

Dear Ambassador,

We write today to express our outrage at the French government's threats and actions to dissolve the Collectif Palestine Vaincra and other pro-Palestinian associations. This is a direct attack on freedom of expression and association that directly undermines fundamental obligations of France under the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The French Interior Minister does not allege that the Collectif has done anything that is unlawful, written or spoken anything hateful, or otherwise undermined or threatened public safety. On the contrary, the Collectif Palestine Vaincra is accused of thought crimes only: supporting the boycott of Israel – in line with the call of the Palestinian people and their civil society, opposing Zionism as a racist ideology, supporting the right of Palestinians to resist (a right upheld by UN resolutions and international law), and calling for the freedom of political prisoners, both in France and in Palestine.

The actions of the French government against the Collectif Palestine Vaincra are, in reality, an attack on fundamental Palestinian rights. Palestinians are living under apartheid, colonialism and occupation, and struggling for freedom. France continues to be complicit in Israel's ongoing war crimes and ethnic cleansing directed against the Palestinian people. It continues to engage in economic, military and diplomatic alliances with the Israeli regime while attempting to conflate opposition to Israel and Zionism with anti-Semitism. In reality, the Palestinian movement is an anti-apartheid, anti-racist movement, and the Collectif Palestine Vaincra is an internationally renowned and respected organization with clear anti-racist, anti-colonialist principles.

France's prior attacks on freedom of expression and association were struck down at the European Court of Human Rights. The ECHR clearly held that France's criminalization of the boycott of Israel violated the European Convention on Human Rights. Rather than reconsidering its position, however, and ceasing to prosecute people engaged in public political activity and expression in support of Palestinian rights, the French government has only escalated its assaults on fundamental rights.

Now, the French government is threatening to dissolve, essentially prohibit, organizations like the Collectif Palestine Vaincra, who have organized dozens of demonstrations, tables, and activities, all of which have been entirely orderly, simply because it wants to silence and suppress the political advocacy and expression of Palestinian rights.

In the meantime, millions of Palestinian refugees are being denied their right to return home. Israeli policies of colonialism and ethnic cleansing are escalating in Jerusalem and throughout occupied Palestine, endangering even French citizens like lawyer and human rights defender Salah Hamouri. Millions of Palestinians live under siege in Gaza and millions more under military occupation. The news brings nearly daily tales of another Palestinian shot dead by Israeli occupation forces. In the Naqab, Bedouins are struggling to defend their land and lives against aggressive colonialism and land confiscation. Rather than taking a stand against these

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actions of the Israeli regime that endanger Palestinian lives on a daily basis, France is seeking to silence – at the penalty of criminalization or even imprisonment – those of its citizens who speak up for justice and against apartheid and war crimes.

We urge the French government to step back from this dangerously authoritarian action and instead respect fundamental rights – in France and in Palestine. The Collectif Palestine Vaincra is loved and respected by people in Palestine and around the world for their clear anti-racist principles, creative advocacy and principled stand for justice for Palestine and freedom for political prisoners. It should not – and must not – be dissolved.

Sincerely,

Alkarama (Movimiento de Mujeres Palestinas)

Alyudur (Movimiento de Jóvenes Palestinos)

Samidoun (Red de defensa de presas y presos políticos)

IJAN (Red Internacional de Judíos Antisionistas)

Unadikum Asociación

Masar Badil (Ruta Alternativa Palestina)

Anticapitalists (Partido)

Colectivo Plaza de los pueblos

Los yayo flautas

Colectivo Palestina libre de Murcia

Comité de Solidaridad con los Pueblos Interpueblos-Cantabria

PRUNE (Partido Renacimiento y Unión de Europa)

UMDF (Union Musulmaine Démocratique Française)

Colectivo Nueva Semilla

Junts (Association Catalana de Jueus i Palestins)

Asociación de Mujeres Emprendedoras Brasil España

Comité de Luta Popular da Espanha

Collectiu Intifada

Lucha Internacionalista UIT-CI

Asociación Al Quds Andalucía de Solidaridad con los Pueblos del Mundo Árabe (Málaga, España)

Asociación Intercultural Saladillo, de Algeciras

BDS Almería(Boicot, Desinversiones y Sanciones al Estado de Israel)

