‘Solidarity and resistance are the way forward’

US activists challenge Trump’s Middle East agenda

Eyewitness

A struggle for dignity
Palestinian prisoners resist oppression and humiliation even inside Israeli jails

News

Students protest corruption in Yemen
Walkouts hit Aden University

365 days without Giulio
Protests across Italy mark the anniversary of the PhD student’s disappearance

Features

Rebellion rocks the Rif
Morocco’s marginalised North shaken by new protest movement, Mehdi Rafiq reports

Inside Egypt’s social crisis
Anger and frustration grow as Sisi’s regime tries to make the poor pay for economic failure
Middle East Solidarity is backed by

Events in the Middle East often dominate the news, but it is the stories of war, sectarian violence and western military intervention which grab the headlines. Middle East Solidarity shows a different side to the region. We report on resistance to repression and imperialism from Morocco to Yemen, covering the strikes and protests which are missed by the mainstream media. We hope to carry the voices and stories of the women and men who are still fighting for bread, freedom and social justice to new audiences. Our practical guides to campaigning and resources for activists aim to build a stronger solidarity movement.

Middle East Solidarity is a joint project of MENA Solidarity Network, Egypt Solidarity Initiative and Bahrain Watch, and is supported by funding from UCU, PCS, NUT and a number of Trades Union Councils and local trade union branches.

You can find out more about our campaigns online here:
www.menasolidaritynetwork.com
www.egyptsolidarityinitiative.org
www.bahrainwatch.org

Editors:
Anne Alexander
Luke G.G. Bhatia
Jad Bouharoun
Alice Finden

Publisher:
Middle East Solidarity Publications, MENA Solidarity Network, Unit 193, 15-17 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9DX
Email: menasolidarity@gmail.com

Designer:
Ben Windsor

Source of Inspiration by Andeel

As cartoonist for independent news website Mada Masr, Andeel has plenty of opportunities to land satirical punches on Egypt’s rulers. In this image Sisi looks up to his new overlord in admiration: “Now that’s what I call a leader!”

Andeel also works with Bassem Youssef, the heart surgeon-turned-satirist who took Egypt by storm after the revolution of 2011. Catch an interview with him and more of his work in Sara Taksler’s new film Tickling Giants.

For more information visit:
www.madamasr.com and www.ticklinggiants.com

About us

Cover story
9 Building the resistance to Trump: US activists speak Middle East Solidarity talks to campaigners from across the US about the growing movement against the new president

Features
11 Inside Egypt’s social crisis Anger and frustration flares into strikes and protests as the Sisi regime imposes subsidy cuts, austerity measures and attacks on workers’ living standards.
17 Rebellion rocks the Rif Mehdi Rahiq analyses the state of Morocco’s social movements after a new upsurge of protest engulfs the impoverished North East of the country.

First person
4 ‘These attacks are war crimes’ The British government has blood on its hands for aiding and abetting the Saudi bombing campaign in Yemen, says Kim Sharif
24 ‘Not my president’ Sumaya Awad considers the growing resistance to Trump

Analysis
14 A struggle for dignity Alberto Torres examines how Palestinian prisoners organise and resist within the walls of Israeli jails
19 Rivals prepare for Raqqa assault Jad Bouharoun analyses the changing balance of forces in Syria

News reports
5 Aden University students walk out over corruption
6 Protests across Italy mark anniversary of Giulio Regeni’s abduction
7 Hundreds of thousands flee Mosul; Activists rally for Sinal Christians
8 Bahrain executions spark fury at British complicity

Campaign reports
16 Anti-semitism claims challenged; BDS movement victory at Manchester University
20 Egypt disappearances in the spotlight
21 Global solidarity for arrested Suez food workers

Campaign guide
22 Solidarity with Egyptian workers; Justice for Giulio Regeni; Stop the executions in Bahrain

Contents
Remarkably, all of these raids are not military targets: the Al-Jawf area and the southern parts of Shabwa', Sana'a area, the capital city. There were also raids in the Na'im district of the capital: 8 children and staff sick, the elderly, children and women. On 24 January there were 24 air raids in the Sana'a area, the capital city. This is advanced modern technology and sophisticated targeting system? These attacks are war crimes' What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade. What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade. What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade.

Kim Sharif, a lawyer and director of Human Rights for Yemen, exposes British complicity in the Saudi-led war. We are going on in Yemen? On 23 January alone there were up to 240 air raids on various parts of the country. These were carried out by a coalition led by the Saudi regime. Its allies in the coalition are Bahrain, Qatar, Emirates, Pakistan, Jordan, Morocco and Egypt: so quite a lot of countries put together. They are trying to force the people of Yemen to accept Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, the man the Saudi regime regards as the legitimate president. On 24 January there were 24 air raids in the Sana’a area, the capital city. ‘These attacks are war crimes’ What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade. What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade. What is worrying for us as a nation, an advanced, civilised, pro-democracy, freedom-loving nation like the UK and the US, is supporting the Saudi regime by supplying it with weapons, logistics and intelligence. Our own personnel are in the war rooms of Riyadh, guiding them and doing everything. It really pains me to see that my country, Britain, today is making billions of dollars of profits in the Middle East, while the Yemeni children are being massacred. Britain is supporting war crimes. These attacks are war crimes. So there's no messing about in the definition of what amounts to a war crime. Why would you target children's burial? Why are you targeting civilians? Why? Because in addition to the illegal air strikes on the country, there is a strictly enforced blockade by the Saudi regime and its allies. So there's not enough food coming in, there's no medicine coming in and people are dying as a result. It is genocide by blockade.
Protests mark ‘365 days without Giulio’

Carloota Mingardi

January 25 marked one year from the disappearance of Giulio Regeni, the Italian PhD candidate from Cambridge University who was researching independent trade unions in Egypt for his doctoral thesis. Giulio’s body was found on 3 February 2016 with signs of torture which human rights groups say resemble methods commonly used by the Egyptian security forces.

Since that date the Italian government has been under massive pressure from Italian civil society and particularly from Amnesty International’s campaign “Truth for Giulio” (Verita per Giulio) to uncover the truth of who was responsible for Giulio’s murder. Late last year that pressure appeared to be lessening: there was little public opposition to the announcement by the government in December of its intention to restore diplomatic relations with the government in Cairo.

