



التحالف الأوروبي لمناصرة أسرى فلسطين
European Alliance in Defence of Palestinian Detainees

La coalition européenne de soutien aux prisonniers palestiniens
La coalición europea de apoyo a los prisioneros palestinos
Europäische Allianz für die Solidarität mit den Palästinensischen Gefangenen e.V.

Final Statement Issued by the Third Conference of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees.

Brussels 4.6.2016

3rd Conference: European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees Forms a Committee Internationalizing the Cause of Prisoners and Supporting Barghouti's Nomination for Nobel Prize.

Brussels- Midst a huge parliamentary participation from about eighteen European countries along with American and Palestinian parliamentary participation, in addition to the Palestinian Expatriate Department (P.L.O), activists and leaders of Palestinian communities in Europe, representatives of Human Rights Organizations, European specialists in International Law, and local representatives of Palestinian committees and institutions following up the prisoners affairs, the European Alliance for the Defense of Palestinian Prisoners concluded its third conference in Brussels yesterday, Saturday 4th of June. They decided to form a parliamentary committee to support prisoners and consented on the suggestion of MP Qais Abdel-Karim to support nominating Marwan Barghouti for the Nobel Prize.

The Third Conference, held on Saturday morning in the Hall Union of International Associations (UIA) in the Center of Brussels, started with a minute of silence for the souls of the martyrs of the Palestinian revolution and all human rights defenders around the world. The opening session was reserved for the speeches of the organizers and some guests initiated by the General Coordinator of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees **Dr. Khaled Hamad**, who respectively greeted the audience and participants of the conference. He also praised the effort of the Palestinian Embassy and the Palestinian Community in Belgium for the success of the conference.

He then welcomed the parliamentary delegations coming from more than eighteen European and American countries, especially MP Qais Abd al-Karim "Abu Layla", Minister Issa Qaraq head of the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees, the representative of the Palestinian Expatriate Department (P.L.O) Mahmoud Al Zeben, head of the Palestinian Prisoner Society Qadura Fares, executive director of the Center for the Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights "Hurriyat" Helmi Araj, the director of Abu Jihad Center for the Prisoners Movement Affairs Fahd Al Haj, along with Amin Shoman, Issam Baker and Mohammad Bahnaj from the High Follow-up Committee for Prisoner Affairs, and other representatives of human rights organizations and associations.

Khaled Hamad emphasized the insistence of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees to continue its efforts and relations to internationalize the cause of the prisoners and defend them and their

families in all the European and international forums. He concluded his speech by saluting Palestinian struggler MP Khalida Jarrar whose release from the Israeli prisons coincided with the conference sessions.

Later, **George Rishmawi** head of the administrative board of the union of Palestinian communities, institutions, and events in Europe, presented a speech in which he welcomed the participants of the conference, particularly the European MPs, Palestinian MP Qais Abd al-Karim, representatives of Palestinian and European organizations and associations concerned with the prisoners affairs, and the representatives of the Palestinian committees coming from about twenty European countries and he praised their effort in realizing this conference which aims at internationalizing the cause of prisoners.

Nader Elsakka, member of the Palestinian national council, presented the speech of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees. He saluted the prisoners and their solid families including the leader Marwan Al Barghouti, comrade Ahmad Sa'dat, Samer Essawi, Karim Younis, Abdallah and Ibrahim Barghouti, the child Ahmad Manasra and all other brave prisoners.

Elsakka asserted that this third conference was held to confirm the persistence of the Alliance and the expansion of its activities. He also urged the PLO, the Palestinian Authority, organizations, and the national and Islamic parties to intensify their efforts in order to internationalize the cause of the prisoners until they force the Israeli Occupation State to abide by the International Human Rights Law concerning the rights of prisoners, end its violations against the Palestinian prisoners, and the arbitrary administrative detention against the Palestinians.

On his part, the ambassador of Palestine in Belgium, **Abdel Rahim El-Farra**, praised the efforts of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees for internationalizing the cause of prisoners and blessed the third conference of the alliance taking place in the most significant European capital with a wide parliamentary presence. He also emphasized the necessity to combine efforts to defend the prisoners in all the international forums due to the impact of these important initiatives on the European public opinion in favor of our nation's cause and our national legitimate rights.

El-Farra also mentioned the concurrence of this conference with the commemoration of the sixty-eight years of Al Nakba, and forty-nine years of Al Naksa in which Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were occupied. This shows the determination of our nation to continue its struggle for the right to freedom, return, and independence and to build an independent Palestinian State and East Jerusalem as its capital.

