

# The SWWF Celebrates International Women's Day

8 March 2024

The history of International Women's Day is a history of more than 150 years of struggles by ordinary women for a world free of oppression and exploitation. It is a history of mobilisation and protests by working class women to galvanise the struggle against capitalist domination and exploitation. This is a day on which the international working class movement puts forward demands around issues facing women workers and forges and strengthens international solidarity in the struggle against world capitalism.

This is a rich and proud tradition of struggle that we as the Simunye Workers Women's Forum (SWWF) fully support. We identify with this tradition of struggle because we are convinced that the liberation of working class women requires the self-organisation and self-expression of women workers themselves.

## Palestine

This year we mark International Women's Day in the context of a genocide being carried out against Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip by Israel.

Genocide is where an army or a group of people kill a large number of people from a particular

nation with the aim of completely wiping out that nation or group. This is what Israel is doing to the Palestinians now.



Israel is an illegitimate, Apartheid state which set itself up on Palestinian land in 1948. Since then, Israel has carried out numerous massacres and genocides against Palestinian people and has occupied most of historical Palestine.



More than 5 million Palestinians have been driven out of Palestine by the Israeli occupiers and are forbidden from returning home, even for a visit.

Since 7 October 2023, Israel has been carrying out the biggest massacre of the Palestinians to date – it has killed more Palestinians than it did in 1948 when it invaded Palestine and turned large parts into Israel. Israel has killed 31 000 Palestinians, of which 9000 are women and 13 500 are children.

At least 8000 Palestinians are missing because Israel bombed their houses from the sky while the Palestinians were still inside. So, their bodies are trapped under the rubble.

The only Palestinian women still working in Gaza are United Nations staff, hospital staff and journalists. Israel is targeting these workers – it has killed 365 medical workers, 132 journalists and 158 UN staff. Women teachers, factory and shop workers, and office workers are no longer working or getting paid because Israel has bombed all factories, shops and schools.





Israel also bombs Palestinians while they are standing in line and waiting for food aid. On 1 March, Israel committed the Flour Massacre, killing 118 Palestinians who were waiting for food. Israeli tanks then drove over the injured Palestinians who were lying on the ground.

There are 50 000 pregnant women in Gaza now who have no healthcare. About

200 babies are being born every day and many are dying. Israel has prevented most food from getting into Gaza so women are starving in order to feed their children.

Some women have reported having only one onion for their whole family to eat over 30 days – they cut tiny pieces and feed the children. Women cannot breastfeed their newborn babies because they have nothing to eat, so no milk.

More than 1.1 million Palestinian women and girls are displaced – their homes have been destroyed and they are sleeping under plastic sheets or on the pavement. Women are giving birth in the street because Israel is bombing Gaza every day and they cannot always reach the hospital on time.

Many women whose homes were bombed had to move to schools. They are suffering there. They have no privacy. There is no soap and toilets are not working.

Many Palestinians in Gaza, including the 1.1 million women who live there, have not washed for 153 days – since the genocide began. There is no clean

drinking water whatsoever unless it rains. There is no water to wash with.

Women who have lost their husbands, brothers and fathers during the ongoing aggression now find themselves the sole provider for their families and children, and need to fetch food for them in a situation already described as catastrophic.



Israel is funded by the USA who, along with European countries, continues to supply bombs to Israel. The South African government charged Israel with genocide and took them to court and won, but Israel ignored the ruling and continued to bomb. Even Palestinian babies are being bombed to death.



## We demand:

- The South African government must place sanctions against Israel. No South African business should be allowed to do business with Israel.
- The South African government must nationalise Clover and turn it into a worker controlled, non-profit company with decent wages. It is owned by Israeli MILCO and the South African workers are suffering at Clover with bad wages, bad health and safety conditions and they are forced to work on public holidays whenever the bosses call them.
- The South African government must ban diamond companies from sending our raw diamonds to Israel. In Israel, they polish and cut the diamonds and then send them back to the mining companies here to sell. The South African government must set up cutting and polishing factories here to create jobs here at home.
- All South African banks must be forced to stop buying shares in weapons companies, and to divest or give up all their shares in Israeli companies.

**An injury to one is an injury to all!**  
**Free Palestine!**

**We extend our solidarity to all working class women suffering from the effects of capitalist exploitation in its neoliberal form. Working class women of the world unite!**

**Contact the Simunye Women Workers Forum at 0828121934.**