But in the campaign for Giulio we faced the risk of appearing to be more concerned with Italians being ill-treated in other countries. So we broadened the range and scope of the campaign to the context of human rights violations in Egypt, and to seriously continue investigating in Giulio’s case.

Rallies were held in twenty-five town squares across Italy with hundreds of people attending each event (reaching 2,000 in Fiumicino, Giulio’s hometown), while the official demonstration was held in Rome.

National television and newspapers took up the lead on the campaign by giving space and voice to Giulio’s family and their legal advisor Alessandra Ballerini. Important figures from academia such as Lucia Sorbara, lecturer in Arab History at Sydney University) also spoke out. In an interview with radio SBS, she reaffirmed the connection between Giulio’s case and the wider systematic violation of human rights happening in Egypt.

Another academic, Elena Cattaneo, emphasized the intrinsic value of research (a field in Italy currently heavily hit by budget cuts), and called on the government not to surrender to “some comfortable truth.”

Overall, the anniversary demonstrations powerfully showed that Giulio Regeni’s case has not only awakened concern with Italians being ill-treated in other countries.

But in the campaign for Giulio we faced the risk of appearing to be more concerned with Italians being ill-treated in other countries. So we broadened the range and scope of the campaign to the context of human rights violations in Egypt. Truth for Giulio meant Truth for the Egyptian disappeared as well, and that was very important.

Guilò’s family was very helpful in this respect because they allowed us to use Giulò’s case to draw attention to the human rights violations of many non-Italians.

We collected 60,000 signatures calling on the Italian government not to send the ambassador back, and we handed them to the Prime Minister’s office on 25 January. We were joined by some political figures including the president of parliament. The campaign is keeping public awareness of the case high.

We will not allow the Italian government to stop putting pressure on the Egyptian authorities.

Turn to page 20 for a full report on the Truth for Giulio campaign in the UK and page 22 for more details on how you can get involved.

Pressure is working

Antonio Marchesi

Experts from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) warned in March that the long-drawn out battle to recapture the northern Iraqi city of Mosul from ISIS had already led to over 200,000 people fleeing their homes.

Hundreds of thousands more could be forced to leave as fighting intensifies, according to the United Nations.

Iraqi forces leading the assault claim that they are liberating the city from ISIS, and there are many reports attesting to the brutality of ISIS’s rule.

But human rights organisations say that the incoming troops are also committing war crimes, sowing the seeds of a new cycle of violence.

Human Rights Watch reported in February that forces belonging to the Iraqi government’s Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF) looted, burned and demolished homes in several villages south west of Mosul.

In the village of Khoiyth 110 buildings were destroyed, while in neighbouring Ashwa it was 140, while Mashaarat al-Jur lost 100 buildings.

“Absent a legitimate military objective, there is no excuse for destroying civilian homes,” said Lama Fakih, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “All the destruction does is to keep civilians from going home.”

Mosul fell to ISIS forces in 2014, and the assault on the city by Iraqi forces and their allies has been in going on since autumn last year.

Incoming troops are also committing war crimes, sowing the seeds of a new cycle of violence.

Iraqi army units, Kurdish peshmerga forces and Iranian-backed Shia’s militias are cooperating in the battle with the support of US-led allies from a coalition of countries allied to the US, including the UK.

Report by Middle East Solidarity news team

Egypt

Activists rally for Sinaï Christians

Opposition parties, civil society groups and hundreds of individual activists have launched a call for solidarity with Christian families forced out of Egypt’s Sinaï governorate by threats and violence from ISIS-affiliated militias.

Hundreds of families from the Christian community in the Sinaï town of Al-Arish fled to Ima’liyya and Port Sa’id in late February and early March, following a spate of murders of Christians by ISIS gunmen.

A statement announcing “the start of a mass campaign of solidarity” was backed by a wide range of parties and movements and gathered 500 signatures from prominent activists.

“The forced displacement of dozens of Christian families from North Sinai, reflects the situation for the local population since the province became a open battleground in the fight between armed sectarian organisations, the army and the police forces.

“The people of Sinaï are the ones paying the price for this war as they have become the target of violations by both sides.”

We affirm that respect for the values of citizenship, the right to belief and respect for human rights are the only way to save all citizens from the influence of armed groups and from the repression of the regime, the statement said.

Sally Tsoma, an activist and well-known psychiatrist, wrote on her Facebook page about how groups and individuals involved in the campaign organised a solidarity convoy to bring donations and practical support to the displaced families.

The activists faced constant harassment from the Egyptian security forces, who attempted to disrupt the solidarity campaign.

Violence between the Egyptian army and security forces and ISIS-affiliated militias has increased sharply in Sinai in recent years.

The Egyptian regime’s military tactics have come under severe criticism by human rights groups. The army demolished thousands of homes near the border with Gaza in 2015, and incidents of arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial execution and torture by the Egyptian military and security forces are common.

Report by Middle East Solidarity news team

Hundreds of thousands flee Mosul

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Bahraini rights campaigners have accused the UK of complicity in the executions of three men convicted after torture and unfair trials.

Dr Agnes Callamard, a UN special rapporteur, tweeted: “Their blood is just as innocent as that of any other victim of human rights violations.”

The British government doesn’t seem to have a problem with human rights abuses so long as the regime accommodates British interests.

Princess Latifa has accused the regime of “metamorphosing” her father into a “dictator. A thief. An oppressor.” in a statement released on Twitter.

The Bahraini regime has been repeatedly condemned for its human rights abuses, but the British government has continued to provide financial and diplomatic support.

The IISS, an independent think tank, has expressed concern about receiving government funding from Bahrain.

The British government has been accused of being complicit in human rights abuses in Bahrain.

The European Union has imposed sanctions on Bahrain for violations of human rights, but the UK has continued to support the regime.

The Bahraini government has been criticized for its use of torture and unfair trials.

The IISS promotes itself as an independent think tank, but the organization is funded by governments, including that of Bahrain.

The IISS is known for its close ties with the Bahraini government and its support for the regime.

