



Charities urge UK government to uphold principles of international law and justice in face of US so-called 'Deal of the Century'

(20 May 2019)

Today, the Palestinian people are facing a national emergency and urgently need our support. Since the election of President Trump, the US administration has trailed a proposed settlement to the unresolved core issues between Israel and the Palestinians. The public announcement of the plan, described by President Trump as the 'Deal of the Century', is expected imminently. Indeed since the plan was first proposed, the US has already acted to support and embed a vision of annexation of Palestinian land and perpetual Israeli occupation, heralding the negation of the Palestinian people's fundamental and inalienable rights to self-determination and return under international law.

Over the past two years, the US has begun attempts to erase the status of some five million Palestinian refugees from what is known by Palestinians as the Nakba of 1948, and undermine their basic rights. This includes the sudden withdrawal of its major annual funding of UNRWA, the agency established by the UN General Assembly on 8 December 1949 to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees who lost their homes and livelihoods during the Nakba. In addition, the Trump administration has unilaterally recognised Israel's illegal annexation of East Jerusalem by recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital, moved its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, closed the US consulate in occupied East Jerusalem and the PLO office in Washington, recognised Israel's illegal annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights, and emboldened Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to call for the annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank. Through these measures, the US has sought to institute a radical departure from the international consensus and requirements for any just peace in the region, disenfranchising the Palestinian people of their land and rights, in clear disregard for the international rule of law.

As a coalition of UK-based humanitarian, development, human rights and faith organisations working to support the rights and welfare of the Palestinian people, we are deeply concerned that the basic human rights and civilian protections guaranteed to the Palestinians under international law are now under serious attack, and in grave danger. We call on the UK government, parliamentarians and civil society organisations to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of international law and justice at this critical time and uphold their respective legal and moral duties to defend the individual and collective rights of the Palestinian people, and to raise awareness of this escalating emergency.

Statement endorsed by the following 14 agencies:

ABCD Bethlehem

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)

Christian Aid

Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu)

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel - UK and Ireland (EAPPI UK and Ireland)

Embrace the Middle East

Friends of Birzeit University (Fobzu)

Friends of Nablus and the Surrounding Areas (FONSA)

Interpal

Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR)

Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)

Quakers in Britain

War on Want

Welfare Association