

International call: Move the "Big Start" of the Giro d'Italia from Israel

We, the undersigned civil society groups committed to universal human rights, sustainable development, freedom of movement, and ethical tourism are alarmed to see world class cycling event Giro d'Italia aiding Israel in its violations of international law and Palestinians' human rights.

Holding the "Big Start" of the 2018 race in Israel will not only cover up Israel's military occupation and racist policies against Palestinians, it will also exacerbate Israel's sense of impunity and encourage it to continue denying the Palestinian people their UN-stipulated rights.

Starting the race in Jerusalem will help cement Israel's unlawful claim of sovereignty over the city. Since it occupied and illegally annexed East Jerusalem over 50 years ago, Israel has worked tirelessly to expand and consolidate its illegal Jewish-only settlements in and around the city.

According to a United Nations Special Rapporteur, the Jerusalem municipality itself, as a matter of policy, is actively carrying out gradual "ethnic cleansing" of Palestinians through home demolitions, forced expulsions and revocation of residency rights. Israel's actions in Jerusalem have been repeatedly condemned as illegal by the UN.

On its web site and official social media channels, Giro d'Italia deceptively portrays occupied East Jerusalem as part of Israel and as its unified capital. No country in the world recognizes any part of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The race stage planned for southern Israel, through the Naqab (Negev) desert, will pass by dozens of Palestinian Bedouin villages Israel refuses to recognize. Israel denies the indigenous Palestinians of these villages, who are Israeli citizens, the most basic of services, including electricity, water, clinics, schools and roads. Many of these villages have been subjected to repeated demolitions by Israel, with one of them, Al-Araqib, demolished over 100 times. In addition, Israel is arbitrarily revoking the citizenship of thousands of Palestinian Bedouins, leaving them stateless, in clear violation of international law.

Giro d'Italia is also working with at least one company active in illegal Israeli settlements. The Israeli production company for the event counts among its clients the Golan Heights Winery, which operates from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights in violation of international law.

The UN Human Rights Council has already warned some 150 Israeli and international companies of the legal consequences of their unlawful involvement in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. All Israeli settlements built on occupied Palestinian -- and Syrian -- land constitute a war crime, according to international law.

We are further concerned at news of Giro d'Italia plans to "celebrate" 70 years since the establishment of the State of Israel at a time when Palestinians will be commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Nakba ("catastrophe"), when approximately 800,000 indigenous Palestinians

were forcibly removed from their homeland, signaling the beginning of Israel's dispossession of Palestinians as a people and its ongoing denial of their human rights that continues today.

Such injustice and oppression run counter to the values and spirit of sports.

We therefore call on RCS MediaGroup, organizers of the Giro d'Italia, to move the start of the race to another country to ensure no involvement in Israeli violations of international law and Palestinian human rights.

We remind RCS MediaGroup, race sponsors and participating teams of the legal consequences and reputational damage stemming from collaborating with Israeli institutions and companies involved in violations of human rights and international law.

We call on cycling teams planning to participate in next year's race to join us in urging RCS MediaGroup to move the race to another country, and, in the event RCS fails to do so, to consider withdrawing from the race to avoid abetting violations of human rights and international law.

Finally, we strongly urge the governments of participating teams to take a public position against Israeli claims of sovereignty over Jerusalem, including East Jerusalem, as its capital and encourage teams, institutions and companies to refrain from providing recognition or assistance to Israeli violations of international law.

Signed:

Noam Chomsky – linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist and historian

Sergio Cofferati – Member of the European Parliament,

John Dugard – jurist and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Palestinian rights,

Richard Falk - professor emeritus of international law and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Palestinian rights

Eleonora Forenza – Member of the European Parliament,

Luisa Morgantini – former vice president of the European Parliament,

Moni Ovadia – actor, writer playwright

Curzio Maltese - Member of the European Parliament

ECCP (European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine), Europe

Palestine Solidarity Styria, Austria

BDS Austria, Austria

Frauen in Schwarz, Austria

Personenkomitee Gaza Muss Leben, Austria
Antiimperialistische Koordination, Austria