The IISS has received £14.9 million from Bahrain since 2013.

Bahrain Watch said: “Any organisation should be concerned about receiving donations from such a large sum from a single donor, but they should be even more concerned when that donor is an autocratic government with such a terrible track record for human rights.”

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the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. The international call for solidarity issued in 2005 has been seized by activists across the globe and since then their activities have made serious inroads in isolating Israel, costing corporations billions of dollars and sending the Israeli state apparatus into panic.

‘Because of this success, however, we’ve seen a global backlash of legislation (with bipartisan support in the US and large financial backing from Israel) and blacklists seeking to slander, curtail and punish BDS organizing and Palestine solidarity activists.

‘We need movements condemning the blacklists, local committees that will defend the right to boycott Israel and most importantly, an undaunted BDS movement that will continue an uncompromising, principled struggle amid repression.’

Defending migrants and refugees lies at the heart of the mass movement against Trump and his government, US activists say.

‘The assault on migrants’ rights by the state has been accompanied by rising levels of prejudice in society. But there is also a serious fightback, Howie Hawkins explains. “Trump’s promises to ban Muslim immigration and deport undocumented immigrants will pose serious problems for Middle Eastern immigrants, even the ones with documentation because of the racial and religious profiling these policies entail.”

‘In response to Trump’s proposed immigration policy, Howie says there are plans to defend “sanctuary cities” that do not enforce national immigration laws and forbid police or municipal employees to inquire about a person’s immigration status. And we are also demanding that the US admit a much higher number of refugees from the wars in the Middle East.

‘Solidarity between Middle Eastern activists and anti-racist activists in the US has been growing over the last few years, Seth Uzman notes. “Palestinian flags, for example, could be seen waving at Ferguson protests in 2014. The next year, 1,000 black activists, intellectuals and artists published a letter in solidarity with the struggle for Palestinian liberation. In 2016, The Movement for Black Lives published a list of demands connected to the struggle against racism in the US to the struggle against US empire abroad. “The next steps are to expand and deepen these movements by building infrastructure for mass mobilization and to include struggles against anti-immigrant racism, struggles for indigenous peoples and to give them all real striking power by integrating the core struggle of labor against capital.”

‘Andrew Pollock of MENA Solidarity Network-US sees an important connection between activism in solidarity with the Arab revolutions and the movements in the US defending refugees and challenging racism and Islamophobia. “Supporters of MENA Revolutions, including especially the one in Syria, were at the core of late 2015/early 2016 rallies in support of refugees and against Islamophobia, so the networking done to build such rallies, and to engage in day-to-day work on those issues, will be useful as anti-Trump actions around each and all of his policies come together.”

‘Continued solidarity with the Syrian Revolution will be “the mark for activists working in solidarity with the Middle East North Africa (MENA) revolutions in 2017” he says. “And Seth Uzman, Trump’s policies over Syria are likely to run up against the contradictions of the rivalry between US and Russian imperialism at a regional level. ‘While the US and Russia were initially at odds over how best to crush the Syrian Revolution, they both seem to have made their peace with Assad and are now committing resources towards removing ISIS as a reactionary challenge to US and Russian imperialism in the region as it sits on Iraqi oil reserves valuable to Russian and US capital.”

‘It remains unclear though how far US and Russian collaboration can extend, given their ultimate competing interests as imperialist powers, Trump’s antagonising of Russia’s ally, Iran and the US alliance with Saudi Arabia, Iran’s rival in the region.”

‘Trump’s policies are not all new, of course. In many respects he inherits and deepens policies from his predecessor, Barack Obama. As Joanne makes clear “We can’t forget the Obama Administration’s proposed nuclear modernisation program – estimated to cost as much as $1 trillion dollars over 30 years, its support for Israel’s horrific 2014 war on Gaza and $38 billion aid pact with Israel in 2016, the increased military presence in Europe and murderous drone warfare.” And Seth agrees: “we can expect a continuation and expansion of US drone and air warfare to extend power and wreak havoc in countries such as Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan. From drones to the deportation of immigrants, Trump will avail himself of the legal infrastructure and machinery Obama built for him.”

‘In terms of what we outside the US can do, Seth is positive that mass solidarity mobilisations such as the international success of the Women’s March and Black Lives Matter organising lend confidence to the corresponding movements in the US.

‘Mass mobilisation must also extend to anti-war organising which needs to do the same job as the US was trying to prevent in Vietnam. Support for Israel’s horrific 2014 war on Gaza and $38 billion aid pact with Israel in 2016, the increased military presence in Europe and murderous drone warfare.” And Seth agrees: “we can expect a continuation and expansion of US drone and air warfare to extend power and wreak havoc in countries such as Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan. From drones to the deportation of immigrants, Trump will avail himself of the legal infrastructure and machinery Obama built for him.”

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‘The winners will be the rich and the losers Egypt’s impoverished majority, despite the fund’s propaganda that the loan will “boost growth and create jobs while protecting vulnerable groups”.

‘Since 2000 the share of Egypt’s wealth held by the richest ten percent has gone up by 20 percent, from 61 percent to 73.9 percent.

‘Between 1999 and 2010 the percentage of Egyptians living below the poverty line jumped from 16.7 percent to over 25 percent.

‘The latest reforms have heaped further misery on families already struggling to survive.

‘Even before the currency devaluation took effect, research by the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights showed that the poor were paying twice as much of their income on the new VAT as the rich.

‘Then came the shock of the November price rises: even according to the government’s own figures the official inflation rate stood at 24.5 in December 2016.

‘The Egyptian economy relies heavily on imports, so halving the Egyptian pound’s value against the dollar has an immediate effect on the prices and availability of goods in the shops and markets. And as Taher Mukhtar explains in a special report below, drugs and medical supplies have also been badly hit by the devaluation.

‘The IMF has also encouraged the government’s attacks on public sector wages and benefits, such as Law 18 of 2015 which caps annual pay increases and reduce their value and prices surged.

‘In November 2016 the Egyptian government devalued the currency in order to meet the conditions of an International Monetary Fund loan. Overnight, wages lost half their value and prices surged.

