

# IJAN

INTERNATIONAL  
JEWISH  
ANTI-ZIONIST  
NETWORK

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Email Bulletin

Canada · Europe · India · Israel · Latin America · Morocco · United Kingdom · United States

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## >> INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

### UN General Assembly President condemns Israeli "Apartheid," Calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions



*UN General Assembly President Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann*

In late November, UN General Assembly President Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, of Nicaragua, accused Israel of "apartheid" and compared Israel's policies to those in apartheid-era South Africa. Father D'Escoto's statement, made on the UN Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, further called for "a campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions" against Israel, urging the UN "to consider following the lead of a new generation of civil society." Not surprisingly, he has already received condemnation for his courage, primarily in the form of accusations of antisemitism.

This is an important historic opportunity to back a demand for the enforcement of the UN declarations in support of Palestine. Though the UN has a horrible track record of not following through on these resolutions, it is an opportunity to support UN leadership in calling for increase pressure and sanctions. Please demonstrate your support for his courageous actions by **signing our petition and encouraging other organizations to send a letter of support directly to Father D'Escoto.**

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*IJAN is a growing international network of Jews whose Jewish identities are not based on Zionism but on a plurality of histories and experiences. We share a commitment to participation in the legacy of struggles against colonization and imperialism. As such, we struggle against Zionism and its manifestation in the State of Israel's historic and ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people and the confiscation of their land.*

www.ijsn.net

## Making connections: Challenging Israeli and North American racism at the Durban Review Conference



Activists at Durban Conference, 2001

In the US and Canada, IJAN is working to build a cross-movement coalition to urge the Obama administration to participate in the Durban Review Conference on Racism, scheduled for April 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland.

This conference is the follow-up to the **United Nations World Conference Against Racism** held in Durban, South Africa in 2001. At the 2001 conference, the NGO forum passed a series of resolutions demanding that former colonial and imperial powers make reparations to the victims of the crime of slavery, in particular people of African descent. In addition, NGOs identified Israel's regime over the Palestinian people as a racist, colonial apartheid regime and recommended its isolation by means of a campaign of boycotts and sanctions. Because of this, the US and Israel stormed out of the conference, labeling it "anti-Semitic." The US, Israel and Canada have since declared their boycott of the 2009 Review Conference, and the Zionist lobby is working hard for European states to join them.

The Obama Administration was brought to power by an unprecedented surge of grassroots organizing among and between oppressed communities. We believe that this Administration has both an opening and an obligation to dedicate US resources and influence to addressing legacies of racism in the US and across the world, including critical dialogue on Israel and Zionism.

The true purpose of the organizing, however, is not to move the Obama Administration, which has shown a very clear allegiance to the Israel Lobby. The purpose is to connect the issues of Palestine with those of grassroots movements for indigenous and immigrant rights and racial justice in the United States. By doing so, it becomes more difficult to exclude the issue of Palestine from an anti-racist platform. It also shows that the Zionist agenda is in contradiction to grassroots struggles in the United States as well as in Palestine and the broader region.

***In the coming weeks, we will release a detailed plan for this campaign, so please stay tuned!***

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## Targeting the Jewish National Fund



"Guns & Bagels" poster by Sara Kershner

IJAN is in the process of developing a campaign with the Palestinian BNC (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign National Committee -- a coalition of 20 organizations) and the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign to target the Jewish National Fund's charitable status in over 50 countries across the globe.

The JNF was created in 1901 for the purposes of colonizing Palestine through the acquisition of land and its management for the purpose of Jewish settlement. It is now granted special privileges and an on-going role in State function, such as their administrative role in the Israeli Land Administration. In turn, the JNF, as a private institution, can hold in trust land and property for the State of Israel, its Jewish population and Jews living outside of Israel and openly discriminates against Palestinian citizens of Israel -- preventing Palestinian leasing of JNF land. Today, 13% of land in '48 (Israel) is controlled directly by the JNF, most of it seized from Palestinians and transferred to the JNF after May 1948. In total, the JNF and Israeli Lands Administration control, through a joint committee, 93% of the land in Israel. It is currently involved in funding settlement projects across the West Bank and in the Negev -- displacing both indigenous Bedouin and Palestinian communities. In addition JNF money is used to finance reservoirs in the West Bank that steals Palestinian water for settler-only use. Internationally, the JNF is active in countries throughout the world and supports a broader network of Zionist institutions and organizations that support the Israeli military and militant Jewish settlements with direct funds.

