL LECTURE:

“European political identity is structurally attached to settler-colonialism and with it, its genocidal instinct”



Eurig Scandrett

Scottish PSC Education & Publications Officer
East Lothian Branch

Professor Ghassan Abu Sittah is a British-Palestinian surgeon. In 2024 he was elected Rector of Glasgow University, the same position that Jimmy Reid held more than 50 years ago. Reid's Rectoral address has gone down in history as a masterpiece, grounded in his Marxist analysis of the grand sweep of history driven by the economic imperative of capitalism but experienced in the lives of individuals, and especially of his own experience in working class Scotland, as alienation.

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GHASSAN ABU SITTAH'S JIMMY REID MEMORIAL LECTURE

Abu Sittah's Jimmy Reid memorial lecture, in October 2025, was of comparable greatness. In Abu Sittah's case, his analysis is rooted in the historical trajectory of imperial colonisation and his own experience as a Palestinian exile, who has worked in Gaza trying to save lives, and succeeding to find humanity in the midst of the cruel inhumanity of genocide.

The word 'genocide' is used so often by the masses of ordinary citizens protesting Israel's actions through our marches, vigils, petitions, direct action, arrests. It seems so obvious that the deliberate mass killing of civilians constitutes genocide, and particularly the targeting of health workers and aid workers trying to save lives, and of journalists that are reporting on the atrocities.

The word 'genocide' is avoided by most politicians, who defer to – and hide behind – legal narratives and definitions, until such politicians are forced by public pressure to concede that genocide is quite clearly what is being perpetrated, and that this has implications for governments and public bodies across the world. Ghassan Abu Sittah lifted the word genocide from the outrage at its specificity, to the intrinsic logic of European settler colonisation, with its roots in imperial United Kingdom.

As Abu Sittah put it, "European political identity is structurally attached to settler-colonialism and with it, its genocidal instinct."

The Gaza genocide of 2023-2025 is the latest graphic outcome of a history of the erasure of a people, a logic that systematically dehumanises and eradicates an entire civilisation and its culture from history, because they are 'not European'.

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GHASSAN ABU SITTAH'S JIMMY REID MEMORIAL LECTURE

Ghassan Abu Sittah praised Jimmy Reid for his insights on how capitalism renders some human beings expendable – surplus to the requirements of the market. Trade unions are constantly fighting for the essential humanity of workers deemed expendable. He noted that today, “Gaza has become a template for the removal of surplus political populations”. The same logic leads to job losses in Scotland and genocide in Gaza.

The implications of structural attachment to settler-colonial genocide affects us all. Glasgow, the university of which Dr Abu Sittah is elected Rector, and a major contributor to the economy of the city, has a £3 million research grant with the company that made parts for the bombs that are used for the violent erasure of children, and holds shares in the company that profits from this atrocity. The progressive decline of the value of government grants is pushing all universities to seek external sources of funding like this, as well as cutting jobs, eroding pay and pushing up workloads to unmanageable levels. My own union, UCU, is currently balloting on industrial action on jobs, pay and workloads, but not on universities' culpability for genocide.

Dr Abu Sittah is well aware of the limitations under which British trades unions operate as a result of successive anti-trade union legislation. However, in his Jimmy Reid memorial lecture he urged the movement to rise to the urgency of genocide and find ways to challenge complicity of our employers and institutions with settler-colonialism. At the lecture, SPSC launched our joint publication with the Jimmy Reid Foundation Scotland's Trade Unions: Opportunities For Solidarity With The Palestinian Liberation, which is designed to rise to that challenge. For trade union activists the opportunities are there – end the genocide that started when Scottish laird Arthur Balfour committed the UK to the Zionist project.

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CHANGE ISN'T HANDED OVER — IT'S SEIZED!

Hussein Ezzedine
Scottish PSC TU Officer
Edinburgh Branch

The mood was sombre as the annual **STUC Black Workers' Conference** convened over the weekend of 18–19 October. Delegates arrived acutely aware of the worsening climate for people of colour in Scotland since they last met. That sense of unease was deepened by another year of genocide in Palestine — one met with a largely underwhelming response from the wider trade union movement.

Yet amid the gloom, delegates found renewed purpose. A significant motion was adopted recognising the deep historical ties between African liberation movements and the Palestinian struggle — a relationship rooted in shared visions of justice, resistance, and anti-colonialism.