After introducing the internationalist progressive struggler **Felicia Langer** through the speech of a German MP (**Frank Huth**), Langer, the Honorary President of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Detainees spoke in details about her experience and her long journey in defending and pleading for the Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli prisons and the suffering and cruel treatment by the Israeli authorities breaching the international human rights law and conventions on the rights of prisoners. Advocate Langer called for greater efforts to expose the occupation practices against the prisoners in order to persecute the perpetrators in international courts. She also urged the European countries to stop treating Israel with double standards especially regarding its obligations to the international law and international resolutions.

In his speech, head of the commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees **Issa Qaraqe'** asked of the international community and human rights organizations to intervene and protect the thousands of prisoners in Israeli prisons endangered by the growing Israeli fascism, Israeli extremism, and the revenge policies taken against all prisoners especially children, arbitrary administrative detention, medical negligence, torture and others.

Mahmoud Al Zeben, director of the European Department in the Palestinian Expatriate Department, spoke on behalf of Tayseer Khaled, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

and the president of the Palestinian Expatriate Department (P.L.O). . In his speech, Khaled praised the continuous efforts of the European Alliance in Defense of the Palestinian Detainees in defending the prisoners in all European and international forums. He also called for launching a wide and continuous political, media, and legal campaign to internationalize the cause of the Palestinian prisoners, specifically, the children, women, and administrative detainees. Moreover, Khaled saluted the Palestinian communities and their active organizations for their role in defending our cause and our national legitimate rights in the western societies.

Tayseer Khaled wished the conference success and asked the European members of parliament to deliver the message of the Palestinian Prisoners' Movement to decision-making positions in their countries so as to exert pressure on Israel as the occupying power, and to force it to respect the International Humanitarian Law and the Fourth Geneva Conventions and its additional protocols in everything that relates to the protection of civilians under occupation and the rights of the Palestinian prisoners.

The Spokeswoman on Human Rights for the Left Party parliamentary group in Germany, **Annette Groth**, draw attention to the EU-ISRAEL Association Agreement which gives preferential treatment to Israeli products on the EU market as well as other privileges. She hinted to the international campaign requesting the suspension of this Association Agreement as article 2 commits all Partners to safeguard Human Rights which are massively violated by the Israeli government and the IDF daily. Annette mentioned that a few years ago the EU Association Agreement with Sri Lanka was suspended because of the massive Human Rights violations by the Sri Lankan government committed against the ethnic minority, the Tamils. This is an example for the success of international campaigns if they are strong. Annette Groth further stressed the outrageous fact of detaining a 12 year old Palestinian Girl, the youngest prisoner worldwide. She said that if such a detention had happened in another country such as Russia, China or Iran, worldwide protest outcry would be on the top of the world media.

The opening session was concluded with a touching speech by liberated prisoner **Mounir Mansour**, head of the Palestinian Prisoners Committee in Occupied Palestine 1948, who spent long years in Israeli prisons. He explained in details the suffering of the Palestinian prisoners of the 48 regions especially the Dean of Prisoners struggler Karim Younis. He also criticized the Israeli racial discrimination policy against the Palestinians restricting and depriving them from their civil and legal rights.

The opening session was followed by four specialized sessions, one for the detention of Palestinian MPs, followed by a session on administrative detention, then on the boycott campaign and the tools for pressuring the Occupying State, while the closing session discussed the agenda and the received recommendations.

MP Qais Abdel-Karim (Abu Layla) inaugurated the specialized sessions with a politically comprehensive and detailed speech about the political Palestinian situation and the Arab struggle. The speech was very well received especially by parliament members as Abu Layla made it clear that the peace process and the Palestinian-Israeli talks have reached a dead end due to Israel's arbitrary actions breaking loose from its obligations. Through this process, Israel has sought to neutralize the opinion of the international community using the negotiations to cover the continuing of settlements and the plans to justify Jerusalem and thus impose a new reality on this land. This dictates a new plan of action on the international community, and the European Union primarily, that is more in line with the principles of human rights and democracy that the international community calls for. They have to take tangible and practical steps in dealing with Israel, an apartheid state that is becoming all the more racist as acknowledged by its own political and military leaders. European countries cannot afford to continue condemning and disapproving Israel's actions as this encourages the occupation to continue with its crimes against the Palestinian people evading its responsibilities and ignoring the international resolutions that call for an end to the last occupation in modern times.