***Stay tuned for more information on this campaign that will target the charitable status of the JNF and its partner organizations, through boycotts, legal challenges, public education, and other creative direct actions.***

## >> Recent Activities

### Building in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Members of the network in Argentina are helping translate all of our documents into Spanish and working closely with the **Federación de Entidades Argentino Palestinas**. IJAN activists participate regularly in their activities, and the Federación posts our documents on their web site.

## >> Network Updates

### Joining IJAN

In January, 2009, IJAN will invite people to formally express their support for and participation in the network by joining the network. Organizing tools such as listservs and discussion forums will be opened for their use.

Additionally IJAN's work is regularly posted in [Rebelión](#), one of the most important political journals printed in Spanish on the Internet. IJAN activists have also been interviewed on alternative Argentinean radio twice in the last six months.

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## Twin Cities, Minnesota Launch

In the Twin Cities, Minnesota, the IJAN launch was celebrated with an initial press release and video showing of *Ringworm Children*, a documentary highlighting eugenics experiments done by Zionist and US agents on Sephardim children in the 50s.

Additionally, Flo Razowsky interviewed professor and editor Joel Kovel for local radio station KFAI concerning the ideas of Jewish anti-Zionism, Israel as an apartheid State, and Kovel's new book *Overcoming Zionism*.

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## London Launch and Organizing Meeting



L to R: Tahir Swift, Dr. Ghada Karmi, Michael Kalmanovitz, Selma James, Professor Moshé Machover, Dr. Mike Berry, Cristel Amiss, Yael Kahn

On October 2nd, people from many backgrounds met for the press launch of the Founding Charter of the IJAN at the Crossroads Women's Centre in Kentish Town. [Click here for more information about this event, including video of the speakers.](#)

On October 24th, a hundred people came together for a follow-up organizing meeting -- including representatives from the Women's Organization for Political Prisoners, Black Women's Rape Action Project, and Solidarity for an Independent and Unified Iraq. The meeting was to discuss how the Charter could be of use for different sectors; the collective action proposed was a regular protest against the Jewish National Fund while attacking its charitable status. [Click here to read more about the participants and discussion.](#)

The United Kingdom chapter will be partnering with the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Committee in building the international JNF campaign in the region. We are looking to the UK as a possible first site for wide scale action on this campaign and for our first IJAN popular tribunal. [More information on the popular tribunals being discussed can be found here.](#)

Detailed information about supporting the network and ways to participate will be available on the website and from contact people in your region around the turn of the year.

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## Charter Translations

Thanks to the efforts of activists and supportive translators around the world, IJAN's Charter is now available in Arabic, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish! [These translations can be found on our website.](#)

Other documents, such as our petition in support of UN General Assembly President D'Escoto are regularly being translated into French and Spanish.

[Click here to see other translations available.](#)

*To offer your services in translating the Charter, petition, or other network statements into other languages, please contact us at [ijan@ijasn.net](mailto:ijan@ijasn.net).*

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## IJAN is recognized by the UK House of Parliament

In the UK, Early Day Motions (EDMs) are formal motions submitted to the House of Commons. They are used to publicize the views of Members of Parliament (MPs), draw attention to specific campaigns, and demonstrate the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. [Twenty-seven MPs have signed EDM #2332 submitted on 22 October 2008 in support of IJAN:](#)

"That this House welcomes the launch of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN) and its founding Charter which gives voice to the great and growing number of Jewish people worldwide who refuse to allow the Israeli state to act in their name and who condemn Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinian people, including the murder of 64 children in 2008

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## Building in France

The regional organizing in Europe is beginning to spread, with French organizing being the first to take its own national shape. Activists in France have been building relationships with other French Palestine-solidarity organizations that have been publishing the Charter and other IJAN announcements. A French Coordinating Team is currently being developed with seven members, and a base of activists interested in organizing with IJAN is also growing.

