

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign



Campaigning to build a mass anti apartheid movement for Palestine

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“I am a keen member of the PSC because I believe a monumental injustice has been done to the Palestinians by the Zionists over the years. Until this injustice is righted there will be no peace in the Middle East.”

Bruce Kent



“Now, more than ever, the Palestinian people need our solidarity. Without justice and recognition of their plight there will be no peace.”

Jeremy Corbyn MP



“The issue of Palestine is at the heart of the most dangerous conflicts ravaging the world today. To work towards justice for the Palestinians is to work for true peace in the world.”

Ahdaf Soueif



“The Palestine Solidarity Campaign is the campaigning organisation in the UK that centralises all the support and solidarity for Palestinians, thereby strengthening the voice of the Palestinians in this country. It is engaged in the widest range of creative lobbying, political solidarity, cultural, social and civic activities. Those who support the struggle for freedom and rights for all Palestinians will find a way to contribute to strengthening those rights under the generous and principled platform of PSC.”

Karma Nabulsi

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) campaigns for justice for the Palestinians. PSC is successfully building a mass solidarity movement with the aim of effecting changes in consciousness, policies and actions at a national and international level. PSC campaigns against the Israeli state's repression of the Palestinian people and encourages a British government policy of supporting justice and human rights — ending the arms trade with Israel and pressing for Israel to abide by international law, to end its illegal occupation, and to allow the return of refugees.

PSC was founded in 1982 and has grown to become the foremost British-based campaign for solidarity with the Palestinian people, with over 3000 members, 40 branches and many affiliated organisations, including 18 national trade unions. PSC represents people in Britain from all backgrounds, political parties and regions, who have come together to work for justice for the Palestinian people and peace in the Middle East.

PSC supports the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and calls for an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. PSC also advocates for Palestinians' civil, political and human rights, in accordance with international law. PSC believes that the suffering of the Palestinians will not end unless there is a just and lasting resolution of the conflict, and hence supports the Palestinians' legitimate right to resist, by focusing on political campaigning and educational awareness raising. PSC does not implement humanitarian or development projects, important work which is undertaken by charities and other specialised organisations.

PSC is opposed to all forms of racism, including anti-Jewish prejudice.



Campaigning actions

PSC employs a wide range of campaign tactics, seeking to build the broadest based unity in action working in coordination with an extensive network of faith groups, trade unions, campaign groups, political organisations, and other bodies.

Parliamentary lobbying

PSC lobbies the British government on issues related to Palestine and the Palestinians, both on long-standing concerns such as the occupation and the right of return, and on urgent issues, such as military attacks on Palestinian civilians. PSC provides guidance to members and supporters on how to lobby Members of Parliament and puts out requests to lobby on specific issues. PSC also organises an annual lobby of Parliament around the 29th November to mark the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Demonstrations and rallies

PSC organises regular demonstrations and rallies calling for peace and justice for the Palestinians, including our national demonstration, usually held in mid-May, the anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba. We are able to respond quickly to events on the ground in Palestine and, working in partnership with other groups, we organise “urgent action” demonstrations and protests in front of Downing Street, the House of Commons, the Foreign Office and the Israeli Embassy, ranging from a hundred to a few thousand people.



Public meetings

PSC regularly organises public meetings on a variety of issues, both nationally and through our branches. PSC has hosted many important Palestinian and other international figures.

PSC members regularly give talks to a range of audiences across the UK, including campaign organisations, trade unions, universities, colleges and schools. PSC has developed an education pack for use with trade unions, schools, branches and other groups.



Boycott, divestment and sanctions

Israel's policies severely restrict the Palestinian economy. As long as Israel continues to violate international law and agreements, PSC believes that campaigning for specific boycotts is one of the most important tactics in the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. It both helps to raise awareness amongst the British public about the occupation, and sends a message to the Israeli public that we do not condone the actions of the Israeli state.

PSC runs the Boycott Israeli Goods (BIG) campaign, launched in 2001, which includes the management of the BIG website www.bigcampaign.org, and provides information to the general public on the consumer boycott, such as which products to avoid. PSC organises campaigns against specific companies that support the illegal occupation, such as Caterpillar, whose bulldozers are used to destroy Palestinian homes. PSC also supports the BRICUP (British Committee for the Universities of Palestine) campaign for an academic boycott, the medical campaign for a boycott of the Israeli Medical Association, and the many other calls for boycott that have been initiated by other professional and cultural groups in the UK.

As well as running a boycott campaign, PSC calls for sanctions against Israel, including the suspension of trade agreements and an end to the arms trade. We campaign for British companies, organisations and shareholders to divest from businesses supporting Israel's occupation. Civil society organisations such as trade unions, women's institutes, ethical trading groups and co-ops are asked to scrutinise their investments and pension funds, to make sure they are not implicated in supporting Israeli Apartheid. PSC members have played a significant role in the campaign for divestment within the church communities, with positive results.



