



Palestine Solidarity Alliance
United Against Apartheid Israel



Palestine Solidarity Alliance South Africa

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01-05-23

Workers' Day 2023

“Revolt, for you have nothing to lose but your chains and your tents!”
- *George Habash*

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic came an unprecedented time in our history where the world stopped and everything stood at a standstill. During a time of uncertainty, the workers of the world were at the forefront of ensuring that the wheels of our society kept turning. While many had the luxury of staying safely at home during the pandemic, it was our essential workers who put themselves at risk of infection and continued to work so that society keeps functioning. Workers in South Africa and across the globe are the backbone of our society yet are not granted the wage and living conditions they have the right to. From garment workers in Bangladesh to farm workers in South Africa, there is a global trend of coercion, exploitation, and abuse with those holding capital rendering the lives of their workers unbearable while their workers continue to fight for safe working conditions and a livable wage. With the rising cost of living, the majority in South Africa continue to earn less than the government mandated minimum wage of R4067,20; an amount which in itself should be pondered on given the cost of living crisis. Companies with a turnover of millions pay their workers a pittance without being held accountable; the system is such that it protects and favors the exploiters over the exploited.

We experienced first-hand the exploitation of South African workers at the hands of such companies during the 2022 Clover strike which aimed to highlight the grievances of the Clover workers and expose the management of Clover. Workers were retrenched in their thousands after once-beloved South African dairy company Clover was bought over by Israeli-based consortium Milco. Clover workers were subjected to austerity measures which heightened their exploitation at the hands of the Clover executives who took home millions in bonuses that year. Despite strike action and pleas from trade unions to the government to hold Clover accountable, the workers' woes fell on deaf ears. A year has passed and the remaining workers at Clover continue to work under the austerity measures placed on them a year ago with no accountability taken from management. What else can be expected from a company that operates from ethnically cleansed Palestinian land? The decision to allow rogue corporations to buy out South African companies such as Milco despite the opposition of Palestine Solidarity Organisations at the competitions board, demands more sterner regulations that relate to companies human rights track records before we hand over our industries and workers dependent on employment opportunities to them. This experience only further proves to us as inter-connected people of the world that we are inextricably tied to local struggles as well as the struggles of the Palestinians.

Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine and Apartheid regime has made the exploitation of Palestinian workers that much easier. With little to no regulations or laws which safeguard the rights of Palestinian workers, Palestinians suffer from exploitation and abuse all while fighting oppression and Apartheid. The amalgamation of settler-colonialism, occupation, and Apartheid leads to a very low quality of life for Palestinian workers whose daily lives are characterized by Israeli checkpoints and crossings. Workers from Gaza que for hours at the Erez Crossing while Palestinians from the West

Bank queue at Check point 300 where they are granted “permission” to enter into occupied Palestine; a process which starts from 3 o'clock in the morning and which is repeated every evening, every day. Not only are Palestinian workers subjected to check points and crossings but they are also required by Israel’s Apartheid laws to have work permits which forces Palestinians to seek permission from an occupying entity to work on their own land. All of these factors lead to Palestinians being at the mercy of Israel’s occupation forces in order to seek employment or even just go to work every day. The dehumanization of workers waiting in ques amongst barbed wire and AK47s falls on the apathetic eyes and ears of world leaders who continue to normalize relations with the Israeli regime.



Palestinians at Checkpoint 300 (image: Sean Hawkey)

Workers rights are integral to us building a just and equitable society. In order for us to realize our dream of justice and equality for all, we have to ensure that we hold corporations accountable for their mistreatment of their workers. As the Palestine Solidarity Alliance, General Industries Workers Union SA, Socialist Youth Movement, Congress of South African Trade Unions and South African Federation of Trade Unions, we reaffirm our conviction to stand up for workers’ rights, in South Africa and in Palestine. The struggles of workers in South Africa are interconnected with the struggles of workers in Palestine. As a post-apartheid nation, we know too well the pain of the Palestinian workers who continue to resist Israel’s apartheid regime and illegal occupation while still ensuring that their families are provided for. This May Day, we extend our solidarity to our comrades in Palestine and pledge that we will continue to raise our voices against their unjust treatment and will continue to work towards freedom and autonomy for all workers; from Cape to Cairo, South Africa to Palestine we will not rest.

*An injury to one is an injury to all.
- David C. Coates*

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