



Letters

A Call for Diplomatic Representation in Israel: October 1, 2009 A General Strike Day

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The High Follow-up Committee for the Arab Citizens of Israel

لجنة المتابعة العليا للجماهير العربية

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A Call for Diplomatic Representation in Israel

We would like to bring to your attention the decision of the High Follow-up Committee for the Arab Citizens of Israel, the National Committee of Local Authorities, all parties, movements and institutions of civil society of the Palestinian minority in Israel, to declare a general strike on October 1, 2009 to mark the 9th anniversary of the Jerusalem and AlAqsa Day (October 2000) when 13 of Palestinian Arab citizens were killed, and their case is still waiting for justice.

This year we decided to commemorate the memory with a strike. The strike is part of the struggle of the Palestinian minority inside Israel for equal rights as we continue to face home demolitions in the Triangle and the Naqab (Negev); changing of the demography through Judaization of the Galilee and the Triangle; an increase in racial incitement; discrimination against our local authorities; new racist laws, such as the new Nakba law; hebraicizing the Arabic names of our towns and villages, with ultimate disregard of the common and historical Arabic name of these places; selling of Palestinian refugees' properties; and an intensification of the intimidation campaigns and distortion of our national consciousness.

As representatives of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel, we want to stress our opposition to racism, incitement and discrimination.... and we want to affirm our desire to live in our homeland in dignity.

With our declaration for a general strike, we want to emphasize our stand against the escalating racism and fascist incitement against our Arab population; we want to defend our existence, our rights and our dignity in our homeland which we have no other. We want to make a stand against the denial of our national and historical rights, while calling for the realization of our national and civil rights, our right to remain steadfast and rooted in the land of our forefathers. We call for an end to the policy of expropriation, privatization of land and demolition of our homes.

We assert our need for fundamental equality for the Palestinian Arab minority and equal allocation for the Arab local authorities. We remain resolute against the arrests and investigation campaign of our young people and the systematic attempts to intimidate them and distort their national identity.

The declaration of the general strike also comes to affirm our position regarding the continuing occupation of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian Territory; in support of the Palestinian national cause, an end to occupation including the siege on the Gaza Strip and the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.

The one day general strike will be highlighted with a main public national march in Arabbeh, which will commence from the Mahmoud Darwish roundabout in Arabbeh (the western roundabout – in the direction of Sakhnin) at two in the afternoon (14:00) towards the municipal market square (Wadi Salameh Road).

We want to take this opportunity to invite you to join us or send a representative and participate in the march. Your presence is of utmost importance; with the current atmosphere of increased racism and the various statements made by government officials, there is a great fear of a repetition of the scenario of October 2000. We want to avoid this situation, but at the same time, it is time to raise our united voice against racism and discrimination. We ask you to join us in making our just cause known, in order to achieve equality, civil and human rights. Our men were killed and we will not relent and will not rest until justice is served and the truth is revealed and those responsible are punished.

With our sincere hope that you will join us in this important event,

Yours respectfully,

Muhammad Zidan

Chairperson
High Follow-up Committee for the Arab Citizens of Israel

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Article covered by Ha'aretz

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<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1117555.html>
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