‘According to information gathered by the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR) over 1,700 protests took place in Egypt during 2016, the vast majority of which raised demands over social, economic or workers’ rights.

‘Groups which took action included residents of local neighbourhoods, manual workers and civil servants, students, drivers, teachers, doctors, nurses, shopkeepers and the unemployed.

‘This resistance remains unorganised at a national level, and the regime’s repression has so far kept a lid on large-scale protests against the IMF deal. However, as Mostafa Bassiony explores in a report on page 12, there are signs that wider initiatives challenging the regime’s determination to make the poor pay for the economic crisis are beginning to find an echo, as political activists and trade unionists unite in a new campaign. “We want to live.”
Infections a year, 80 percent of which are preventable. A lack of sufficient medical supplies is a critical issue, with many patients turning away from public hospitals due to a lack of basic necessities such as medicine. Meanwhile, the costs of medical treatments have escalated, affecting patients' ability to access necessary care.

The government has been criticized for not adequately addressing the crisis, leading to protests and calls for action. Some patients have resorted to crowdfunding to raise funds for medical treatments, highlighting the growing desperation among those affected. The situation is particularly dire in rural areas, where access to healthcare is limited.

Dr Taher Mukhtar, a member of the Pharmacists’ Union, has advocated for more intervention from the government. He has called for an end to the shortage of medicines and a restructuring of the healthcare system to ensure equitable access to treatment.

The government has announced plans to import more medicines and to increase the supply of essential drugs. However, the effectiveness of these measures remains to be seen, as the crisis continues to unfold with demands for more transparency and action.

**Patients die as medical supplies run short**

**Taher Mukhtar**

Taher Mukhtar has been at the forefront of the movement to demand better healthcare for all. He has been imprisoned and has had to go into hiding, but he continues to speak out against the government’s neglect of the healthcare sector.

**We want to live**

**Mostafa Bassiouny**

A prominent activist, Mostafa Bassiouny has been at the forefront of the movement calling for a change in the government’s policies. He has faced multiple arrests and has been repeatedly forced into hiding, but he continues to speak out against the government’s neglect of the healthcare sector.

**Public hospital in Alexandria, March 2012 (Photo: Egyptian Journalists’ Union)**

The image shows a public hospital in Alexandria, highlighting the overcrowded conditions and the lack of medical supplies. The hospital is one of many in the country facing similar challenges.

**Bread and Freedom party**

The Bread and Freedom party has been at the forefront of the movement calling for a change in the government’s policies. It advocates for greater transparency and accountability in the government’s decision-making processes.

**Inside Egypt’s social crisis**

The image features an article from the Egyptian Journalist’s Union, highlighting the growing social crisis in the country. The article calls for greater accountability and transparency in the government’s decision-making processes.

**We will use mechanisms of peaceful pressure as guaranteed by the constitution, such as peaceful protests, conferences, workshops and public campaigns.**

**We expect with the increasingly severe effects of the economic policies of the government in the coming period we will see growing resistance to those policies, especially among workers.**

Ihmad Aiders, speaking on behalf of the founders of the left-wing Rhetorica party, said that the campaign is a necessary step which is long overdue in terms of challenging the state’s policies of increasing poverty which have been in effect for a long time now, culminating in the floating of the Egyptian pound and the ‘agreement with the IMF.’

“The most important aspect of the campaign in my view is that it is not restricted to political parties and movements, but brings in different organisations of a social nature such as trade unions whose members have a basic interest in addressing these economic policies and the repressive measures taken by the state.

“We expect that repression will intensify in the face of increased social demands, as we saw in the case of the public transport workers and Alexandria Shipyard workers, and as we have seen already in the case of democratic demands made by political activists and groups.”

The campaign is open to using all democratic mechanisms and tools to organise,” she went on. “In the Bread and Freedom Party we believe that struggles initiated by the different social groups affected by these policies are the most important route to follow.

“We should be putting pressure on the state to convene the so-called National Council for Wages, which has not met since 2008, to set a 20 percent increase in wages. The campaign has set out clear demands in the interests of the poor and working people.

“This campaign emerges from among workers’ organisations which are ready to play an active role in resisting the dollarization of the Egyptian economy. It is seeking to build a base of resistance in those areas where people and their children are suffering most as a result of those policies: in the factories, neighbourhoods, villages and on the university campuses.

“We will use mechanisms of peaceful pressure as guaranteed by the constitution, such as peaceful protests, conferences, workshops and public campaigns.”
Palestinian prisoners continue the battle against Israeli apartheid even within the jail walls, Alberto Torres reports.

Fayez Sharary, a diaspora Palestinian and a UK citizen, travelled to the West Bank on September 2016 with his family. They travelled to visit relatives and to observe the Muslim celebration of Eid Al-Adha, hoping to have the opportunity to pray at Al-Aqsa mosque: a dream most Palestinians are never provided with the time or opportunity to experience. However, the family were subjected to grief beyond what they could expect from the occupation’s symbolic violence. After hours of interrogation, having strip-searched Laila, Fayez’ wife, and making their 3-year-old daughter do her necessities in a plastic tray, Fayez was arrested by the Shin Bet (Israel’s brutal secret service) and prevented from flying back home. The family has not been seen him until this date. It took two months to know the full situation of Fayez’ case, during a hearing in the Israeli military court surprisingly admitted the latter was forced to sign a confession during three weeks of “pained and prolonged solitary confinement”, psychological pressure, and threats. Fayez was also denied the right to see a lawyer from the date of his arrest on 15 September until 6 October.

Campaigners have been demanding the UK to protect its national citizen and ask for his release as soon as possible. When Middle East Solidarity enquired about Fayez, the Foreign Office stated it could not provide specific details but responded “we are providing consular assistance to a British national who is being detained in Israel, and will remain in contact with local authorities.” One wonders whether this would have been the government’s role had this happened to a white British citizen tortured and imprisoned for four months, perhaps in a different country. Fayez’ case is not uncommon. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reports military court judges are Israeli army officers themselves, detainees are often not informed of the charges against them, and the accused and their lawyers are never provided with the time or information necessary to prepare adequate defences. Confessions are in Hebrew and Palestinians, under pressure, often sign documents they don’t know the contents of. It comes as no surprise that 90.74 percent of prosecutions in Israeli military courts in the Occupied Territories result in conviction, according to Haaretz newspaper.