Agir pour la Paix, Belgium
Association belgo-palestinienne, Belgium
Appel Pour une Ecole Démocratique, Belgium
BACBI (Belgian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel), Belgium
Comité BDS-ULB, Belgium
FORUM NORD SUD, Belgium
Links Ecologisch Forum, Belgium
M3M - Médecine pour le Tiers Monde, Belgium
MOC Mouvement Ouvrier Chrétien, Belgium
Palestina Solidariteit vzw, Belgium
Plate-forme Charleroi-Palestine, Belgium
Plateforme Watermael-Boitsfort Palestine, Belgium
Union des Progressistes Juifs de Belgium (UPJB), Belgium
Wilde Pedal, Belgium

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, Canada

Acción Colectiva de Objetores y Objektoras de Conciencia, Colombia
BDS Colombia, Colombia
Colectiva Antimilitarista La Tulpa, Colombia
Grupo Libertario Vía Libre, Colombia

Association of Academics for the Respect of International Law in Palestine (AURDIP), France
AFPS - Association France Palestine Solidarité, France
Association pour le tourisme Equitable et Solidaire (ATES), France
BDS France, France
BDS France 66, France
FSGT 93, France
Parti Communiste Français, France
TDS VOYAGE, France
Union Juive Française Pour La Paix, France
Union Syndicale Solidaires, France

BDS Berlin, Germany

Réseau syndical international de solidarité et de luttes (www.laboursolidarity.org), International

Action from Ireland (Afri), Ireland
Gaza Action Ireland, Ireland
Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Ireland
Peace and Neutrality Alliance, Ireland

100 Idee Per La Pace - Siena, Italy
APS Libera Accademia di Roma, Italy
ASD Università Popolare dello Sport, Italy
Ass. Pace per Gerusalemme - Il Trentino e la Palestina onlus, Italy
Associazione Cultura è Libertà una campagna per la Palestina, Italy
Associazione di Amicizia Italo Palestinese Onlus - Firenze, Italy
Associazione per la Pace di Pordenone, Italy
Associazione Ya basta! Êdi bese!, Italy
AssoPacePalestina, Italy
BDS Italy, Italy
BDS Rome, Italy
BDS Sardegna, Italy
Biciclettaro di Malaerba & Natrium, Italy
Centro di Salute Internazionale - Associazione di Promozione Sociale, Italy
CENTRO STUDI SERENO REGIS di Torino, Italy
Comitato BDS Campania, Italy
Comitato pistoiese per la Palestina, Italy
Comunità cristiana di base di San Paolo - Roma, Italy
Commercio Equo e Solidale Coop. Soc. onlus, Italy
Coordinamento Campagna BDS Bologna, Italy
Coordinamento Lombardo per Palestina, Italy
FIOM - CGIL, Italy
Fronte Palestina, Italy
Gazzella Onlus, Italy
La tenda di Amal Onlus, Italy
Libera - Emilia Romagna, Italy
Lorusso Editore, Italy
Lunaria, Italy
Nova jerusalem, Italy
Palestina Rossa, Italy
Partito della Rifondazione Comunista - Piemonte, Italy
Partito della Rifondazione Comunista - Sinistra Europea, Italy
Pax Christi Italy, Italy
Radio vostok, Italy
Rete Radié Resch - Udine group, Italy
Rete Romana di Solidarietà con il Popolo Palestinese, Italy
Rete-ECO (Jews Against the Occupation), Italy
Salaam Ragazzi dell'Olivo Comitato di Trieste, Italy
Salaam Ragazzi dell'Olivo-Milano-Onlus, Italy
Servizio Civile Internazionale, Italy
U.S. Citizens Against War - Florence, Italy
Un ponte per..., Italy
USB - Unione sindacale di base, Italy

