

# THE TEXT WE WROTE AND READ ON THE OCCASION OF THE SOLIDARITY PROTEST WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN TIMISOARA ON 13 JANUARY 2024, IN THE PRESENCE OF PEOPLE FROM THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY, FRIENDS AND COMRADES.



We've been watching in horror, as you all probably have, as in the last 3 months the Israeli military has been indiscriminately bombing Gaza. More than 23.000 have been killed, 10.000 of which were children. Around 300 health care workers. 100 journalists. Newborn babies in incubators have died due to lack of electricity. Entire families have been wiped out in a single bombing. There is no functional hospital left in Northern Gaza. 70% percent of all residential buildings have been leveled. Many education institutions, including the oldest one the University of Gaza, were also bombed.

Even cultural sites. You know, in 2017 the world witnessed how ISIS bulldozed 2000-year old Roman monuments in Palmyra in the Syrian desert. The world reacted calling them barbarians and savages. Now Israel is destroying cultural sites and artifacts that date back thousands of years, and no major news outlet is talking about it.

Israel has dropped everything from white phosphorus to giant 1 ton bombs that leave 12m craters. A UN war crimes investigator has said that the first month of bombardment had seen a density of destruction not seen since the Vietnam war; far surpassing both Iraq wars, for example. Just in the first 6 days as many bombs were dropped on Gaza as the US has dropped on Afghanistan in an entire year. And, as someone said last time, Gaza is a strip of land just 50 by 7 kms. 365 km<sup>2</sup>. That is not even 3 times the size of Timisoara. So the scale and density of the destruction is hard to fathom.

Maybe some of you have watched two days ago as the South African lawyers have made their case in the International Court in Hague, bringing evidence in support of their claim that Israel is doing and planning genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza. Under the Genocide Convention, the attempt to commit genocide is also punishable. So the lawyers have been laying out the arguments

for the fact that the current Israeli government through their statements have been proving a deliberate, premeditated plan for the systematic destruction of the Palestinian people – genocide. The genocide convention adopts a narrow view of genocide, as the physical destruction – in whole or in part – of a group of people.

In international law, however, genocide is sometimes viewed more broadly as the attempt to eliminate a group of people through blocking both the physical and the cultural reproduction of the people. Through this view one can only interpret the acts of the state of Israel throughout the last decades, through deliberate killing of health care workers, journalists, intellectuals, the bombing of factories and power plants, universities and museums, ancient cultural sites, blocking aid, destroying buildings and blocking building materials from entering, etc – one can only interpret this as a prolonged, planned attempt at the genocide of the Palestinian people. There is no way to deny this.

And of course we welcome the court case brought by South-Africa. By the way, no white-majority western state, and almost no EU members of parliament have come out in support of South Africa's case. We support South Africa's process. We've watched it, and have learned things from it. And we hope they will win. But ultimately we're afraid that even the international justice system and the human rights legislation is too part of this western capitalist world-system that has brought us in this situation.

For those of us born after the second half of the 20th century our imaginary is completely taken up by the the nation-state and capitalist world-system. And we forget that the system of states is something imposed on the rest of the world through western colonialism. And in doing so any other kind of imaginary or possibility was erased. Since then most struggles for freedom have

been conceptualized as struggles for a sovereign state. But why should we cling to this worldview? Why should we cling to this idea of western capitalism as a desirable future?

This system we think is built on two principles. First is the production of profit as the main goal of the economy, and the whole of human society is organized so that this goal is maximized. I think it's symptomatic here how at the same time while this destruction is happening in Palestine, the European Commission has voted to uphold the Eastern Mediterranean gas pipeline as a priority project for the EU. The pipeline will transport to the EU gas that is extracted from several places, including from disputed waters off the shore of Gaza. So gas and oil first, then human rights; if possible.

And the other pillar, as Naomi Klein said in a talk some years ago, is some kind of theory of human hierarchy that justifies these configurations of exploitation. A theory of human hierarchy that devalues the lives and culture of black and brown people that live in the Global South. This configuration links all the major crises that we are witnessing. Global migration crisis. Climate change. And the oppression of the Palestinian people. As Naomi Klein says "A culture that places so little value on black and brown lives that it is willing to let human beings disappear beneath the waves, or set themselves on fire in detention centers, will also be willing to let the countries where black and brown people live disappear beneath the waves, or desiccate in the arid heat." And we would add, it would also let people like the Palestinians, be bombed out of existence.

In December we read a news report that the Israeli army, as they raided a hospital outside Gaza city, had crushed people with their bulldozers and had buried people alive. Is this the western civilization, the "way of life", that

both right-wing strongmen like Trump and Orban, and liberal voices within the European Union, want to protect? We've slowly come to understand that the main institution on which this way of life was built, and is continuing to be built each day, is not the ballot box, is not the justice system. But the bulldozer! The bulldozer that crushes the lives of some people to create wellbeing for others. That crushes the lives of people of the Global South to create wellbeing for some in the Global North. That crushes the lives of everyone who is deemed an Other – women, black and brown people, poor working class people, neurodivergent and disabled people, queer people, the Global South.

We refuse to accept such a system in which the well-being of some is built on the suffering of others. We refuse to be part of a cultural tradition that celebrates a system that crushes and buries people alive with bulldozers. Is this system really the best of all worlds? The best system that the human mind can imagine? NO!

## WE CAN DO BETTER.

To be clear, it is more democracy that we are advocating for, not less. We would suggest that we need to look to Kurdish comrades in Northern Syria or indigenous Mexican comrades in Chiapas for how to organize in ways that are radically democratic, egalitarian and that truly works for everyone. And we can achieve this only if all of us, Others in some way or other, unite and stand in solidarity. Because all of us together are most of the world and we have the power to create a better world.

Thank you. That's all we wanted to say.

**FREE FREE PALESTINE!**

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**DE LA RÂU LA MARE, PALESTINA ELIBERARE**