

# Palestine Land Day: A day to resist and remember

On Land Day, Palestinians demand once and for all that the international community pick the right side of history.



*A Palestinian man holds an olive seedling to be planted during a protest leading up to Land Day 2021*

## What is Land Day?

Forty-six years ago today, Israeli police shot and killed six Palestinian citizens of Israel as they were protesting the Israeli government's expropriation of thousands of dunums of Palestinian land. Since then, March 30 has been known as Land Day. It has become a major commemorative date in the Palestinian political calendar and an important event in the Palestinian collective narrative – one that emphasises Palestinian resistance to Israeli colonisation and sumud (steadfastness). Israel's policy remains unchanged since 1976.

## Before 1976

From the foundation of the Israeli state (and even before) ethnic cleansing was the norm. A declassified document from 1948 illustrates the brutality with which this was sometimes carried out. *"In the village of Al-Dawayima... troops of the 8th Brigade massacred about 100 people," reported Haaretz, although the number of the Palestinian victims later grew to 120. One of the soldiers who witnessed that horrific event testified before a government committee in November 1948: "There was no battle and no resistance. The first conquerors killed 80 to 100 Arab men, women and children. The children were killed by smashing their skulls with sticks. There wasn't a house without people killed in it."*

## Continued Ethnic Cleansing

\*\*In May 2021 Gaza was again subjected to an onslaught by Israel. This came after the forced evictions of Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in Jerusalem and the defence of those

families by Hamas. Israel was implementing its decades-long policy of "demographic balance"—a form of ethnic cleansing.

\*\*Like Sheikh Jarrah, Israeli settlers have made similar claims to owning Palestinian lands that lie close to the Old City of Jerusalem in Silwan  
\*\*In Jaffa, in the coastal area south of Tel Aviv, Amidar, an Israeli state-owned housing company, is planning to expel Palestinian residents from their properties and turn those properties into a synagogue.

## Silence and hypocrisy

There are countless such examples. Western powers claim to be defend freedom, democracy and opposition to oppression. Their silence over Israel's war crimes and crimes against humanity is deafening and hypocritical. Their deliberate decision to ignore the Amnesty International report from 2022 which stated that Israel is implementing apartheid equally so. We see this hypocrisy, in particular, over the response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. This is well summed up by Israeli anti-Zionist,

Ilan Pappe.

*One empty high-rise in the Ukraine ... prompted deep analysis about human brutality, Putin and inhumanity. These bombings should be condemned, but it seems that*



## Ukraine? No. Gaza!

*those leading the condemnation among world leaders were silent when the city of Gaza was flattened in one brutal wave after the other over the past 15 years. No sanctions ... were even discussed, let alone imposed on Israel for its war crimes in 1948 and ever since. In fact, in most of the Western countries leading the sanctions against Russia today, even mentioning the possibility of imposing sanctions against Israel is illegal and framed as anti-semitic.*

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