

Statement on the September 2011

Declaration of Statehood

We, in the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), stand steadfastly against the proposal for Palestinian statehood recognition based on 1967 borders that is to be presented to the United Nations this September by the Palestinian official leadership. We believe and affirm that the statehood declaration only seeks the completion of the normalization process, which began with faulty *peace* agreements. The initiative does not recognize nor address that our people continue to live within a settler colonial regime premised on the ethnic cleansing of our land and subordination and exploitation of our people.

This declaration serves as a mechanism for rescuing the faulty *peace* framework and depoliticizing the struggle for Palestine by removing the struggle from its historical colonial context. The attempts to impose a false peace with the normalizing of the colonial regime has only led us to surrender increasing amounts of our land, the rights of our people, and our aspirations by delegitimizing and marginalizing our people's struggle and deepening the fragmentation and division of our people. This declaration jeopardizes the rights and aspirations of over two-thirds of the Palestinian people who live as refugees in countries of refuge and in exile, to return to their original homes from which they were displaced in the 1948 Nakba (Catastrophe) and subsequently since then. It also jeopardizes the position of the Palestinians residing in the 1948 occupied territories who continue to resist daily against the ethnic cleansing and racial practices from inside the colonial regime. Furthermore, it corroborates and empowers its Palestinian and Arab partners to act as the gatekeepers to the occupation and the colonization of the region within a neo-colonial framework.

The foundation of this process serves as nothing more than to ensure the continuity of negotiations, economic and social normalization, and security cooperation. The state declaration will solidify falsified borders on only a sliver of historic Palestine and still does not address the most fundamental issues: Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, political prisoners, occupation, borders and resource control. We believe such a state declaration will not ensure nor promote justice and freedom for Palestinians, which inherently means there will be no sustainable peace in the region.

Additionally, this state declaration initiative is being presented to the United Nations by a Palestinian leadership that is illegitimate and has not been elected to be in a position of representation of the Palestinian people in its totality through any democratic means by its people. This proposal is a political production designed by them to hide behind their failure to represent the needs and desires of their people. By claiming to fulfill the Palestinian will for self-determination, this leadership is misusing and



exploiting the resistance and sacrifices of the Palestinian people, particularly our brothers and sisters in Gaza, and even hijacking the grassroots international solidarity work, such as Boycott Divestment and Sanctions efforts and the flotilla initiatives. This proposal only serves to squander all efforts made to isolate the colonial regime and hold it accountable.

Whether the proposal for statehood recognition is accepted or not, we call on Palestinians inside our occupied homeland and in countries of refuge and exile to remain committed and convicted to the worthiness of our struggle and inspired by their rights and responsibilities to defend it. We call on the free people of the world and the Palestinian people's allies, to truly practice solidarity with the Palestinian anti-colonial struggle by not taking a position on the state declaration but rather continuing to hold Israel accountable by means of Boycott in all forms economically, academically, and culturally, Divestment and Sanctions.

Until Return and Liberation,

International Central Council

Palestinian Youth Movement