



# GRASSROOTS BLACK LEFT

Labour African, Caribbean and Asian Socialists

## GBL statement on Israel and the Palestinians

May 15 2021

Grassroots Black Left supports the calls from the international community for an immediate ceasefire to the hostilities currently taking place between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory of Gaza, which has faced military bombardment from air, land and sea.

It is an issue of great sadness that more than a hundred Palestinians and eight Israelis have been killed, the latter by rockets fired by troops under the control of Gaza's ruling Hamas party. We deplore the attempted expulsion of Palestinian families from their homes in Israel's Jerusalem district of Sheikh Jarrah and police attacks on Arab citizens in the east of the city at the Al Aqsa mosque and the use of live ammunitions on the streets during Ramadan, which triggered the current dispute.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces three serious corruption charges and has so far been unable to form a new government, has cynically stoked-up division for political gain and that is why he has so far refused to accept the offer from Hamas for a ceasefire. We note, only days ago, he was on the verge of losing power to an opposition coalition supported by two Arab parties, among others.

The UN Security Council, particularly America, which has huge influence on the Israeli government, must do all in its power to bring about an end to the deadly hostilities.

The current crisis should be set against the backdrop of the controversial passage, in 2018, of Netanyahu's "nation state law", which spelled out that only Jews had the right to self-determination in Israel and which stripped Arabic of its official status.

Ultimately, there can be no lasting peace until Israel agrees to reverse its policy of occupation and treats Palestinians equally. We note that Human Rights Watch put out a recent damning report, which compared Israel's treatment of Palestinians to apartheid South Africa.

We applaud Jewish protestors who have stood with the Palestinians and publicly expressed their strong opposition to the Israeli government's treatment of them and we call on Labour leader Keir Starmer to do the same.

**Cllr Hassan Ahmed and Deborah Hobson**

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