



**SUPPORTING SOUTH AFRICA'S HOLDING ISRAEL ACCOUNTABLE:
RIGHTFULLY RESISTING ACTS AND JUSTIFICATIONS OF GENOCIDE**

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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

NO ONE CAN RATIONALLY DOUBT OR reasonably deny the singular, yet interrelated moral, legal, political and historical importance of South Africa's initiative and case brought to hold Israel accountable for genocide against the people of Gaza, Palestine before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague, Netherlands. It's distinctive importance is first demonstrated in South Africa courageously standing up and rupturing the iron ring of the imposed and cultivated criminal silence and support which the U.S. and the other Western White-dominated governments have given Israel, arming, funding, shielding, and lying for it in shamelessly and vulgarly immoral and anti-human ways. It is also a triumph over the systematic silencing going on in the media, on campuses, in employment, and even in the streets, most infamously and openly by France and Germany, using anti-free speech laws and practices to suppress demonstrations against and opposition to Israel's genocide in Gaza, Palestine and apartheid in West Bank, Palestine.

Also, South Africa's initiative reaffirmed the moral assessment of millions of people in this country and around the world, including Jewish people, who refused to be silent or accept the falsification of history and reality by those who would deny and justify genocide being committed in plain sight of the whole world, in news reports and for the first time in history, painfully videoed by the

Palestinians, victims themselves, in real time. Moreover, South Africa's initiative gives the Palestinian people, who are routinely denied voice, presence and rightful recognition and representation in relevant forums and in the corporate media, an unprecedented world hearing on a most urgent issue, their unfolding and expanding genocide. And thus, South Africa's initiative contributes to advancing the Palestinian people's struggle to end the genocide, but also to their struggle for liberation, self-determination and security in their own place, space and state, as Nana Haji Malcolm X advocated in the early years of unified Palestinian resistance.

Here, however, it is important to keep continuous focus on the Palestinian people whose righteous liberation struggle for 75 years against occupation, oppression and erasure has brought us and the world to this point. It is their determined refusal to be defeated, erased or walled off from the world that has brought us to this historical moment. So, we, of necessity, are grateful to South Africa for its audacious and morally compelling initiative and to all the peoples and persons of this country and the world who have contributed to this historical struggle and moment. But it is they, the Palestinian people, a people in radically evil oppression and righteous resistance, who offer all of us a critical opportunity to do the right, just and life-respecting, life-affirming thing. For in supporting them and other oppressed and struggling peoples,

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we are also contributing to expanding the realms of freedom, justice and shared good in the world. Indeed, it is the sacred teachings of our honored ancestors that the good we do for others we are also doing for ourselves. For we are cooperatively building the good world we all want and deserve to live in and leave as a legacy for those who come after us.

South Africa's highly documented and methodically delivered argument charged Israel with committing and failing to prevent genocide of the Palestinian people of Gaza through its mass and indiscriminate killing, its physical and psychological harm, and the imposition of conditions "intended to bring about the destruction of a substantial part of the Palestinian national, racial and ethnic group" as the Geneva Convention defines it. And it asked the ICJ to order Israel to halt its genocide against the Palestinian people of Gaza and to preserve and prevent destruction of the evidence of its genocide. It had rightly anticipated a continuing cover up of these unconscionable atrocities and the destruction of evidence proving the unique "scale, speed and severity" of the genocide. Indeed, Israel has not only committed genocide, killing over 24,000 Palestinians, 10,000 of which are children and 70% women and children, and wounding approximately 60,000 with thousands under the rubble and uncounted and unaccounted for during this period. It has also committed what many are calling *domicide*, destroying or damaging 86% of Palestinian homes and infrastructure, and

refusing to let the people return and rebuild.

Moreover it has committed *cultural genocide*, intentionally damaging and destroying libraries, schools, hospitals and medical centers, cultural heritage sites, churches, mosques and monuments, and targeting and killing cultural creators, leaders and keepers, including, intellectuals, teachers, historians, artists, writers, journalists and clergy. And it has committed *ecocide*, fulfilling its governmental officials' vow to turn Gaza into an uninhabitable wasteland, polluting air and water, undermining the productivity of the soil, and destroying food, water and sanitation systems.

This initiative by South Africa is also a stern rejection of the hypocrisy and horrific results of a selective morality in which people abhor invasions and attacks on civilians in Ukraine and deny, dismiss or diminish the devastating invasion and genocide against the Palestinian people and others different and vulnerable. This brings to mind how during Europe's imperial, colonial and enslavement era, no moral consideration of such kind was given to the holocausts, genocides, mass murders, displacements and savageries of all kinds against the people of color. It is, as Nana Aimé Césaire noted, only when Hitler did to White people what they had been doing to the peoples of color in even greater numbers, did the reconsideration of war, pillage, plunder and genocide become an item of serious consideration on an inclusive world agenda.

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Likewise, the South African initiative reaffirms a central moral principle that there is no immunity from criticism which Israel and its allies have sought to impose on the world in various venues for its own benefit. Indeed, they not only impose this policy in corporate media and other social and political places, but also in the so-called hallowed halls of universities, which are branded and sold as “market places” of ideas and opinions of all kinds and where critical thinking is touted and taught as central to quality education. But here, as we have seen, this freedom of speech and thought does not include Black Studies and other Ethnic and oppositional Studies, or any human empathy and conversation about Palestine and Palestinian people and their 75-year old struggle against occupation, oppression, genocide and erasure.

This critical historical case and the wider discourse that has been generated and developed around it is not just putting Israel on trial for its genocide against the Palestinian people, but also poses an important challenge to the Post WWII structure and process of the world order largely dominated and directed by the U.S. and other European powers. And it demonstrates a central understanding in the

liberation struggles of the 1960s that a small nation and less militarily powerful people can play a decisive role in world politics in breaking the back of enslavement, colonialism and imperialism through its own liberation struggle and aiding others in offering new interpretations and approaches to achieving a just, good and sustainable society and world.

FINALLY, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE that in freeing itself and using its moral status grounded in its victorious struggle against the crime against humanity called apartheid, and contributing to the liberation of others to advance the realm of human freedom, justice and shared good in the world, South Africa continues the African liberation tradition which flowered and was etched in eternity by the Haitian people, the Haitian Revolution and its revolutionary spirit which we commemorate and celebrate in this month of January. It reaffirms the teachings of Nana Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune who assured us as African peoples that “Our task is to remake the world”. And it reminds us that as Nana Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah taught that central to the historical and moral mission of Africa is that it “become one of the greatest forces for good in the world”.▲

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