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## IJAN Participation in the Bilbao Initiative

**"The Bilbao initiative"**, an assembly of civil society, was called for by the **Palestinian Network of NGOs (PNGO)**, **Ittijah (Union of Arab community based organizations in the State of Israel)**, the **Alternative Information Center (AIC)** and **MEWANDO**. This gathering was intended as 'a space and a process where Palestinians, Europeans and anti-colonial Israeli representatives will share perspectives and debate about the challenges we face when developing an effective coordination tool for practical campaigning in solidarity for Palestine and for a just peace.'

This meeting was held 29-31 October, 2008. The Final Declaration of the meeting of civil society representatives concludes that, from a legal perspective, Israel's regime is a system that uniquely combines apartheid, settler-colonialism and belligerent occupation, and that the State of Israel must be held legally accountable. It named the complicity of the United States and the EU, and the failure of the international community, particularly the United Nations, to recognize and effectively address racism and racial discrimination as a root cause of Israel's systematic and persistent oppression of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the meeting called upon international civil society at large to shoulder the moral and political responsibility of effectively supporting the struggle to end Israel's multifaceted injustice, as was done against apartheid South Africa. **The full text of the Final Declaration can be found here.**

IJAN members participated at this event held in Basque country. Liliane Córdova and Selma James spoke at the conference, and the International JNF Campaign described at the top of this bulletin was presented, adopted and announced here. **More information, including video from the conference, can be found here.**

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## IJAN Participation in Launch of Catalanian BDS Initiative

alone, its apartheid laws, its expropriation of Palestinians' land and resources, its militarism and nuclear weapons, and its trade in arms (the fourth largest in the world); and notes that by speaking out IJAN discredits Israel's attempts to suppress criticism with false accusations of anti-Semitism."

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## Work Groups updates

As requests for support and partnership grow, IJAN is building its capacity to respond through the evolution of work groups. Work groups currently forming include Political Education and Leadership Development (PELD), Communications, and Media.

**PELD** is preparing to post a revised syllabus and is beginning to gather curriculum tools. These materials will be available on the study group portion of the web site in early 2009. They will grow to include on-going revisions and different study syllabi as people evolve them and they develop in different directions. PELD is also working on an "Unlearning Zionism" workshop. This is a workshop for people shifting their relationship to Zionism, people interested in increasing their ability to express their personal commitment to anti-Zionist politics, and people exploring a vision of what becomes possible when we find a different path than the one in which Zionism implicates us.

The **Communications** work group is preparing to respond to requests for letters of support, statements and petitions. This work group will work with those requesting these materials whether inside or outside the network.

The **Media** work group is developing a media plan that includes developing press releases, building relationships with journalists and news sources, and developing our own media.

Other work groups will be developed as needs emerge. ***If you are interested in participating in one of these work groups, please contact us at [ijan@ijsn.net](mailto:ijan@ijsn.net).***



L to R: Victoria Britten, Dr Radi Mahmud Shuaibi, Hazem Jamjoum, Lilane Cordova

IJAN was invited to the launch of the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign in Catalonia, held on 28 November, 2008. The event and the campaign have been organized by an **association of Palestine solidarity organizations**. The event was crowded, including television and newspaper journalists and deputies of the Catalogne Parliament. Liliana Cordova represented the network on a panel entitled "From South Africa to Palestine: stop the apartheid!" Other participants included Victoria Britten, journalist and former associate editor of *The Guardian*, and Hazem Jamjoum from BADIL.

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### **San Francisco Bay Area responds to racist Zionist attacks on Palestinian Students at UC Berkeley**

On November 13, 2008, three Palestinian students at the University of California, Berkeley, were attacked by members of the Zionist Freedom Alliance, an off-campus organization participating in an "Israeli Liberation Week" concert. The administration and media have largely portrayed the incident as a "clash" or "conflict" between two groups of students, rather than addressing it as an assault. More information is available from **IndyBay**, the **Daily Californian** (note: contains strong bias), and **Dina Omar's statement**.

