



Thursday, 6 April 2016

Dear CEO Keegan and Lord Mayor Carr,

On behalf of the Global Palestinian Refugee Network, composed of 38 community based Palestinian refugee organizations in Palestine and in exile, BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights expresses its support for the vote of the Dublin City Council to fly the Palestinian flag over Dublin City Hall between the significant dates of 15 May 2017 and 5 June 2017. BADIL commends this gesture of "solidarity with the people of Palestine living under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza, with the Palestinian citizens of Israel denied basic democratic rights and with the over 7 million displaced Palestinians denied the right of return to their homeland". BADIL takes this opportunity to thank the initiators and supporters of this move, which is highly appreciated by our people, especially refugee communities. Tamir, a 13 year old child from Aida refugee camp located in Bethlehem, commented on the move when he heard about it: "Wow... imagine what would happen if all people around the world become like Irish people... We will get our freedom."

As mentioned, the dates between which the flag will be flown are significant as they observe two of the massive displacement campaigns against Palestinians in recent history: 15 May 1948, 'Nakba Day', commemorates the ethnic cleansing of over 750,000 Palestinians and razing of 531 Palestinian villages by Zionist militias between 1947 and 1949 which resulted in the establishment of Israel. 5 June 1967 commemorates the forced displacement of up to 450,000 Palestinians as Israel began its military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Now, over 7.9 million people, 67 percent of the Palestinian population, are considered forcibly displaced persons. 7.25 million of these are registered and non-registered refugees and the rest are considered internally displaced on both sides of the 1949 armistice "Green" Line. All are prohibited from exercising their right to reparations including their right to return protected under international law, and face ongoing displacement and discrimination.

In order to uphold a future where human rights are not only recognized but practically implemented, BADIL encourages Irish municipalities to ground this symbolic gesture in support for the campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, a Palestinian-led solidarity movement. The responsibility of the international community to utilize boycott to achieve social justice and compliance with international law and human rights is enshrined in the UN Charter, multiple international conventions, treaties and UN resolutions. Boycott has become one of the best practices of the international community, including civil society, in terms of dealing with states, corporates and even individuals' violations of human rights.

Given the situation of 'ongoing Nakba' in the context of a belligerent occupation, apartheid, and colonization, acts of international solidarity with Palestinians are of the utmost importance. It is in this spirit that BADIL commends efforts taken in Dublin and calls on the international community to act in accordance with their responsibilities under international law to protect Palestinian human rights and rights accorded to them as protected persons in a situation of armed conflict.

On behalf of the Global Palestinian Refugee Network,
Nidal Alazza,
Director, BADIL

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BADIL | Resource Center
for Residency and Refugee Rights

BADIL has a special consultative status with UN ECOSOC

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