



SOUTH AFRICAN
WOMEN IN DIALOGUE



INTERVENTION AT THE AU 37TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY

REGARDING PALESTINE

On the occasion of the African Union (AU) 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held on 14-15 February, and the subsequent 37th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly on 17-18 February 2024—wherein a report on the situation in Palestine was considered—we, a unified body of activists, mediators, peace practitioners, and feminist organizations committed to the principles of human security and the establishment of a feminist Just Peace throughout Africa, particularly advocate for a just resolution in Palestine. It is with a sense of urgency and a deep commitment to justice that we implore the AU Heads of State, the African Women’s Committee on Peace and Development, the AU Special Envoy on Women Peace and Security, and AU Femwise to take decisive action in the following areas:

- 1- **Elevate and Empower Palestinian Women:** Fully support and ensure representation and inclusion of Palestinian women in all facets of peace negotiations presently underway, as well as in subsequent dialogues post-war. Their voices, experiences, and insights are invaluable to crafting lasting peace and should be at the forefront of any negotiation process. In A virtual consultation held by the 3 undersigned organisations on 18 February 2024, Palestinian women expressed their foremost aim which is to end Israel’s impunity and international complicity in order to end the genocide in Gaza and to start dismantling Israel’s regime of apartheid and settler-colonialism.
- 2- **Uphold the African Charter:** African states have a solemn obligation under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights “to eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, Zionism...”. It is imperative that they demonstrate unwavering solidarity with Palestine, refraining from any form of complicity in Israel's genocidal actions. This includes abstaining from arms trades, prohibiting mineral extractions, and refusing labour exports to Israel that directly or indirectly support their oppressive regime. African states must also Impose a two-way military-security embargo on Israel, work to adopt a mandatory arms embargo on it at the UN, and adopt other punitive measures to prevent and suppress its acts of genocide, and end the provision of economic and diplomatic support to it. Impose lawful and proportionate economic sanctions and other countermeasures on Israel, including canceling all free-trade and cooperation agreements, until it fully adheres to its obligations under international law. Take



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immediate action to expel Israel from international fora including the [UNGA](#), [International Olympic Committee](#), FIFA, and others, as apartheid South Africa was. More importantly, African states must act on their responsibility to ensure that corporate entities and institutions in their territory or under their jurisdiction will cease and desist from aiding and abetting Israel's genocide and other crimes under international law, including the crime against humanity of apartheid, against the Palestinian people.

- 3- **Support South Africa's Case before the ICJ:** We call for African states to fully endorse the case initiated by South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including honouring the ICJ's binding rulings issued on 26 January 2024. This legal stance is not only about South Africa's commitment to international law and the protection of human rights but represents a collective African voice against injustice and Zionism.
- 4- **Strengthen the African Human Rights System:** The ongoing AU Reforms process offers a pivotal opportunity to enhance the African Human Rights System, ensuring it has robust accountability mechanisms capable of opposing violations against the Palestinian people. It is crucial that this system is fortified to stand as a beacon of justice and solidarity, reflecting the values and aspirations of the African continent and its people.

We implore the African Union and its member states to heed this call to action, embodying the principles of justice, solidarity, and human rights that are the foundation of our collective identity. Let us stand united in our support for Palestine, demonstrating unwavering commitment to the pursuit of Just Peace and the protection of human dignity.

Submitted by

- South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID)

- Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA).

- Pan African Palestine Solidarity Network (PAPSN)