Whilst in response to the UK government's proscription of Palestine Action, delegates voted unanimously to defend civil liberties and international solidarity. Demanding an end to the misuse of counter-terror legislation and excessive policing powers used to suppress legitimate protest.

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CHANGE ISN'T HANDED OVER — IT'S SEIZED!



These motions, and the powerful contributions from delegates, reflect a clear understanding. That the fight for racial justice in Scotland is inseparable from the global struggle for freedom and equality. Whilst standing with Palestine is not a distraction from the fight against the far right — it is central to it.

Conference organisers considerably distributed our publication **Opportunities for Solidarity with the Palestinian Liberation Struggle** offering delegates practical tools to take action.

As the conference closed, one delegate commented: “We do this year after year and yet things get worse. We have to do something different.” That ‘something different’ must be clearly understood: organising relentlessly at the grassroots, using the tools already in our hands.

Change isn't handed over — it's seized. And no one else will do this for us. If the world shifts, it's because we pushed. We must challenge each other, and ask ourselves the question — how hard will I push?

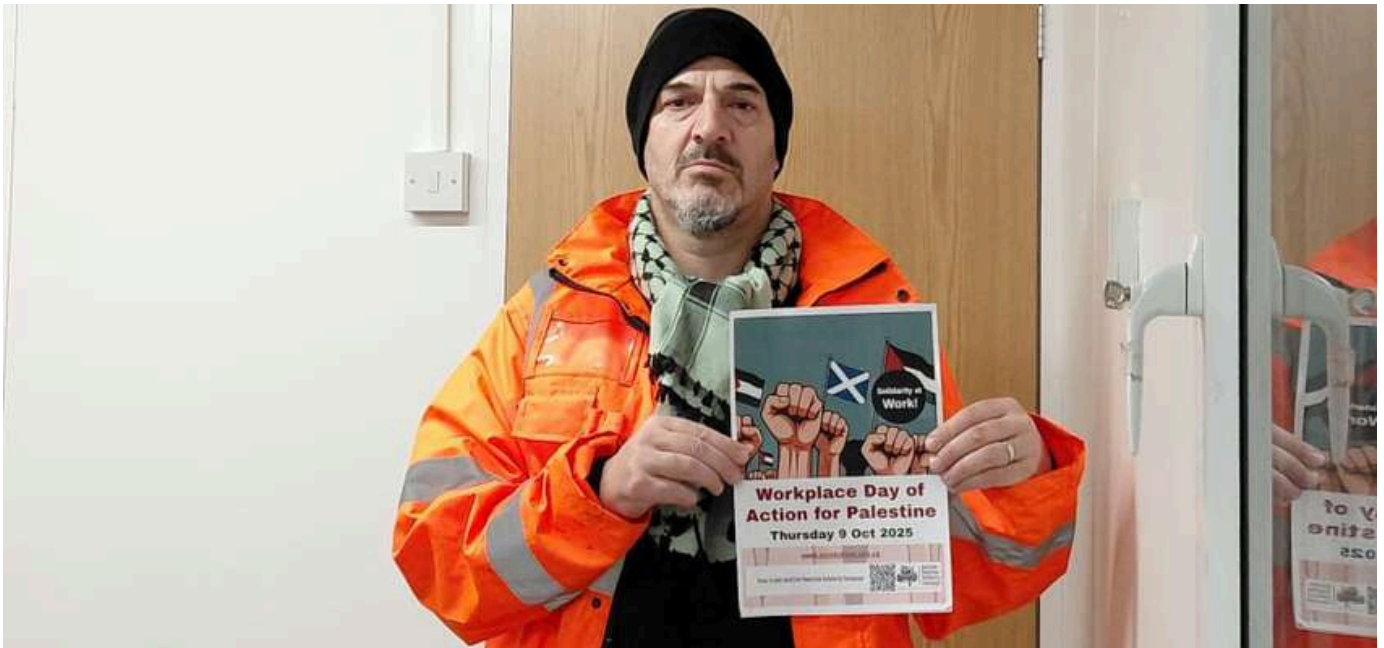
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WORKPLACE DAY OF ACTION



Hussein Ezzedine
Scottish PSC TU Officer
Edinburgh Branch

Earlier this year, the STUC Congress passed a motion, committing to support a series of workplace days of action in support of the Palestinian people. So, it was disappointing that our appeal for STUC support for the day of action on 9 October did not get a response. However, activists in Scotland did join the call, Keffiyehs were worn to work, solidarity photos taken, materials shared, and messages placed on online noticeboards. Without the backing of the national trade union centre there may have been understandable caution and unease about taking even such innocuous action. However, we have to start somewhere, small actions are better than no action—what matters is building the will and confidence to make our solidarity impossible to ignore.

