

Pro-Palestine, Climate Justice Movements Converge Against Citigroup in New York

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – Protesters have been gathering outside the Citigroup Headquarters in New York City to demand the company cut ties with the Zionist regime, as well as fossil fuel and weapons manufacturing industries.

Activists say the protests are a sure sign that the movements for Palestinian liberation and climate justice are fast intersecting as the Zionist regime continues its war on Gaza with the full support of the U.S. political and business elite.

Titled “Summer of Heat on Wall Street”, the 12-week-long campaign against Citigroup, including its subsidiary, Citibank, that began on 10 June, calls on the institution to stop funding fossil fuels, exponentially increase financing for renewable energy, respect human rights and indigenous sovereignty, and issue climate reparations.

“We understand that there is no climate justice without a free Palestine,” Liv, an organizer with the Summer of Heat on Wall Street campaign, told Middle East Eye.

“Palestinians will be the first people to experience the harshest



A person holds a sign as people participate in a “Climate Justice Means Free Palestine!” rally outside of the Citibank headquarters in New York City.

impacts of climate change,” Liv, who provided only their first name, added.

The campaign has been endorsed by over 100 organizations, including ANSWER Coalition, Extinction Rebellion United States and the Sunrise Movement.

Earlier in June, the local chapter of the Palestinian Assembly for Liberation (PAL-Awda-NY/NJ) launched its own campaign against Citibank over the institution’s self-

proclaimed “leadership and commitment to Israel”.

The group is calling on Citibank customers to close their accounts and cancel their credit cards.

According to its website, Citibank “boasts the largest presence of any foreign financial institution in Israel and offers corporate and investment banking services to leading Israeli corporations and institutions and global corporations operating in Israel”.

In 2013, Citi established its “Innovation Lab” in Tel Aviv, which works closely with Citi’s accelerator program and cybersecurity lab and supports Israeli start-ups specializing in financial tech.

According to PAL-Awda, in 2021, Citibank loaned Israel \$2.5bn to buy 25 F-35 fighter jets.

A 2023 congressional report on U.S. foreign aid to Israel corroborates this claim, citing the Zionist regime’s war ministry’s use of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) from the U.S. to secure a loan from “a small consortium led by Citibank” to purchase F-35 fighter jets from U.S. contractor Lockheed Martin.

“Those jet fighters are now warring death and destruction on Gaza, on hospitals, on schools, on churches, on homes, on people living in tents,” Bill Dores, an organizer with PAL-Awda-NY/NJ, told MEE.

Climate activists say that Citibank is not just funding the current destruction in Gaza and ongoing occupation of Palestine, it is also the largest financier of fossil fuel expansion worldwide.

Leader’s...

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“The judicial system’s main purpose must be to work bravely to ensure that justice is served, without having discrimination or privileges for any figure and that is a difficult role,” he said.

The Leader applauded the progress made in the Judiciary toward a program-based system, saying the improvement should be performed in a way that can be witnessed and sensed in the country.

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the issue of some detainees held without a verdict, advising the judicial authorities to handle their cases faster so that no one remains long in jail.

He also touched on the “unresolved problem” of detainment in cases of debt, saying it should be settled as it might be not possible for the detainee to settle their debt no matter how long they stay in jail.

And finally, Ayatollah Khamenei advised judges to make their verdicts according to internal and Islamic laws and not according to the West’s human rights doctrine.

Over...

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area about the size of a soccer field.

Israel is pushing ahead with its invasion of Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. Most have now fled the city, but the United Nations says no place in Gaza is safe and humanitarian conditions are dire as families shelter in tents and cramped apartments without adequate food, water, or medical supplies.

Elsewhere, Civil Defense teams in the northern Gaza Strip recovered the bodies of five people who were killed in an airstrike that hit two apartments in Gaza City, and several others were wounded. An airstrike earlier Friday hit a municipal garage in the city and killed five people.

Fadel Naeem, the orthopedic chief at al-Ahli hospital, said the bodies of 30 people were brought there Friday, calling it “a difficult and brutal day in Gaza City.”

Meanwhile, the Zionist military said Friday that two soldiers were killed in combat in central Gaza. No information was given about the circumstances of the deaths of the two, both men in their 20s. Three other Israeli soldiers were severely injured, the military said.

Israeli ground invasions and bombardments have martyred more than 37,550 people in Gaza, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count.

Hamas Says Open to Any Initiative That Ends War in Gaza

GAZA CITY (Dispatches) – Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the political office of the Palestinian resistance movement, Hamas, has reiterated his group’s openness toward any initiative that ends the Zionist regime’s war on the Gaza Strip that meets the demands of the Palestinian resistance.

Haniyeh made the statement in a seminar in Beirut that discussed scenarios of the Israeli onslaught against Gaza.

The Hamas leader said the group is open to deal with “any document or initiative that ensures the foundations of the resis-

stance’s position in the ceasefire negotiations.”

He reiterated Hamas’ demands for a permanent ceasefire, full Israeli army withdrawal from Gaza, reconstruction, the provision of relief and a prisoner swap.

Zionist regime officials, including prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, did not commit to any of the demands by Hamas and insisted on continuing its goal of totally defeating Hamas in Gaza.

He said Hamas has specific demands for a permanent ceasefire, complete withdrawal, reconstruction, prisoner exchange, relief for

the Palestinian people and everything related to the siege.