Call from Palestinian Civil Society for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel until it complies with International Law and Universal Principles of Human Rights

"We, representatives of Palestinian Civil Society, call upon international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. We appeal to you to pressure your representative states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. We also invite conscientious Israelis to support this Call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace."

9 July 2005. Endorsed by the Palestinian political parties, unions, associations, coalitions and organisations representing Palestinian refugees, Palestinians under occupation and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

www.stophthewall.org/downloads/pdf/BDSEnglish.pdf

Cultural events



PSC organises events which celebrate Palestinian culture. Branches around the country regularly host young musicians and dancers from Palestine. Artists who support Palestine perform and sell their work to highlight the situation and to raise funds for the campaign work. We promote showings of films about Palestine and we hold an annual Christmas concert.

PSC stalls



PSC runs stalls at many events at festivals, fairs, cultural events and public meetings. Many branches also run regular — some weekly — stalls in their local town centre or market square. The stalls raise awareness through the sale of Palestinian fair trade goods, PSC merchandise, and through the distribution of PSC publications, including the factsheets. The stalls provide an opportunity for people to talk to PSC members to learn more about the Palestinian issue and the work of PSC, and, as a result, some choose to become active in the campaign.



Effecting changes in consciousness

Website

www.palestinecampaign.org is a comprehensive source of information for both the newcomer and the experienced campaigner. Our website includes the latest news relating to Palestine, advertises events organised by PSC and its partners taking place throughout Britain, and advises on how to get involved in specific campaigns, such as the boycott, media work, trade unions and student action. The website also contains an extensive list of resources on Palestine and links for media, humanitarian, human rights, political and solidarity organisations, cultural sites and places to buy Palestinian goods.

Palestine News

PSC's quarterly magazine provides comment and analysis on the situation in Palestine, reports on the campaign, book reviews, cultural news and updates on branch activities. Palestine News is sold at a wide variety of events and provided free to members.

Other publications

PSC produces a set of factsheets about Palestine and the Palestinians, available free of charge to all interested individuals and organisations. Topics include: "Palestine-Israel: The Basic Facts", "Barrier to a just peace: Israel's colonial settlement policy", "The colonisation and ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem", "Palestinian blood on British hands: Stop Israel's arms trade", and "Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: the non-violent response to Israeli Apartheid and Occupation". The enclosed leaflet provides a full list of current factsheets.

PSC's 48 page booklet "Palestine: the case for justice" provides an informative introduction to the origins of the conflict and to current issues, with up-to-date maps and key quotations.

Media work

PSC produces articles and regular press releases, places advertisements in the national press, and responds to relevant articles in the press, highlighting bias and inaccurate reporting. We frequently make formal complaints to organisations such as the BBC and in 2006 contributed to the BBC Impartiality Review, arguing the case of bias against the Palestinians.

Some of PSC's members have formed a media group, which monitors the press on a daily basis. They issue complaints and comments as individuals, and their letters regularly appear in the national press.



Merchandise

PSC sells a range of items promoting the Palestinian issue which include t-shirts, badges and pins, kaffiyehs, greeting cards, and calendars. PSC also sells CDs, DVDs and books which may be unavailable from other sources. The merchandise's primary purpose is to raise the profile of the campaign, although it does also generate some revenue for PSC.



How PSC works

PSC's executive committee consists of 20 members, plus two members representing the PSC's Trade Union Advisory Body. Other organisations and individuals may be co-opted on to strengthen links or facilitate work.

PSC's head office is located in central London. There are three members of staff, and PSC depends on volunteers to manage specific campaigns, run branches, conduct media work, and help with administration, merchandise sales and fundraising.

Branch activities

PSC has over 40 branches throughout the country. They operate independently of the national body, but work to implement the aims of PSC, winning support locally from activists, trade unionists, faith groups and other organisations. The enclosed leaflet provides a full list of branches. Branch activities include:

- public meetings, including speakers from Palestine
- film showings
- demonstrations, protests and rallies
- media work
- boycott work
- selling fair trade goods and handicrafts from Palestine
- fundraising for the PSC campaign and NGO work in Palestine
- twinning and friendship links with communities in Palestine — ranging from formal municipal twinning arrangements to informal friendship based links. Exchange visits are arranged between members of the respective communities, so that PSC members can witness at first hand life under occupation, and so that Palestinians can raise awareness in the UK. Some branches also support small community projects in the areas where they are twinned.

PSC holds regular branch forum meetings to develop the work of branches and exchange information. Local branches work in coordination with each other to maximise effectiveness and, in some instances such as in the north, have developed networks for doing so.



