

Appeal for Support of Nonviolence in Palestine



Jerusalem, 15 April 2006

In light of the severe food crisis in the Gaza Strip and the impending food and fuel crises in many parts of the West Bank, and the unfairness and hypocrisy of punishing the entire Palestinian people collectively for exercising their democratic right to vote;

Given the long history of Palestinian nonviolent resistance, and the fact that the large majority of Palestinians, every day for the past 38 years, have employed nonviolent tactics similar to those of the South African anti-Apartheid movement and the U.S. civil rights movement to resist the Israeli occupation;

Given that, after years of supporting nonviolence, democracy, and human rights in the Palestinian territories, the withholding of international aid threatens to reverse the successes of the struggling yet vibrant nonviolence movement;

We, one of the leading Palestinian NGOs working to spread the values and practice of nonviolence, and on behalf of the thousands of Palestinians who have devoted their lives to bringing about a just and lasting peace using nonviolent means,

Urgently call upon the United Nations, the international community (specifically the United States, the European Union, and the Quartet), humanitarian and non-governmental organizations around the world to:

1. Realize that violent resistance is encouraged not by the support of basic human needs and rights, but by the despair resulting from the freezing of humanitarian aid;
2. Support the array of Palestinian nonviolence initiatives that form the backbone of Palestinian society by:
 - a) Ending the economic blockade of the Palestinian people; and
 - b) Pressuring the Israeli government to transfer the suspended tax and customs revenues to the Palestinian Authority.

At the same time, we *call upon* the Palestinian people to maintain their national unity and stand up for their dignity. Let us vow to withstand adversity rather than capitulate to violence. Let the world see who we really are and let us be a model for justice and democracy around the world.

Finally, we *call upon* civil society, both locally and abroad, to speak up against the recent inhumane policies and join us in this plea to uphold international humanitarian law with integrity.

