



Palestine Solidarity Alliance
United Against Apartheid Israel



Palestine Solidarity Alliance South Africa

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Passing of struggle stalwart and anti-Apartheid activist comrade Jessie Duarte

As the Palestine Solidarity Alliance, we are deeply saddened at the news of the passing of comrade Yasmin “Jessie” Duarte, who joined the ranks of the Marhoom in the early hours of this Sunday morning. As a Palestine solidarity organization, we join our comrades in South Africa and in Palestine, in mourning the loss of the fierce progressive force for the people which Comrade Duarte was.

At the time of her passing, comrade Jessie was serving as the Deputy Secretary General for the African National Congress (ANC), a party in which she played an essential role in. She worked in tandem with the likes of struggle stalwarts Nelson Mandela, Albertina Sisulu, Reverend Beyers Naudé, and Walter Sisulu. She was instrumental in setting up women’s structures across the country during the liberation struggle, after being recruited by Albertina Sisulu, pushing for women’s rights across South Africa just as she pushed for solidarity with our comrades in Palestine.

Comrade Jessie was as deeply committed to the anti-Apartheid struggle in Palestine as she was in South Africa, being central in pushing South Africa’s ruling party to commit to the cause of the Palestinian people and bolstering solidarity on the ground in South Africa by working with Palestine solidarity organisations. In 2020, while addressing the United Nations, she joined hundreds of organisations and people across the global south in solidarity with Palestine and called for the UN to have a resolution which would investigate Israel’s apartheid and would impose lawful targeted sanctions to end this apartheid, as was done during apartheid in South Africa. She believed that it was important for the UN to consider beyond the historic, political, and religious and see the struggle of the Palestinian people for the human rights issue it is and, on this basis, ensure that the people who reserve the rights to their land, to be free, to choose the system of government which they wish, and to self-determinate do so. She called on the UN to make the right decision and ensure that Apartheid in Israel is ended just as it was in South Africa.

Comrade Jessie radiated warmth and beauty wherever she was. We can only imagine the pain that her loss brings to those who held her dearest. Our hearts go out to her close friends, comrades, and family. As the PSA, we reiterate her call and recommit ourselves in ensuring that the calls made by our comrade and ally are heeded.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Hamba Kahle comrade