Working in partnership

Trade unions

18 national trade unions, representing more than 80% of trade union members of the TUC, are affiliated to PSC, and a growing number of trade union branches and regions are affiliating.

Quotes from the motion passed at British Trade Union Conference 2006

“Congress supports:

- the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination;
- the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland;
- the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied territories; and
- the removal of the illegally constructed ‘apartheid wall’.

Congress believes that the achievement of justice for the Palestinians will help bring peace to the Middle East and to the people of Israel.”

“Congress resolves to ask the General Council to: seek to bring about greater cooperation amongst solidarity organisations supporting the rights of the Palestinian people, such as the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and encourage all affiliates to affiliate.”

For the full text visit:

www.palestinecampaign.org/trade_unions.asp



The passing of this policy was a significant achievement, and has further strengthened the links between the trade unions and the PSC. The Palestine Solidarity Campaign Trade Union Advisory Committee, composed of representatives of all the affiliated trade unions, meets on a regular basis, and two members are elected onto the PSC Executive Committee. PSC holds conferences specifically for trade unionists. Several trade unions, with the support of PSC, have built links with Palestinian unions, organised delegations to visit their Palestinian counterparts and invited Palestinian trade unionists to Britain. Many trade unions have passed motions in support of the Palestinians.

See enclosed leaflet for a full list of affiliated national trade unions.

Students

A number of universities and colleges have Palestine societies and solidarity groups, and PSC supports their work by providing speakers, materials, and running conferences and day schools on campaigning.

A growing number of British universities have established formal links with Palestinian universities, and support the Palestinian ‘Right to Education’ campaign.

Palestinian partners

PSC campaigns in solidarity with the Palestinians and for their right to self-determination. We work in partnership with Palestinian organisations in Palestine and in the UK, representing the whole spectrum of Palestinian society, on the social, political and cultural level. We regularly exchange news and information related to the campaign. PSC has organised several delegations to Palestine, and organises speaking tours by key Palestinian figures and cultural activities by Palestinian artists in the UK.

Faith groups

PSC works with faith organisation representing the Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities, including faith-based peace and justice organisations, such as the Amos Trust.

Political organisations



Jeremy Corbyn MP

PSC works closely with Members of Parliament who are members of the All Party Committee on Palestine, two of whom are Patrons of PSC. PSC also has stalls at the Labour Party conference and the Liberal Democrat party conference.

Part of the international solidarity movement

PSC organises and participates in international conferences and participates in the European Coordinating Committee on Palestine (ECCP) every year. We participate in lobbying activities of the European Union. We have played a role in several European Social Conferences.

How to support our work

Join PSC

It is the members of PSC that make the campaign work. They contribute at a national or branch level, or as individuals, by writing letters to their local MP and the press, and raising awareness among their family and friends. An indication of the strength of feeling of the people in Britain, our membership has quadrupled over the last few years. Membership fees are, of course, vital to our work.

Members receive:

- copies of our quarterly magazine, Palestine News
- information about events in Palestine, and activities organised in the UK — by email and/or through regular mailings
- details on how to join the nearest branch
- details on how to join the media group

The enclosed membership form contains membership rates. You may join PSC by either completing and returning the form, by visiting the website www.palestinecampaign.org and paying online, or by calling the office on 0207 700 6192 to pay by credit or debit card.



Donate

PSC's annual budget is approximately £300,000. Without the support of its large volunteer base PSC would be unable to achieve all that it has over the years with these limited resources. PSC's main sources of funding are membership fees, private donations, and fundraising events, such as art exhibitions, sponsored walks and concerts. We also raise modest funds from the sale of merchandise.

We rely on donations, and therefore need your support. There are four ways in which you may make a donation to PSC.



1 Online. Visit www.palestinecampaign.org and click on "donate".

2 Bank transfer.

For donations via a UK bank transfer, please use these details:

Account: 18536409
Sort Code: 60-11-14
Bank: Nat West Bank
490 Holloway Road
London
N7 6HN

For donations via an international transfer, please use these details:

International Account: GB46 NWBK 6011 1418 5364 09
Swift Code: NWBKGB2L
Bank: Nat West Bank
490 Holloway Road
London
N7 6HN

Please contact the PSC office to let us know you have made a donation, and so that we can send you an acknowledgement.

3 By cheque. Please make cheques payable to PSC and send them to Box BM PSA, London, WC1N 3XX. Please indicate that this is a donation.

4 By phone. Call 00 44 (0) 207 700 6192 to make a donation by debit or credit card.

PSC is a company limited by guarantee. For copies of PSC's annual report and accounts please contact our office on 020 7700 6192.



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