



Palestine Solidarity Alliance
United Against Apartheid Israel



Palestine Solidarity Alliance South Africa

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As the Palestine Solidarity Alliance, an affiliate of the South African BDS Coalition, we welcome the SA Rugby decision to withdraw their invitation to Tel Aviv Heat to participate in the Mzansi Challenge. We recognise that this principled decision follows from the campaigning of human rights activists globally and the efforts of the South African BDS Coalition.

In their official statement, SA Rugby states that they withdrew their invitation to the Israeli rugby team in order to “avoid divisions”. We welcome that this is a firm action to preserve the unity of the freedom loving, anti-racist people of our country. We further recognise that this is a firm stand against apartheid Israel, declaring that there can “be normal sport with an abnormal society”. The slogan of SACOS then has the same relevance today as we enhance the struggle against racial discrimination, ethnic cleansing and apartheid, crimes that Israel perpetuates daily and with impunity.

The sports boycott against apartheid Israel has its roots in the then boycott of apartheid South Africa’s “whites only” sports teams. We recall the gallant struggle of the international anti-apartheid movement that called out South Africa for its racist policies, inequality and social division. We agree, Israel’s Apartheid, genocide of the Palestinian people, human rights violations, and war crimes should be separated. We maintain our position, no normal sports in an abnormal society and no normal *with* an abnormal society.

At the height of Apartheid in South Africa, activists called for the separation of Apartheid South Africa sports teams from various sporting tournaments. No normal sports in an abnormal society was the banner under which activists across the globe rallied in order to strengthen the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement against Apartheid South Africa. This movement was successful in isolating South African teams and helped strengthen the movement for more widespread boycotts and disinvestment from Apartheid South Africa.

We remain inspired by the spirit of the people of New Zealand who came out in their numbers to oppose the South Africa Rugby Union tour of New Zealand in 1981, filling the streets surrounding the rugby stadiums and remaining firm on their stance against Apartheid and racism. Many believe sports to be apolitical but we argue the converse. Sports has always been political and has political significance. Taking a knee, wearing armbands, hoisting certain flags after victory are all political statements. As a society, we cannot separate the political from the personal. Living in a post-Apartheid society with the effects of Apartheid still plaguing us, it is evident to us that the personal is political. As the PSA, we remain resolute in our efforts to continue calling for BDS against Apartheid Israel, including sports boycotts. We reaffirm, there can be no normal sports in an abnormal society.

For more information contact

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