

**Annual Report for 2024**

Presented to the Friends of Palestine Tasmania Annual General Meeting, 21 June 2025.

**President’s Report**

The ongoing escalation of genocide by Israel against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the rampant violence and illegal seizure of more land in the West Bank is the context in which this Annual Report is written and the priorities that we have pursued during 2024 and since.

Our later than usual AGM has occurred due to commitments to other activities and events held to highlight the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and increasingly the repression and illegal occupation of the West Bank.

This report covers the main activities over calendar year 2024, the financial year used by FOPT.

FOPT’s aims are to:

* promote appreciation of Palestinian identity, history and culture,
* advocate for peace and justice in Palestine and for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people in a viable and democratic Palestinian state; and
* raise funds to support the charitable needs of Palestinians.

During the year we have engaged in advocacy, education and fund-raising events to promote these aims.

We have worked collaboratively with other groups and organisations in Tasmania and interstate to strengthen the voices speaking up for Palestine.

We have directly organised a number of events and campaigns and have supported and promoted those of other groups.

Some key activities were:

* ***‘Invaders Fear of Memories’.*** Working jointly with Tasmanian Students for Palestine, TUSA, Tasmanian University Muslim Society and Hobart Playback Theatre, to supportBen Rivers’ powerful play which was presented to a capacity crowd at UTAS and later in Launceston. Later in the year, the play was performed in Launceston. Ben’s play has been performed internationally in many countries, so it was a great privilege to have him perform this work in Hobart.
* **Palestinian Film Festival.** Three films were shown at the State Cinema in Hobart. We staffed an information table for each of these well-attended sessions.
* ***Dying to tell the Story - Why Frontline Journalism Has Never Been More Important*.** Peter Greste, Professor of Journalism at Macquarie University and campaigner for journalist freedom spoke at UTAS, presented jointly by FOPT and the Australian Institute of International Affairs (Tasmanian Branch). Our enormous appreciation to Peter for speaking out from frontline experience and to Professor Tim McCormack who spoke on the war crime of targeting journalists.
* **Nakba Commemoration:** The annual Nakba commemoration was held in May to mark the anniversary of the expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland in 1948. We joined with TPAN on the lawns of Parliament House after the regular rally and march. Speakers highlighted the ongoing conflict and violence that has never been resolved since the first Nakba.
* ***How does International Law Judge Israel and Palestine?* AGM with Guest Speaker Chris Sidoti:** human rights lawyer, advocate and Commissioner on the United Nations Human Rights Council’s Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Jordan, Chris spoke from his experience in international law about how we should understand what is happening in Palestine and Gaza today. A deeply informative talk, providing clarity about international law as it applies to Israel and the rights of Palestinians. Bringing people of the calibre of Chris to Tasmania is something that FOPT seeks to do and will continue to provide our members and supporters with speakers who can expand our knowledge and approach to advocacy and education about Palestine.
* ***Disturbing The Peace*: Documentary Film:** FOPT supported a young activist, Tammy Lee whose initiative it was to show this film. The film, about the Israeli- Palestinian conflict focused on the Combatants for Peace, an organisation of former Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters who have renounced violence and advocate for a two-state solution. A great opportunity to bring new people into the conversation and to expand the understanding of today’s conflict with a perspective of peace which brings some Israelis and Palestinians together. Thank you to Tammy for this initiative.
* Foreign Minister, **Penny Wong gave the Plimsoll Address** at the University of Tasmania . The meeting was attended by many supporters and members of FOPT and other groups in Hobart active in advocacy for Palestine, for a ceasefire in Gaza and importantly for the Australian Government to do much more to condemn Israel and demand accountability for its crimes against humanity. A large demonstration against Australia’s failure to act in relation to Israel’s ignoring of international law and Australia’s ongoing support for Israel even as war crimes are committed.
* **Run For Palestine.** The annual Run for Palestine was held around Salamanca Place and was well attended. Funds raised were donated to APHEDA (Union Aid Abroad) which provides support to Gaza and is one of their main appeals, It works with Palestinian organisations providing access to water, food, hygiene kits and humanitarian aid to Gaza and Lebanon**.**
* **Art Exhibition.** Our longstanding committee member Shiraza held an exhibition of her art work and plants, raising substantial funds for Palestine. Thank you Shiraza.

**AROUND TASMANIA**

***CYGNET FOR PALESTINE COLLECTIVE***

2024 saw considerable activity, energy and commitment by the Cygnet for Palestine Collective and community. Spearheaded by Robert and Fiona Alcock and well supported by their community a full program was held in Cygnet. FOPT were proud to support all their following initiatives**:**

**FEBRUARY**

Two events – Film evening and Tasmanian actor, Robert, sharing his experience as a volunteer unarmed civilian peacekeeper with EAPPI in the occupied Palestinian Territories. Robert recounted his experiences of the Israeli occupation and displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank.