Though we are currently at a low level of largely symbolic action, this can change if these events become regular and repeated, coordinating this on a UK wide level has its advantages. We are liaising with activists beyond Scotland regarding future days of action and hope these will receive the union support that delegates voted overwhelmingly for at Congress.

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SCOTLAND DEMANDS BETTER

Hussein Ezzedine

Scottish PSC TU Officer
Edinburgh Branch

On 25 October, we took to the streets of Edinburgh for the Scotland Demands Better march and rally, calling for urgent action on poverty and inequality. The event had been in planning for several months and was heavily promoted by trade unions.

Recognising that true change requires dismantling the systems that create injustice — both at home and across the world — Palestine solidarity activists, along with environmental, anti-racist and other progressive campaigners, were prominent throughout the march. We are part of the broader struggle for a world that is fair, just, and equal. We know that Scotland cannot be fair in a world that is not; the fight for justice here is inseparable from the fight for justice everywhere, with the Palestinian struggle an integral part of the global movement against exploitation and oppression.

While initially planning for larger numbers, organisers expected around 5,000 participants, which was probably a reasonably accurate estimate of those taking part — which seems a bit disappointing for such a long planned national mobilisation.

There was however a large, lively Palestine Bloc adding colour and energy, and the engagement at the SPSC stall was really positive. However, as we packed up and the voices of the main speakers drifted across a now-deserted Meadows, the scene did feel less than inspiring.

However, it had undoubtedly been a good day prior to this — we must build on the positives and demand better.

Better for Scotland — Better for all!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

SCOTTISH WORKERS CONFERENCE ON PALESTINE

The Scottish Workers' Conference on Palestine will bring together trade unionists and activists from a number of organisations to share experiences, build skills, and plan practical campaigns rooted in worker power.

Through workshops, and strategy sessions, participants will learn from one another, strengthen networks, develop strategy and leave equipped with the tools to take effective action in their workplaces and communities.

This is a grassroots event fully focused on action, uniting Scottish workers with each other and with the wider solidarity movement, to stand together for Palestinian freedom, dignity, and justice.

The success or not of the event will be measured by the impact and actions that follow. We have started engaging with partners who will shape the conference. Get in touch to get involved!

ST ANDREW'S DAY MARCH AND RALLY

The STUC has organised a Glasgow march and rally against racism every year since 1989, where St Andrew's Day doesn't fall on a Saturday the march takes place on the Saturday before. This year the march is on Saturday 29 November. We are looking for volunteers to leaflet on the day. Will you join us? Get in touch!

Anti-Palestinian racism is both targeted — and an enabler of the far-right ideologies which have gained traction in Scotland. We will be publishing our Statement of Solidarity with Palestinian Workers to coincide with St Andrew's Day. Make sure to sign the letter down below!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

**ST ANDREW'S DAY
ANTI-RACISM & ANTI-FASCISM
MARCH & RALLY 2025**

**STAND UP, SPEAK OUT:
UNITE AGAINST RACISM!**

**SAT
29
NOV**

**MUSTER
10.30 A.M.
BARROWLANDS
PARK
GLASGOW G1 5BG
MARCH OFF
AT 11 A.M.**

**RALLY
12 P.M. AT
ADELAIDE
PLACE
209 BATH ST
GLASGOW
G2 4HZ**

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SPSC CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



The Jewish National Fund (JNF) has served as a global fundraiser for Israeli ethnic cleansing, occupation in Palestine since its inception. Despite its role in institutionalised racism and apartheid, the JNF enjoys charitable status in over 50 countries, including Scotland, which comes with financial privileges such as tax relief.

Canada led the way in revoking the JNF charity status in the country, and we are calling on the **Scottish regulator** (OSCR) to do the same! In 2012, the **Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) resolved to endorse the Stop the JNF Campaign**.

WRITE TO OSCR

As trade unionists in Scotland, we must show unwavering solidarity with our Palestinian colleagues in their struggle for freedom, equality and justice, for the liberation of all oppressed peoples are inextricably linked workers' struggles in Scotland and around the world.

Signatures continue to be added to our **Statement of Solidarity with Palestinian Workers** and these will soon be published on the website.

SIGN THE LETTER

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GET IN TOUCH

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