Palestinian Civil Society Salutes California Dockworkers and Endorses their “Block-the-Boat” BDS Action

Occupy Palestine, 7 October 2014 – The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC), the largest coalition in Palestinian society that leads the global BDS movement for Palestinian rights, warmly salutes the Oakland, California dockworkers and community activists for their inspiring new victory against the Israeli container ship Zim on 27 September 2014.

As widely reported, community and trade union activists demonstrating against the recent Israeli massacre in Gaza have launched a 200-strong fresh picket at the Port of Oakland in California, preventing the Zim Shanghai from unloading its cargo.

Heeding Palestinian civil society’s call from Gaza for intensifying BDS actions against Israel and its complicit companies and institutions, the “Block the Boat” campaign activists gathered at the port to prevent the Zim from offloading. Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU-Local 10) refused to unload the ship, citing “safety fears.”

The 5 September Call from Gaza, issued by the BNC and the main trade and professional unions, women’s associations and mass movements in Gaza, called for:

“Building effective direct action against Israel and Israeli companies, such as the inspiring Block the Boat actions that prevented Israeli ships from unloading in California and Seattle ... .”

Abdulrahman Abunahel, BNC coordinator in Gaza, commented on this fresh victory saying, “This success will further boost the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement’s ability to hold Israel to account for its siege of Gaza and other crimes committed against the Palestinian people.”

“The dockworkers of ILWU-Local 10 and Oakland community activists are showing what effective, principled solidarity looks like. We deeply appreciate their ongoing support for our struggle for freedom, justice and equality,” added Abunahel.

BDS National Committee (BNC)