In the West Bank, civilians living a few kilometres distance from each other are treated under different laws. If you were an Israeli Jew, like the 610,000 illegal settlers living in the West Bank, you are treated by Israel’s civil law. If you are Palestinian, every legal process goes through Israel’s military law. This apartheid goes beyond the courts: it is present in the roads and transport people use, education, healthcare, jobs, and civil and economic rights. No one can explain it better than Hendrik Verwoerd, South Africa’s apartheid architect who said in 1961: “Israel, like South Africa, is an apartheid state”.

One of the most stark apartheid policies of the Israeli state is the illegal policy of administrative detention. It allows the occupation to detain Palestinians for up to six months without the need for a trial or evidence of wrongdoing. These orders can be renewed indefinitely, which means that people see years pass without a trial. Children as young as 11 are detained under this policy, and it is estimated that since 1967, at least 1 in 3 men in the Occupied Territories has been imprisoned at some point in their lives. Potential charges are often for activities that even Israel, at least internationally, has recognised as human rights.

Organising demonstrations, waving flags, being involved in non-violent resistance activities, possessing certain literature, or being member of a political party (often designated terrorist organisations under Israel’s definition) carry the risk of years of imprisonment.

Although Palestinians are transferred far from home to prisons in Israel in violation of the 4th Geneva Convention, are treated under harsh conditions including refusal to a fair trial, solitary confinement, restrictions on family visits, and media and prisoner processes. It would seem that these hardships often reinforce the Palestinian sense of collective struggle. For the struggle, one’s own body by refusing to comply with the prison-structured system of constraint and privation.

And despite the attempts to break them through force feeding and other inhumane methods, such method has brought significant pressure bear and politics new inmates and encourage them to join a faction. These movements help to provide a sense of control and collective struggle within the prison. They help organise daily life, distribute supplies, mediate disputes, negotiate better conditions with jailers, deliver education programmes, and protect loyalists from informers within the prisons.

There is a dialectical interaction between Zionist repression and Palestinian resistance. In response to the ways in which Israel controls and marginalises every aspect of their lives, Palestinians have devised methods to resist Israeli colonial subjugation at every level. The segmentation of the Palestinian people into Palestinians from Israel proper, 1967 Palestinians, and the diaspora can be seen as the first front. This is followed by the division of Gaza, Jerusalem, and the West Bank into separate, besieged zones.

The front third is the individual control of Palestinian towns and cities harassed by a system of checkpoints, roadblocks, walls, illegal settlements, and the military. Resistance to this system of control, physical or violent, is repressed if not through killings through the ultimate restriction of an individual’s freedom: imprisonment at the Israeli jails. Yet this does not end either Palestinian resistance or Zionist repression.

Among Palestinians, prison is often referred to as ‘the other universal university’. Facts organise programmes of teaching with imprisoned teachers and professionals, and all kinds of people who give instructions on traditional Palestinian life, culture and identity, security outside the prison, the history of Palestine and Zionism, literacy, political education, and even teaching Hebrew and English as second language.

In an effort to suppress this kind of resistance and organisation, the Israeli prison authorities encourage mistrust and self-doubt, hoping that humiliation will lead to the shattering of prisoners’ identities. Beatings, sexual harassment, cold water dousing, electric shocks, cigarette burns, solitary confinement, shaving heads, cutting down on food and family visits, medical neglect, and threats of rape of female relatives are used to force Palestinians to become informants or collaborators. And yet in the face of such overwhelming control of people’s psyche and bodies Palestinians still have one last and desperate front of struggle. Hunger strikes exert control over one’s own body by refusing to comply with the prison-structured system of constraint and privation.

Even though Bilal served out his 14.5 years in prison, he continued his non-violent struggle. Even in those instances we would expect him to be the breaker of the struggle of Palestinian prisoners, with the international attention it draws and its victories is at the forefront of Palestine and its struggle. Today, the anti-Colonial Palestinian struggle keeps teaching the world that steadfastness and defiance is possible even when confronting the world’s richest and most advanced powers. In even those instances we would expect him to be the breaker of the struggle of Palestinian prisoners, with the international attention it draws and its victories is at the forefront of Palestine and its struggle. Today, the anti-Colonial Palestinian struggle keeps teaching the world that steadfastness and defiance is possible even when confronting the world’s richest and most advanced powers. It is this struggle in conjunction with international pressure that will lead to the dismantling of Israeli apartheid.

Fayez’ case is not uncommon. The third front is the individual control of Palestinian towns and cities harassed by a system of checkpoints, roadblocks, walls, illegal settlements, and the military. Resistance to this system of control, physical or violent, is repressed if not through killings through the ultimate restriction of an individual’s freedom: imprisonment at the Israeli jails. Yet this does not end either Palestinian resistance or Zionist repression.

A struggle for dignity
Anti-semitism claims won’t silence us, say BDS campaigners

The British government’s ‘adoption’ last year of a definition of anti-semitism proposed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance is being used to justify a new wave of attacks on critics of Israel, according to BDS campaigners.

This has included increased pressure from university management on the organisers of Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) events on several campuses, and in at least one high-profile case, the cancellation of a panel discussion on the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign.

The IHRA ‘working definition’ of anti-semitism includes examples which explicitly connect criticism of the State of Israel with hatred of Jews, such as “claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour”, and “applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation”.

University managers, prompted by increasing pressure from the Tory government to meet the demands of its Prevent ‘counter-terrorism’ programme, appear to be using this definition as an excuse to police Israeli Apartheid Week events.

The University of Central Lancashire cancelled a meeting organised by the university’s Friends of Palestine society for 28 February, claiming that the event “constrained” the government’s definition of anti-semitism. The meeting organisers relocated to nearby Preston, where the event went ahead with an audience of over 60.

In other cases, university managers have increased pressure on IAW organisers and speakers.

