

BUILD A MASS MOVEMENT TO STOP ISRAELI STATE TERROR

- ▶ Stop the Israeli military's missile strikes on Gaza!
- ▶ No more brutal force against Palestinians defending their homes and religious sites!
- ▶ Stop the home evictions of Palestinian families
- ▶ For democratically-organised action and defence committees in Palestinian communities
- ▶ For the immediate withdrawal of the Israeli army from the occupied territories
- ▶ For a mass struggle of the Palestinians, under their own democratic control, to fight for genuine national liberation
- ▶ For workers and communities in Israeli cities to organise against far-right violence and sectarian clashes
- ▶ For independent workers' organisations in Palestine and Israel
- ▶ For an independent, democratic socialist Palestinian state, alongside a democratic socialist Israel, with two capitals in Jerusalem and guaranteed democratic rights for all minorities, as part of the struggle for a socialist Middle East

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STOP THE DESCENT INTO GAZA WAR – AND DIVISIVE CONFLICT IN ISRAELI CITIES

Weeks of repressive, brutal Israeli policing of Palestinian gatherings and protests in East Jerusalem have led to a new round of bloody conflict.

Israeli missiles have slaughtered over 100 Gazans, including many children. The Socialist Party strongly condemns this horrific bombardment, which is causing enormous terror and devastation in the densely populated Gaza strip. The Israeli military is considering a ground invasion too.

Outrage at the Jerusalem events and assault on Gaza led to Palestinian eruptions of protest across the occupied territories and solidarity demonstrations in the wider Middle East and globally.

Palestinian anger also broke out in cities across Israel. Rampages by far-right Jewish activists and sectarian violence in a number of mixed Jewish-Palestinian cities have brought serious dangers, with lynchings, barricades and clashes showing elements of a developing civil war.

In the occupied territories, rage among Palestinians has been high for a long period. As well as brutal repression, they suffer high levels of unemployment, poverty and lack of services – including at present insufficient coronavirus vaccines and other health facilities. None of the pro-capitalist Palestinian-based parties improve their lives in any of these respects, including Fatah and Hamas. The elites in the Arab countries and the so-called ‘international community’ of capitalist powers have also shown their bankruptcy regarding a way forward, time and time again.

Hamas forces and other Palestinian militias have fired over 1,000 rockets

and shells from Gaza towards Israel, with many hitting Israeli towns and cities, killing seven people, two of them Palestinians. These attacks on Israeli civilians show desperation but are not a way forward to achieve liberation from oppression. They draw ordinary Israelis closer to right-wing government ministers who respond with increased brutality against the Palestinians, and with a vastly greater level of weaponry than the Palestinian militias have.

To be successful, Palestinian struggle needs to be based on democratically organised, mass mobilisations – a new intifada.

The crucial question for the Palestinians is how the Israeli regime is going to be defeated. Socialists support their right to resist the Israeli army’s attacks, using armed self-defence when necessary - which should be controlled democratically by their communities. But also they need to aim to divide Israeli society along class lines – winning as many Israeli workers as possible towards supporting a socialist solution for national rights and decent living standards on both sides of the divide.

Palestinian mass protests last month in East Jerusalem succeeded in getting barriers removed next to the old city that were stopping gatherings during Ramadan. More recently they managed to get a racist, provocative, Israeli nationalist march cancelled that had planned to pass through the Arab part of the old city. In addition, protest action led to the postponement of a court case that was expected to ratify evictions of Palestinian families in nearby Sheikh Jarrah.

For the Palestinians in the occupied

territories, an urgent task is the development of democratically-run local committees to organise more actions and defence. Democratic committees, linking up with each other, would be important preliminary steps towards building a mass, independent, working-class led party in the Palestinian areas.

Working-class people in Israel also need to build their own party, independent of capitalist interests. A key factor behind the descent into conflict has been the inability of Israeli prime minister Netanyahu to form a new coalition government after failing to achieve a majority in each of four successive Israeli general elections. His Likud party and allied parties on the right and far right were willing to inflame division to suit their agenda of posing as the strongest defenders of ‘law and order’.

However, security for the Jewish population will not be achieved by policing and military means, nor will it be achieved by looking to any of the many brands of Israeli pro-capitalist politician for another capitalist solution. Israeli Jewish workers, together with the Palestinian residents of Israel who live and work alongside them, will need to build their own party, one that can challenge capitalist interests.

Challenging capitalism will mean politically adopting a socialist programme on both sides of the national divide: For a socialist Palestine alongside a socialist Israel, as part of a socialist confederation of the Middle East.

On that basis it will be possible to lay the basis for bringing the capitalist nightmare of cycles of death and destruction to an end.

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