Bay Area members of IJAN wrote **an open letter to support the students who were attacked and to contextualize the violence within the structural violence of Zionism, racism, and colonialism**. It has also signed onto an open letter circulating among Arab-American and Muslim-led organizations condemning the racist attacks and demanding action from the UC Berkeley Administration and community.

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### **IJV and IJAN oppose Canadian support of JNF**

**Independent Jewish Voices (IJV)** in Canada initiated a petition and letter writing campaign opposing the Canada Museum of Civilization allowing the Jewish National Fund to host its annual Negev fundraising dinner on their premises. IJAN Canada participated by sending a letter to the Museum, and is still pursuing a public response. IJAN also promoted the campaign for signatures

## **>> News & Analysis**

### **BNC Position Paper**

The Palestinian BNC has recently written and circulated a strategic position paper entitled "**United Against Apartheid, Colonialism and Occupation: Dignity and Justice for the Palestinian People**." This paper was presented at the Bilbao Initiative, where IJAN added its endorsement (see Recent Activities section). Other endorsers include the landless workers movement (MST) in Brazil, the Spanish solidarity network RESCOP, the European Coordinating Committee of NGOs on Palestine (ECCP), and the National Lawyers Guild and the Green Party in the United States, among others. It is seen as a strategic document for working within and beyond the Durban Review conference.

**[Click here to download the complete paper \(available in English, Arabic, Spanish, and Italian\).](#)**

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### **Gaza**

As predicted by political writers such as Ilan Pappé and Toufic Haddad, Israel's unilaterally designed and implemented disengagement from Gaza prepared the terrain for the current crisis -- one that rings with the threat of annihilation. With Gaza's borders closed on all sides, banks are near collapse, hospitals cannot function, and people are being deprived of electricity, food, and drinking water. IJAN urges all people of conscience to stay informed, inform others, and speak loudly to friends, neighbors, local, state and national politicians, and to demand UN intervention. **[Click here to read IJAN's complete statement on Gaza.](#)**

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### **Analyses in French**

Rudolf Bkouche analyses the history of the "peace process" as an Israeli strategy, and Liliana Córdoba Kaczerginski adds a

and letters internationally. [Click here to read the full text of the IJAN letter.](#)

## Paris Launch

The IJAN launch in Paris, attended by about 50 people, was a round table discussion with seven activists from various organizations. They were asked to share their reactions to the IJAN Charter and to explain how their perspectives on Zionism are expressed in practice. People attending were quite interested and raised many questions to which IJAN members answered. The meeting was closed with a call for joint actions, particularly around BDS.

## >> UPCOMING EVENTS & ORGANIZING IDEAS

### Amsterdam, The Netherlands

An organizing meeting is being planned for Amsterdam in February, 2009. If you are interested in helping organize it, or in attending, please contact [europa@ijsn.net](mailto:europa@ijsn.net).

### Twin Cities, Minnesota

Upcoming events and ideas include: the beginning of an independent Jewish Anti-Zionist study group; holding a radical dialogue with the local Palestinian Islamic community in order to balance the dynamic of "Interfaith dialogues" often organized by Jewish communities as we find these dialogues do not allow space for critical analysis of Zionism or Israel; and organizing events with the intention to 'educate through action', including public actions, to draw attention to the Jewish Anti-Zionist perspective that is alive and growing in the world. We see these plans as continuing to build real relationships across lines and especially within a Palestinian/Jewish Anti-Zionist context.

In the spring of 2009, IJAN in the TC will present a run of *Café Intifada*, *An Intellectual Salon*. *Café Intifada* is a locally written, directed and produced interactive theatre piece that presents Israel's occupation of Palestine like never before, where the audience becomes the occupied and occupiers.