**MAY**

Palestinian Film Event – Israelism (with Regina Weiss, War Crimes Prosecutor), followed by short films, and the delightful Wajib.

**DECEMBER**

*FALASTIN* - people, culture, sumud

A successful fundraiser, also supported by Amnesty, with pictures, short films, music, book readings, activities, traditional food highlighting the beauty and life of Palestinians certainly pre-October but showing the traditions and beauty, resilience that remains despite the catastrophe of 1948 and ongoing.

*LIVE PERFORMANCE* of Oud music from Gaza. Majdi &amp; Seraj- FOPT provided financial support to bring the artists from interstate to Tasmania for this event.

**NORTHERN TASMANIA** was well represented by our committee liaison person in Launceston, Tom Leydon. Tom works closely with local supporters and other community groups in Launceston and the NW coast, initiating and supporting events advocating for Palestine. This includes supporting a presentation from Robert and his EAPPI colleague Lyn, at UTAS (which was strongly opposed by a mainland Zionist group) and organising the **WALK For Gaza in Penguin,** an initiative to highlight the very small size of Gaza in kilometres and the plight of the 2.2 million people in this area of land under bombardment and displacement. Tom also provides a regular newsletter to supporters in the north and north west of the State, highlighting events and actions that can be taken including involvement in weekly rallies.

**Other Activities included:**

* We are active members of APAN, Australian Palestine Advocacy Network.
* Regular letter writing to media on Gaza and Palestine and to members of Federal Parliament urging them to take action on Gaza
* Social Media: Facebook, Instagram and website
* Kufiyah sales – imported from only remaining weavers in west bank
* Representations to the TMAG Board and management regarding the soon to be established Holocaust Education and Information Centre. Members have been seeking clarification on the focus of the Centre, concerned that the definition of genocide used seems to exclude Palestine and other countries and minority groups who have experienced genocide since World War 11. This issue remains unresolved given the responses to date. The Museum is set to open in November 2025.
* Contacting the State Government of Tasmania requesting that the colours of Palestine be lit up on the Tasman Bridge after the large number of deaths of Palestinians occurred following October 7th attack which resulted in the bridge being lit in in Israeli colours. Of course this didn’t happen but we did make the point and we since understand that this has caused a rethink about singling out specific countries in the future. Let us see!
* Regular promotion in public places of pro-Palestinian events, including the Palestine Film Festival, and the talk by Peter Greste. The State Library deemed these events inappropriate which we objected to.
* Regular Newsletters to members and supporters providing information about events on what is happening locally, nationally and internationally and promoting campaigns such as BDS.
* FOPT Committee members attended a number of on-line discussions with guest speakers organised by national organisations
* Members and supporters continue to provide strong support at the regular rallies in Hobart and Launceston. These provides valuable opportunities to join with others, promote the work of FOPT, recruit new members and supporters, but most importantly to keep the genocide of Gaza in the public domain by showing solidarity with local Palestinians and to support the work and activism of TPAN and Launceston for Palestine who organise and manage the rallies and other activities.

Thank you to all the Committee members, members, volunteers and other supporters of Friends of Palestine Tasmania for your encouragement, involvement and support of our activities and your generosity in donations. In difficult times, knowing that our presence is valued by those committed to justice for Palestinians keeps us going.

Peta Fitzgibbon

President

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FriendsofPalestinetasmania.org

**Treasurer’s Report – 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024**

**INCOME**

**Donations:**

General - $1512.81

AGM - $107.00

Nakba – 236.00

**Membership** - $680.00

**Events:**

Art Exhibition - $1275.00

Falastin Exhibition - $2347.00

Run for Palestine - $1876.51

**Kufiya Sales** - $310.00

**TOTAL - $8344.32**

**EXPENDITURE**

**Memberships:**

APAN - $200.00

Multicultural Council of Tasmania - $30.00

**Administration:** Annual Return - $71.20, Website hosting – 286.31

**AGM**

Refreshments - $70.00

Guest Speaker travel and accommodation - $383.56

**Event Expenses:**

Invaders’ Fear of Memories - $189.00

Ecumenical Accompaniment speaker: Launceston and Cygnet expenses - $400.00

Peter Greste Public Meeting:

Refreshments and guest speaker travel and accommodation - $467.49

Run for Palestine:

Refreshments - $89.45, Police Permit - $48.62

**Fundraising Activities:**

APHEDA donation - $2000.00

Falastin Exhibition donation - $1972.00

Nakba Income Share to TPAN - $118.00

Thank you gift - $65.00

Kufiya Purchase - $877.55

**TOTAL - $7268.18**

CARRIED FORWARD - $2186.76

**BALANCE - $3262.90**