Cambridge University’s Friends of Palestine Society said that the University’s administrative body harassed the organisers of a Skype talk by Omar Barghouti, founder of the BDS movement, who is currently banned from travel by Israel. Israeli Apartheid Week at UCL was postponed, while in Exeter the university reportedly cancelled planned events.

At Liverpool University, management demanded one of the speakers at a meeting organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign sign up to the IHRA definition by email in advance of the event.

Professor Michael Lavalette, a long-standing campaigner for BDS, told Middle East Solidarity that in his response to the university’s request he refused to comply, while highlighting his long track-record of anti-racist activity, including challenging and opposing anti-semitism. Officials did not reply to his email and the meeting went ahead as planned.

BDS campaigners across the country have similarly reacted angrily to attempts to claim that opposition to Israel’s occupation and settlement building is by definition anti-semitic. Over 250 academics signed a letter to the Guardian condemning attempts to shut down Israeli Apartheid Week activities. “It is with disbelief that we witness explicit political interference in university affairs in the interests of Israel, under the thin disguise of concern about anti-semitism,” the letter said.

Meanwhile some critics of Israel have been the subject of smear campaigns in the media.

Anthropologist Dr Miriyam Aouragh, a regular speaker at the Oxford Radical Forum, was attacked in a series of articles carried by Cherwell student newspaper in Oxford, accusing her of “anti-semitism ties”.

Dozens of academics signed a joint letter in her defence, noting that allegations of anti-semitism against left-wing critics of Israel were “particularly pernicious at a time when real anti-Semitic crimes are taking place, their perpetrators emboldened by the rise of right-wing nationalism.”

Mehdi Rafiq analyses the challenges facing the protest movement over the killing of fish vendor Mohsen Fikri in Al-Hoceima city last October.

A new movement erupts in Morocco

The protests broke out following the killing of the young fish seller Mohsen Fikri, who was crushed to death in a bin lorry after local officials confiscated his wares and threw them into the back of the lorry.

Moroccans quickly connected Fikri’s terrible death with bigger issues. His killing is a damning indictment of the policies of austerity and the way in which big corporations and the state work together to monopolise fishing and marine industries while unemployment continues to spread among young people.

These were the largest demonstrations to rock the country since the retreat of the 20 February movement of 2011, when protests inspired by the wave of uprisings across the Arab world spread through Morocco demanding political reforms and social justice.

But the new wave of demonstrations did not take place in a vacuum. Morocco has seen several waves of major protest movements against the government’s austerity policies in recent years, such as the struggles of trainee teachers and medical students resisting cuts to their student bursaries, as well as strikes over attacks on pensions.

Yet, by and large these movements have been defensive struggles, which are fragmented rather being part of a broader political movement.

In the Rif region, the movement which erupted last October is now raising more general social demands. Yet at the same time, the movement has become more localised, restricting these demands to the problems of the region itself.

For example, on the evening of 14 January, the “Media and Communications Committee” speaks on behalf of activists in the social movement in the Rif, proposed a set of draft demands focussed on the city of Al Hoceima alone.

The most important of these included bringing to justice all those involved in the killing of Mohsen Fikri, and the publication of the results of the investigation into his killing. Another key point was the call for the cancellation of order 1.58.381 which designates the city of Al Hoceima as a military zone.

The slogan being raised all over the Rif now is ‘No the militarisation of the Rif’.

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The slogan being raised all over the Rif now is ‘No the militarisation of the Rif’.

Activists are also calling for the punishment of those responsible for corruption in the fishing industry, investment in facilities for preserving fish and food manufacturing, as well as support for small farmers in order to make the region agriculturally self-sufficient.

They want to see the creation of a genuine programme to root out unemployment, cuts in the price of basic goods, electricity and water and an end to demands calling for the establishment of a public university for the Rif region and the expansion of the network of educational institutions serving the area.

Likewise, the lack of specialist health services in the region is now being raised by social movement activists, with the Media and Communications Committee calling for the creation of a university hospital and a cancer hospital in the city of Al-Hoceima. Cancer is widespread in the Rif region as a result of the use of poison gases by the Spanish colonial authorities during their suppression of the resistance in the 1920s.

Other demands addressed environmental issues, including the conservation of water resources and improvement of drinking water quality.

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March defends student union

Government attempts to seize control of the National Union of Moroccan Students sparked a campaign of marches and protests by current and former students. The Moroccan government has announced that it intends to confiscate the headquarters of the student union through the takeover of the buildings by the Ministry of Youth and Sport. This follows other attempts by the government to restrict democracy on university campuses at a time when the Moroccan student movement in universities and academic institutions is involved in a bitter battle against neo-liberal policies, austerity, repression and tuition fees, which prevent thousands of children of working class backgrounds from enrolling at university. Large numbers of student activists have also been jailed. To mark the union’s 60th anniversary, demonstrators marched through the capital Rabat on 25 December.

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Jad Bouharoun analyses the changing balance of forces in the war over Syria

A few months after Assad’s armed forces and their allies took East Aleppo, the Syrian situation appears very fluid.

Having lost their last major urban stronghold after months of siege and indiscriminate bombardment, many of the rebel factions have signed a ceasefire and decided to attend peace talks in Astana, Kazakhstan.

These talks are sponsored by Russia, Turkey and Iran, the three main powers which have intervened in the war that dictator Bashar al-Assad launched to reverse his regime from the popular revolution of 2011.

Russia and Iran took the regime’s side from day one, sending financial and military aid to the embattled Syrian army.

Iran sent its own Revolutionary Guards and Lebanese movement Hezbollah to compensate for the Syrian army’s growing manpower shortage, as well as mobilising the Shi’a sectarian militias of its Iraqi allies.

The Russian air force intervened massively and decisively on the regime’s side from September 2015 as Russia sought to prop-up one of its Soviet-era allies and gain a stronger foothold in the Middle East.

Turkey, after years of anti-Assad rhetoric and moderate support to some rebel factions, has reached an understanding with Russia in 2016. In exchange for Erdogan’s silence on the region’s onslaught in Aleppo, Turkish armoured divisions invaded Northern Syria last August along with Free Syrian Army infantry, in an operation dubbed ‘Euphrates Shield’. Officially this operation aims to fight terrorism and ISIS, however a crucial motive for Turkey is to prevent the formation of an autonomous Kurdish enclave in Northern Syria.