Comité pour une Paix Juste au Proche-Orient, Luxembourg

Breed Platform Palestina, Netherlands
Diensten en Onderzoek Centrum Palestina (docP), Netherlands
Internationale Socialisten, Netherlands
Kairos - Sabeel Netherlands Foundation, Netherlands
Palestijnse Gemeenschap PGNL, Netherlands
Palestijse huis, Netherlands
Palestina Komitee Rotterdam (PKR), Netherlands
Palestina Werkgroep Enschede, Netherlands
Stichting Palestina, Netherlands
The Rights Forum, Netherlands
Vrouwen in het Zwart Haarlem, Netherlands
Vrouwen in het Zwart [Women in Black], Netherlands
Craigavon Council of Trade Unions, Northern Ireland

AKULBI Academic and Cultural Boycott of the State of Israel (Norway), Norway
Fellesutvalget for Palestina, Norway
Friends of Sabeel Norway, Norway
The Association of Norwegian NGOs for Palestine, Norway

ICAHD, Palestine/Israel

Edinburgh Action for Palestine, Scotland
Scottish Friends of Palestine, Scotland
Scottish Palestinian Forum, Scotland
Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Scotland

Iniciatíva za spravodlivý mier na Blízkom východe, Slovakia

Gibanje za pravice Palestincev, Slovenia
Society for Human Rights and Supportive Action, Slovenia

BDS South Africa, South Africa
National Coalition for Palestine (NC4P), South Africa

Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía (APDHA), Spain
RESCOP (Red Solidaria Contra la Ocupación de Palestina) and its members: - Spain
Al'Madafa
Anticapitalistas
Asociación Al-Quds de Solidaridad con los Pueblos del Mundo Árabe (Málaga)
Asociación de Amistad Palestina-Granada «Turab»
Asociación Andaluza por la Solidaridad y la Paz – ASPA

Asociación Hispano Palestina Jerusalén (Madrid)
Asociación Palestina Biladi
Asociación Pau Ara y Sempre
Asociación Pro-Derechos Humanos de Andalucía
Asociación ProPalestina del Campo de Gibraltar
Asociación Unadikum
BDS Alacant
BDS Catalunya
BDS Granada
BDS Madrid
BDS País Valencià
Castelló per Palestina
Centro de Estudios Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional (CERAI)
Coalició Prou Complicitat amb Israel
Comité de Solidaridad con la Causa Árabe (Madrid, Asturias)
Comité de Solidaridad con los Pueblos – Interpueblos (Cantabria)
Comunidad Palestina en Canarias
Comunitat Palestina de Catalunya
Comunitat Palestina de València
Coordinadora de apoyo a Palestina (La Rioja)
Ecologistas en Acción (Confederal)
Fundación IEPALA
Fundación Mundubat
Grupo de Cooperación Sevilla Palestina
Hilombé Solidaridad
Izquierda Anticapitalista Revolucionaria (IZAR)
Komite Internazionalistak (Euskal Herria)
MEWANDO (Euskadi)
Movimiento de Jóvenes Palestinos
Mujeres en Zona de Conflicto – M.Z.C.
Mujeres por la Paz – Acción Solidaria con Palestina (Canarias)
Pallasos en Rebeldía
Paz Ahora
Paz con Dignidad
Plataforma de Solidaridad con Palestina (Sevilla)
Plataforma Palestina Ibiza
Plataforma Solidaria con Palestina de Valladolid
Palestina Toma la Calle
Red Judía Antisionista Internacional (IJAN)
Sodepau
Sodepaz
Sodepaz Balamil
Taula per Palestina (Illes Balears)
Unión de Juventudes Comunistas de España (UJCE)

CIG (Confederación Intersindical Galega), Galicia

BDS Zürich, Switzerland

Le Collectif urgence Palestine-Vaud soutient et signe cet appel., Switzerland

Cambridge Palestine Solidarity Campaign, United Kingdom

Chester Friends of Palestine, United Kingdom

Friends of Sabeel UK, United Kingdom

Hackney Green Party, United Kingdom

Jews for Justice for Palestinians, United Kingdom

Kairos Britain, United Kingdom

Palestine Solidarity Campaign, United Kingdom

The Big Ride, United Kingdom

Bay Area Women in Black, United States

Corvallis Palestine Solidarity, United States

Jewish Voice for Peace, United States

Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land, United States

Tennessee Campaign for Palestinian Rights, United States

US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, United States