

samidoun

PALESTINIAN PRISONER SOLIDARITY NETWORK

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network sends our strongest greetings of solidarity and struggle to your important unified meeting and event to build the campaign to free Georges Ibrahim Abdallah. Georges is an international symbol and an imprisoned leader of the Palestinian prisoners' movement, the struggle for the liberation of Palestine and the international workers' struggle.

Georges Abdallah has been imprisoned by the French state for over 34 years. He is currently held in Lannemezan prison. The United States and Israel are partners in his imprisonment; every successive U.S. Secretary of State, from Condoleeza Rice to Hillary Clinton and onward, has demanded that he remain behind bars. There are a number of reasons why all of these imperialist, colonialist, racist and capitalist forces are allied together to keep Georges behind bars, but one is clear in every letter, speech and statement that reaches us from his prison cell: his clarity of vision and his revolutionary purpose that remain undimmed despite three and a half decades of imprisonment.

As an international network, we work to free Palestinian prisoners. We know that the defense of Palestinian prisoners is critical to supporting the victory of the Palestinian revolution. We also know that the leaders of the Palestinian resistance, the people who can shape the future of the liberation struggle, are targeted for imprisonment. From student leaders held without charge or trial in administrative detention to national political leaders like Ahmad Sa'adat and Khalida Jarrar, the Israeli state has sought to isolate the Palestinian movement's leaders through the colonial weapon of imprisonment. Therefore, it is our duty to work to break that isolation and build bridges of solidarity with these imprisoned strugglers and leaders.

We know that the Palestinian people do not face only Israel and Zionism in their struggle for liberation; they are facing complicit, reactionary regimes and the brutal power of imperialism. Therefore, we see that Ahmad Sa'adat was imprisoned by the Palestinian Authority for four years with his comrades before the Israeli attack, and strugglers in the West Bank face threats of arrest and imprisonment through the PA's "security coordination" with Israel.

The imperialist role in the colonization of Palestine is a reality underlined by the imprisonment of Georges Abdallah for nearly 35 years. The French state is playing an active role in perpetuating the colonization of Palestine through its support for the Israeli state - and its imprisonment of Georges.

In addition, it is only in recent months that we have also begun to see forward movement from the Lebanese government to defend the rights of its citizen. For decades, the state has left Georges alone, despite the tireless advocacy of his family, his comrades and the broader Lebanese and Palestinian movement. It is due to this ongoing struggle and tremendous work that we have seen forward motion such as the visit of the Lebanese Ambassador to Georges Abdallah and the commitment of the Lebanese president, Michel Aoun, to raise Georges' case with Emmanuel Macron at their next meeting. It is thus no surprise that we see reports of Macron and the French state delaying this meeting.



Of course, just as the pressure is building in Lebanon, you and others in France are also moving forward. We see contingents joining the "gilets jaunes" marches with the face of Georges Abdallah, and hundreds upon hundreds marching each year in Lannemezan, making clear that Georges will never be isolated despite the iron bars of repression. It is this popular movement that presents real hope and true partnership in resistance and the struggle for liberation.

We always say that Georges Ibrahim Abdallah is a Palestinian prisoner and one of the leaders of the Palestinian prisoners' movement. This is not just a definition related to his nationality, and it does not change because the prison cell in which he is held is French rather than Zionist. We know also that Georges is precious to liberation movements around the world, and that the struggle to free all of our political prisoners forms a strong basis for collective action to confront our common oppressors: from Mumia Abu-Jamal, Mutulu Shakur and the Black Liberation prisoners in U.S. jails, to the strugglers of the Philippines, to the Turkish and Kurdish prisoners behind bars in Turkey, to the political prisoners in Moroccan and Egyptian jails, to all of these revolutionary prisoners around the world.

Together, our struggles are stronger - and we march together for liberation, for Georges, for all political prisoners, for Palestine from the river to the sea and for our world.

We are with you today in struggle and wish you the greatest success.

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network

1 February 2019

samidoun.net