Haniyeh added that these demands are the demands of his people, the resistance, and all the free people of the nation.

He warned that Israel’s negotiating strategy is based on mobilizing regional and international pressure to pressure Hamas to accept the Israeli vision, which affects the foundations of Palestinian demands.

Haniyeh said that the U.S. and its allies are backing the war in Gaza after the Zionist entity suffered an “earthquake” on the sev-

enth of last October.

The Hamas leader said that the ongoing Israeli war in the Gaza Strip for the ninth consecutive month is “not only managed by the occupation army but also by the American administration and its allies from Western colonial forces.”

He revealed that U.S. President Joe Biden personally chaired a meeting of the Israeli war council in a session that lasted seven hours to set goals for eliminating the Islamic resistance and Hamas, and changing the security and political reality in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli Women Feel Insecure, Rush to Buy Guns in Oct. 7 Aftermath

ARIEL, Occupied Territories (Dispatches) – With many Israelis gripped by a sense of insecurity following Hamas’s unprecedented October 7 operation, the number of women applying for gun permits has soared, while feminist groups have criticized the rush to arms.

According to security ministry data, there have been 42,000 applications by women for gun permits since the operation, with 18,000 approved, more than tripling the number of pre-war licenses held by women.

The surge has been enabled by the loosening of gun laws under the Zi-

onist regime’s right-wing cabinet and its far-right minister Itamar Ben Gvir.

More than 15,000 women now own a firearm in the occupied territories, with 10,000 enrolled in mandatory training, according to the ministry.

“I would have never thought of buying a weapon or getting a permit, but since October 7, things changed a little bit,” political science professor Limor Gonen told AFP during a weapons handling class at a shooting range in the West Bank settlement of Ariel.

The October 7 operation that triggered the war resulted in the deaths

of 1,194 people in Israel, according to an AFP tally based on Zionist regime figures.

“We were all targeted (on October 7) and I don’t want to be taken by surprise, so I’m trying to defend myself,” Gonen said after the class, an obligatory step for acquiring a permit.

While the immediate trigger for the surge in gun buying was the Hamas operation, Ben Gvir was already pledging to reform firearms legislation when he became minister in late 2022.

Under Ben Gvir, the process for getting a gun license has been sped

up, with Israeli media reporting that in the immediate aftermath of the Hamas operation the authorities were often clearing hundreds of permits per day.

The full list of requirements makes it nearly impossible for non-Jews to obtain a permit.

The Gun Free Kitchen Tables Coalition, an Israeli initiative founded by feminist activists, condemned the civilian arms race.

It is “a strategy of far-right settlers to consider the arming of women to be a feminist act”, a spokesperson for the group of 18 organizations told AFP.

Report: UK Foreign Office Blocking Bahraini Activist’s Citizenship Bid

MANAMA (Middle East Eye) – A Bahraini human rights defender in exile in the UK has accused the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of unlawfully obstructing his British citizenship application for three years.

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, a Bahraini dissident and advocacy director at the London-based Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (Bird), has been in exile since 2012 after fleeing the government of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and being granted refugee status in the UK.

Alwadaei has been stateless since 2015, when the Bahraini government stripped him of his nationality. But he has indefinite leave to remain in the UK and applied for citizenship in May 2021.

The application process usually takes a maximum of six months. However, the Home Office, responsible for visa and citizenship applications in the UK, has yet to make a decision.

The Foreign Office appears to have advised against granting citizenship in undisclosed communications, citing potential strain on UK-Bahrain relations.

“The UK is my home after fleeing torture and imprisonment in Bahrain. But enduring over three years of scandalous delays to receive a decision on my citizenship application, despite meeting all legal requirements, has been a nightmare,” Alwadaei told Middle East Eye.

“To discover that these delays have been mainly imposed by the UK Foreign Office, driven by fears of jeopardizing relations with Bahrain, is shocking.”

Bahrain is an ally of the UK government. In July, Bahrain was removed from the UK’s list of human rights priority countries, prompting condemnation from rights groups who said the decision amounted to whitewashing. The removal came days after Manama pledged to invest £1bn (\$1.26bn) in Britain.

According to Alwadaei, a disclosure from a Subject Access Request revealed that the Foreign Office attempted to block the Home Office from granting him citizenship despite meeting all the legal requirements.

The disclosure shows that the FCDO sent two notes, in August 2022 and March 2023, warning the Home Office against granting Alwadaei citizenship on the basis of “bilateral implications” and “good character” and that the threat of public exposure caused them to back down.

Envoy...

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cooperation and engagement.

“Iran remains committed to supporting Afghanistan, keeping its borders open to Afghan displaced and refugees during critical times and challenges the Afghan people faced, and hosting more than six million Afghans at an annual cost of 10 billion dollars despite sanctions,” Iravani said, adding that Iran has provided education to 700,000 Afghan students residing in Iran.

He said due to the challenging economic conditions caused by U.S. illegal sanctions and the lack of international aid, Iran cannot manage the influx of Afghan refugees and drugs alone, which impacts the entire region.

“The international community must provide swift, sufficient, and continuous support to host countries like Iran,” he added.

The Iranian envoy said Afghanistan’s assets frozen by the West should be returned unconditionally, and sanctions should not hinder economic revitalization efforts.

“Western countries, having occupied Afghanistan for over 20 years, must honor their commitments to the country’s reconstruction and the fight against terrorism,” he added.