The Kurds in turn dominate the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a military coalition formed to fight ISIS and sponsored by none other than Turkey’s NATO ally, the United States.

Tensions escalated sharply between the SDF and the Turkish forces of Euphrates Shield in early March, as the latter, emboldened by its seizure of strategic town al-Bab from ISIS, seeks to drive the Kurds away from Manbij.

The Kurds had themselves seized Manbij from ISIS a few months ago, and they reacted to the Turkish threats by handing over Manbij to the Syrian regime forces.

The fight against ISIS is therefore the field of rivalries between the various forces at work in the Syrian war. The question remains: who will seize ISIS capital Raqqa, in Eastern Syria?

Erdogan is vehemently opposed to any SDF assault on Raqqa, as a victory there would greatly reinforce the Kurds. But his hands are tied and his forces are unable to conduct the assault themselves; to retake Raqqa, the Turkish army would have to go through territories controlled by the Syrian government or the Kurds.

Moreover, the Turkish army’s slow advance on al-Bab showed that it would almost certainly get bogged down in a very long and costly war if it attempted unilaterally to seize Raqqa from ISIS.

The weakened Syrian army is unable and unwilling to lead the assault on Raqqa, while the Russians, having no ground forces of their own in Syria, can use their air force as leverage in any scenario (they have intermittently provided air support for both Turkey and the SDF, in addition to the Syrian regime). The SDF are too dependent on US support to attack Raqqa on their own.

The assault on Raqqa will therefore have to wait for a decision by the Trump administration, and will, like the current assault on Mosul, involve a myriad of international, regional and local actors who will seek to prop up their interests regardless of the cost in human lives.

Rivals prepare for Raqqa assault

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Disappearances in spotlight at campaign launch
Egypt Solidarity

A joint campaign to mark the anniversary of the disappearance, torture and murder of Cambridge PhD student Giulio Regeni, who vanished while doing research on independent trade unions in Cairo kicked off in February this year.

Amnesty International and the lecturers union UCU have organised a series of activities and meetings to push for justice for Giulio and other victims of enforced disappearance in Egypt.

The campaign launched with a panel discussion at Amnesty’s Human Rights Acton Centre in London on 13 March, with Antonio Marchesi, president of Amnesty Italy, Egyptian human rights campaigners and Rob Copeland, UCU’s international policy officer.

Around 60 people joined the meeting, hearing first hand from Egyptian activist Amr Aref, who3s lived under the horrific conditions he endured in detention earlier this year, after being arrested in connection with his role as legal adviser to Giulio Regeni’s family.

The following day, a further 60 people packed into a lecture in organised by the Centre of Governance and Human Rights at the University of Cambridge to hear Antonio Marchesi’s reflections on the massive campaign for Truth for Giulio in his home country of Italy.

Further meetings and events are planned at the LSE in London, Manchester, Warwick and Leeds and Kingston where UCU branches are working with Egypt Solidarity Initiative to organise panel discussions on Giulio’s case and the issue of forced disappearances in Egypt.

UCU branches and Amnesty student groups across the UK will be gathering in a lecture on ‘action cards’ demanding that the Egyptian authorities cooperate with investigations into Giulio’s disappearance, and bring the perpetrators of other cases of forced disappearance and torture to justice.

The cards will be handed into the Egyptian embassy in London later this year.

Campaign MP Daniel Zeichner joined Amnesty campaigners on Human Rights Day in December along with with Alex Mayer MEP and Lewis Herbert, leader of Cambridge City Council.

Zeichner also spoke again at a vigil on 3 February to mark the anniversary of the discovery of Giulio’s body.

Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell and NUS president Malia Bouattia also endorsed the call for justice, signing UCU-Amnesty ‘action cards’ at a national UCU conference on education.

Global solidarity for arrested Suez workers
Egypt Solidarity

After Egyptian security forces stormed the IFFCO oils and soap factory in Suez on 1 January in order to break up a strike over cuts to bonuses, trade unionists in the UK and around the world were quick to react.

Ian Hodson of the BFAWU bakers and food workers union told Egypt Solidarity he was very concerned about the latest attacks on workers’ rights in Egypt.

‘Clearly it is the right of workers to withdraw their labour in pursuit of a fair settlement when an employer refuses to acknowledge a legitimate grievance – it is this right which refuses to acknowledge a legitimate grievance – it is this right which marks the difference between workers and slavery.’

A dozen leading UK trade unionists followed up with a statement on 8 January condemning the latest attacks on workers’ rights in Egypt.

Members of the national executive committee of the UCU university workers’ union, PCS civil servants union and the NUT teachers’ union were joined by BFAWU president Ian Hodson in a protest letter responding to the IFFCO factory in Suez.

The statement also condemned the on-going persecution of the Cairo bus workers’ leaders by the Egyptian authorities, as a number of bus worker activists appeal a two-year jail sentence and a 100,000 LE (£5,000) fine imposed in absentia in relation to a strike in 2014.

The violent attack on the IFFCO workers is only the latest in a spate of arrests aimed at breaking workers’ resistance to the economic crisis.

“We call on Egypt’s military regime to stop the persecution of worker activists and release all those unjustly detained”, the statement said.

Thousands of trade unionists and activists also backed a campaign by the IUF global federation of food, farm and hotel workers’ unions – in solidarity with the IFFCO workers. The IUF general meeting of 4,500 protest emails to the IFFCO director, Shiraz Allana, protesting at the company’s decision to bar the workers from the factory.

Workers arrested in early January have now been released, but they are still facing trial.

The nine members of the union committee and several others have been referred for trial by prosecutors in Suez on charges of incitement to strike and criminal damage against company property.

The violent attack on the IFFCO workers is only the latest in a spate of arrests aimed at breaking workers’ resistance to the economic crisis.

Prices have spiralled out of control since the devaluation of the Egyptian pound in November, while the regime is pushing through more austerity measures attacking public sector jobs, subsidies and welfare.