We would like to work toward a strong enough network that we can initiate an international Jewish Anti-Zionist pen pal program in order to get connected with folks in other parts of the world working through a similar lens as ours. In this way, we feel that information and skill sharing can occur, relationships can be built and work strengthened. Plus it's just fun to get mail and exciting to learn of others across the world working on similar issues. To get involved in the Twin Cities area, contact [usa@ijsn.net](mailto:usa@ijsn.net).

comment on the ultra-fanatic racist side of Israel's political map. [Click here to read these articles.](#)

## Leeds Rejects False Definition of Antisemitism

In November, 2008, the Jewish Society at Leeds University attempted to have the union to adopt the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) '[working definition of antisemitism](#)' which states that a manifestation of antisemitism is: "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination (e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor." The Student Palestine Solidarity Group (PSG) at Leeds University led broad organizing against this referendum and won. On December 5, 2008, it was announced that the motion was defeated by approximately 2 to 1.

This face-off at Leeds follows on the tails of adoption of the same definition by the [United Kingdom's National Union of Students in March of 2007](#). We hope this victory represents a growing recognition that the use of false accusations of antisemitism in order to silence critics of Zionism is unacceptable.

## Nobel Prize Winner Calls to Revoke Israel's Membership in the UN

On 20 November, 2008, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mairead Maguire made a public statement that the United Nations should suspend or revoke Israel's membership in response to its ignoring of some 65 UN resolutions over the years.

Maguire won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976 for her work with Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

[Click here to read more from Electronic Intifada.](#)

## Mourning the Tragedy in Mumbai

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## Berlin, Germany

An initial IJAN meeting is being planned for Berlin in April, 2009. Slowly but surely, and with the support of European organizers, Jews in Berlin who share an anti-Zionist politic are finding each other and will come together to think through organizing strategies relevant to the very particular political context in which they will work. To get involved in this work, write [europa@ijsn.net](mailto:europa@ijsn.net).

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## US Organizing Meeting

IJAN activists in the U.S. will gather in Berkeley, California, in early January for a two-day face-to-face meeting to develop strategies and structures for organizing. This time will be used to further develop U.S.-based political education and leadership development work, U.S. contributions and functions in the cultural, spiritual, student, academic and Jews of Arab descent sector networks, and campaign work including participation in the Durban Review and JNF campaigns, and the growing BDS movement. We also hope to lay the ground work for a larger US Jewish anti-Zionist Organizing Convening in late 2009. Fore more information, contact [usa@ijsn.net](mailto:usa@ijsn.net).

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## Video Collaboration: "People Not Places"

Invincible, an anti-Zionist Jewish spoken word artist and musician (who was involved in the early building of IJAN), has released a new album. On the album is a song, "People not Places," that explores the hidden history of colonization in Palestine from the perspective of a young American Jew on a Birthright trip to Israel. She comes to the realization that the myths she learned are not the real story. The song includes guest verses sung by Palestinian hip hop artists such as Suhel from DAM, Abeer aka Sabreena da Witch, and Shadia Mansour. A video is in the works that will splice pieces of the song with interviews. Palestinian people will be interviewed about the Right of Return, activists who are part of grassroots struggles in the United States will be interviewed about the link between their struggles and the Palestinian struggle, and anti-Zionist Jews will be interviewed about their journeys toward critiques of Zionism and Israel, and into solidarity with the Palestinian people.

IJAN has been asked to co-sponsor and co-produce this video. We will be collecting interviews of Jews willing to share their journey from Zionism into anti-Zionism. We will also be involved in the dissemination and screening of the video over Israeli Apartheid Week (March 2-8) and beyond. Please get in touch with us at [usa@ijsn.net](mailto:usa@ijsn.net) if you are interested in participating.

Though IJAN has not issued a statement on the situation in Mumbai, one member wished to share these thoughts:

"Recent events in Mumbai serve as a reminder that such violence continues to be the daily experience of those people whose nations, land and histories have been and continue to be devastated by colonialism, imperialism, and occupation. Such attacks and the losses they incur are tragic. Unfortunately, such attacks are not shocking in light of the history of suffering that they are a reaction against. May we all work for the justice that might stop and then repair the histories of violence that are driving our planet, its people, and all living things to destruction."

**International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network**

Canada :: Europe :: India :: Israel :: Latin America :: Morocco :: United Kingdom :: United States

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