

# 60 YEARS OF PALESTINIAN DISPOSSESSION... NO REASON TO CELEBRATE "ISRAEL AT 60" !

“ Even after fifty years of living the Palestinian exile I still find myself astonished at the lengths to which official Israel and its supporters will go to suppress the fact that a half century has gone by without Israeli restitution, recognition, or acknowledgment of Palestinian human rights and without, as the facts undoubtedly show, connecting that suspension of rights to Israel's official policies. ... the Palestinian Nakba is characterized as a semi-fictional event ... caused by no one in particular. ”

*Edward Said, commenting on the "Israel at 50" celebrations in the US in 1998*

**T**he creation of the state of Israel almost 60 years ago dispossessed and uprooted hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes and lands. With their peaceful lives ruined, society fragmented, possessions pillaged and hope for freedom and nationhood dashed, Palestinian refugees held on to their dream of return, and Palestinians everywhere nourished their aspiration for freedom, dignified living, and becoming whole again.

There is no reason to celebrate! Israel at 60 is a state that is still denying Palestinian refugees their UN-sanctioned rights, simply because they are "non-Jews." It is still illegally occupying Palestinian and other Arab lands, in violation of numerous UN resolutions. It is still persistently and grossly breaching international law and infringing fundamental human rights with impunity afforded to it through munificent US and European economic, diplomatic and political support. It is still treating its own Palestinian citizens with institutionalized discrimination.

In short, celebrating "Israel at 60" is tantamount to dancing on Palestinian graves to the haunting tune of lingering dispossession and multi-faceted injustice.

There is absolutely no reason to celebrate! But there are myriad reasons to reflect, to engage, to work towards peace and justice.

The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations' Network (PNGO)  
website: [www.pngo.net](http://www.pngo.net)

## Signatories:

Mahmoud Darwish	(poet, Palestine),
John Berger	(artist/author, UK),
Augusto Boal	(director/writer, Brazil),
Ella Shohat	(author, USA/Israel),
Roger Waters	(musician, UK),
Ken Loach	(filmmaker, UK),
Andre Brink	(writer, South Africa),
Aharon Shabtai	(poet, Israel),
Judith Butler	(philosopher, USA),
Vincenzo Consolo	(writer, Italy),
John Williams	(guitarist, UK),
Tom Leonard	(poet, Scotland),
Anthony Loewenstein	(author, Australia),
Patrice Nganang	(writer, Cameroon),
Demis Roussos	(singer, Greece),
Mourid Barghouti	(poet, Palestine),
Ilan Pappé	(historian/author, Israel),
Naomi Wallace	(playwright, USA),
Ahdaf Soueif	(writer, UK/Egypt),
David Toscana	(writer, Mexico),
Tariq Ali	(author, UK),
Tom Lanoye	(writer, Belgium),
Radwa Ashour	(writer, Egypt),
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Michel Kleifi	(filmmaker, Palestine/Belgium),
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Raymond Deane	(composer, Ireland),
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Margaretta D'Arcy	(playwright, Ireland),
John Arden	(playwright and novelist, UK),
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