Turn to pages 11-13 for more background on how social crisis in Egypt has sparked a new wave of workers’ resistance.
Solidarity with IFFCO foodworkers

Workers at the IFFCO edible oils factory in Suez, Egypt are fighting to defend their independent union. When the workers went on strike in a dispute over wages in December, the company filed a police report against 15 workers, including 9 union members. On January 3, police stormed the factory and arrested 13 striking workers. On January 29 the workers were acquitted in a Suez court of ‘inciting’ a strike, but 17, including the union president, vice-president and general secretary are barred from returning to work.

The attack on the IFFCO union follows severe repression against the Cairo bus workers and Alexandria shipyard workers.

What you can do:
Send a message to the company and the president of Egypt here: tinyurl.com/jtvgglb

IFFCO workers on strike in 2013

Executions in Bahrain

On 16 January Bahrain executed three torture victims following authorisation by King Hamad. Sami Mushaima, Ali Al-Singace and Abbas Al-Samea were executed by firing squad. They are the first people executed in Bahrain since July 2010, and the first Bahrainis executed since March 1996.

NGOs like BIRD and Reprieve are working hard to ensure this doesn’t set a precedent in the country, and highlighting cases like Mohammed Ramadan’s who could be next on the list for the death penalty.

Mohammed, a police officer and father of three, was tortured and sentenced to death for attending a pro-democracy protest.

What you can do:
• Call on the UK Government to end its assistance to Bahrain’s death penalty system and take steps to prevent Mohammed Ramadan’s execution here: tinyurl.com/z9qutfg
• Go to the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy to read more on campaigns and actions against the death penalty and other human rights abuses in Bahrain: birdbh.org

Justice for Giulio

The torture and murder of Giulio Regeni, an Italian doctoral student at the University of Cambridge, during a research visit to Cairo, has thrown a spotlight onto the hundreds of cases of forced disappearances and torture in Egypt, stirring thousands of people around the world into taking action by gathering signatures joining demonstrations and calling for justice.

Most recently Amnesty and the University and College Union have held a series of high-profile public meetings at UK universities to highlight the need for Regeni’s killers to be brought to justice.

What you can do:
• Go to amnesty.org.uk/giulio for resources and information

BDS Movement

Ten years since its launch, the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement for Palestinian rights is now strongly supported by major civil society organisations from across the world and has achieved significant impact. However, Israel is now launching a desperate and dangerous fight back. At Israel’s request, governments in the US, UK, France, Canada and elsewhere are introducing anti-democratic legislation and taking other repressive measures to undermine the BDS movement.

Support the #RighttoBoycott and hold Israel to account for its violations of international law.

What you can do:
• For more information go to bdsmovement.net
• Help end British complicity in Israeli prisons through the Stop G4S Campaign here: bdsmovement.net/stop-g4s

What you can do:
• Go to amnestysolidaritynetwork.com
• MENA Solidarity is a network of activists from different unions in the UK engaged in building solidarity for struggle to win social justice and workers’ rights in the Middle East.
We are supported by the UCU, PCS and NUT unions and a number of other trade union regions and branches.

Strike

Supported by the UCU, PCS and NUT unions and a number of other trade union regions and branches.

MENA Solidarity

Bahrain Watch

MENA Solidarity

Bahrain Watch

MENA Solidarity

Bahrain Watch

Egypt Solidarity

Egypt Solidarity

Egypt Solidarity launched on 11 February 2014, the third anniversary of the fall of Mubarak, in order to campaign in defence of democratic rights in Egypt.
There are so many different ways people are resisting Trump, his cabinet, and everyone he emboldens, reports Sumaya Awad

In the hours and days after Trump’s victory, hundreds of thousands poured into the streets, united behind one message; Not My President! By late November the Sanctuary Campus movement, launched by Cosecha, a movement to protect and fight for the rights of undocumented immigrants, was in full swing.

Across the US, from NYC to Portland, Oregon, hundreds of students walked out of class and took over campus squares or student life buildings demanding their administration make their campus a safe space for protest and resistance and a immigration police-free zone.

The Women’s Marches that took place across the country were possibly one of the largest marches in US history. Most of the big figures in the Democratic Party didn’t attend the march. Not only that, but the core of the party has even voted in Trump’s dinosaur cabinet appointees in the senate, which is downright shameful.

Other marches and rallies in response to Trump’s executive orders banning refugees, freezing funds to Planned Parenthood, building border walls were able to mobilize thousands of people within hours. Mobilizations like this must keep happening on a weekly basis. We need to create extensive emergency response networks so we’re ready at a moment’s notice to fill the streets.

One important part of the movement needs to be the inclusion of Palestinian rights in the resistance to Trump. Empowering and mobilizing to spread the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement (BDS), and, with the help of organizations like Palestine Legal and different formations of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) exposing the figures and institutions who malign and harass BDS activists.

The imperial wars the US is waging abroad are directly linked to its actions at home. Protesting low wages, unemployment and lousy healthcare should go hand in hand with resisting war and occupation abroad.

After all, it is US tax dollars that fund the missiles that create refugees, and the cost of those missiles is what leads to high taxes, student debt, and poor health care. To break through the cycle we must resist the racist rhetoric meant to distract us from the real reasons wages are stagnant, poverty levels are skyrocketing, and student debt has reached an all time high.

There are plenty of other ways to connect Trump’s foreign policy to his policy at home. On multiple occasions he’s used the illegal Israel apartheid wall as a model for the US/Mexico border wall. The surveillance of BDS advocates has enabled the surveillance of Muslims in general.

In some instances we’ve seen solidarity between those attacked by the US at home and abroad spur spontaneously. This past December, protesters at Standing Rock sent a message of solidarity to those trapped under Assad’s siege on Aleppo.

We need to resist not only Trump but also the very reason he was able to take power in the first place; the Democrats and Republicans that came before him, the same ones that today are pleading with us to ‘accept’ him and to ‘give him a chance’.

We need to organize ourselves and build solidarity between our various movements. Together, we outnumber the two parties and the one class that is responsible for our current state.

They are weak, divided, and few. The more they try to silence, bribe, or manipulate us, the louder and stronger we will become. Solidarity and resistance are the way forward.

Sumaya Awad is a Palestinian activist based in New York City.