Abu Layla praised the efforts of the European Alliance in Defense of Palestinian Prisoners, the solidarity movements, the international boycott movement, and the friends of Palestine who relentlessly struggle to expose the deeds of the occupation as they rally to defend the Palestinian cause, the cause of our people and their legitimate national rights. He praised every person carrying the cause of our brave prisoners in their hearts, especially the detained children, administrative detainees, and his fellow members of parliament as Israel is the only country in the world that allows the detention of foreign MPs.

In his speech, MP Abu Layla saluted MP Khalida Jarrar who acquired her liberty from the occupation prisons, and suggested that the organizers of the conference adopt the campaign for electing national leader and prisoner Marwan Al-Barghouti for the Nobel Prize; a suggestion well received by most present members of parliament.

Following his speech, all participating MPs presented their speeches focusing on the successful measures to support prisoners and internationalize their cause, and the efforts in urging the European parliaments to adopt their cause and offer them international protection. MPs from almost 18 European and foreign countries were present.

Fernando Magan, Elvira Hernandez/ Spain

Jon Altolagirre/ Basque

De Clair, Mathilde Elbkri, Luc Vacauwenherge, Nada, Philippe Dumoulin, Gwenaelle Grovonius,

Marc. Neive/ Belgium

Nokalaj Villumsen/ Dinmark

Glen Williams/ Great Britanian

Elias Demitriou, Marina Nikolaou/Cyprus

Öcumundur Jonasson/ Iceland

Daniel Sestrajcic/ Sweden

Xristina Kopsini, George Ververis/ Greece

Ivav Ivanov, Starcho Velkov/ Bulgaria

Luis Hernandez/ Cuba

The second session on the agenda was devoted for the Palestinian and European organizations working in human rights and for the affairs of Palestinian detainees. They provided ample details and statistics of the suffering of prisoners along with the racial policies committed against them, and the dramatic circumstances of their livelihood in prisons especially children, women, administrative detainees and sick prisoners.

During this session, **Qadura Fares**, head of the prisoners' society, discussed the reality of prisoners and their numbers in Israeli prisons pointing to the fact that daily arrests have increased while the occupation authorities are weaving lies and fake accusations to arbitrarily condemn anyone they fail to administratively detain otherwise.

In the session concerning the legal situation of prisoners **Helmi Araj**, head of the Center for the Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights "Hurriyat", demonstrated – as an expert in health cases among prisoners – ample details of the suffering of Palestinian prisoners who are exposed to premeditated murder and surveillance by the Israeli Prison Services (IPS). Sick prisoners are medically neglected and critical health cases are increasing in number while the IPS denies them any treatment threatening their lives especially those diagnosed with serious health problems, a fact which makes their near martyrdom possible at any moment as what happened with numerous martyr prisoners.

Several other representatives contributed to the discussion from different institutes and human rights organizations namely **Fahd Abu al-Haj**, head of Abu Jihad Center for the Prisoners Movement Affairs, **Amin Shoman**, **Issam Baker** and **M. Bahnaj** from the High Follow-up Committee for Prisoners Affairs,

Rania Al-Madi from Badil-Center, **Odeh Zubeidi** from Addameer Center, Charlotte Kates from Samidoun Network, **Hamdan Addamiri** from Palestinian community in Belgium, **Hassan Balawi** – Consul of Palestine and many others.

The third session on the agenda was dedicated for discussing the international boycotting of Israeli along with finding means of pressuring it as the Occupying country and urge it to obey the International Law with its treaties and Conventions on Human Rights concerning the cause of Palestinian prisoners. In this respect, several representatives of the civil society, the human rights organizations, boycott campaign representatives, European and American solidarity movements, along with activists from the Palestinian communities provided ample discussions and successful experiences of boycotting campaigns in European and American countries that influenced the public opinion towards the cause of prisoners in particular, and the rights of Palestinians at large.

The conference concluded its agenda in a closing session that tackled the most significant suggestions and ideas that can reinforce the solidarity movement with prisoners and help internationalize their cause and rally for their rights. The following recommendations were approved:

- Form a parliamentary committee of MPs, activists, institutes and human rights organizations to support the prisoners and internationalize their cause.
- Adopt the suggestion of Palestinian MP Qais Abdel-Karim to **support the campaign for electing Prisoner Marwan Barghouti for the Nobel Peace Prize**
- Launch a campaign titled “adopt a prisoner” to support the resistance of prisoners and their families either financially or medically or through any possible means
- Organize parliamentary sessions in the European Union or any local European parliament.
- establish media and cultural workshops concerning the heritage of the prisoner’s movement
- Host the 4th conference for the alliance in La Hague on the 10th of December, 2017, commemorating the International Human Rights Day.

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