

The ancient heritage of Palestine



The three parts of the presentation

Agriculture/Infrastructure

-Ecocide

Cultural heritage

- Culturicide/ Scolasticide

People – the right to return

-Genocide

Agriculture

- Vegetation - Olive trees, orchids, orange
- Groundwater and wells
- Soil

Olive trees



- Olive trees are a universal symbol of peace and a powerful symbol of Palestinian rootedness in their land. Because they give the people a sense of belonging during times of displacement, self-reliance in adversity, and tranquility amidst conflict.
- The Palestinian people are anchored to the land and the olive tree.
- Each olive tree stands as a powerful emblem of resistance against the expansion of illegal settlements.
- Farming represents 70% of local fruit production and adds about 14% to the local economy.
- Approximately 100,000 families in the Palestinian territories depend on olives and their oil as their main or supplementary sources of income.
- During an average year, Gaza once produced more than five thousand tons of olive oil from more than forty thousand trees.
- October is a sacred month for Palestine: many farmers' yearly income relies almost entirely on the olive harvest season. Families were left with nothing as a consequence of the Israeli blockade.

Olive trees



- Until 7th October 2023, farms and orchards occupied 47% of Gaza's total land area.
- By the end of February 2024 Israeli military operations damaged over 38% of that land.
- By March 2024, approximately 40% of the agricultural land in Gaza, once used for food cultivation, has been severely affected.
- More than half a million olive trees have been uprooted or destroyed by Israeli civil and military forces in the past 10 years (Al Jazeera, 2011)
- Approximately one million olive trees, many of which were centuries old, have been uprooted by Israel since 1967. They uproot them to uproot Palestinian identity. (Jacobin, 2023)
- Forensic Architecture (FA), a London-based research group that investigates state violence says:

„The destruction of agricultural land and infrastructure in Gaza is a deliberate act of Ecocide.”

Groundwater

- The Israeli army used chemical and biological weapons during the 1948 war, including poisoning water wells in several Palestinian towns. The poisoning targeted dozens of Palestinian water wells, including the Acre and the Galilee village of Ilabun in the north. (Aawsat, 2022)
- Morris and Kedar said that the substance used in the poisoning was causing mass infections of dysentery and typhoid, adding that such diseases spread in Acre.
- Palestinian wells, homes destroyed in the West Bank (UN, 2007)
- In 2013, neighboring Egypt began flooding the tunnels with seawaters. Groundwater supplies were quickly polluted with salt brine and, as a result. (Jacobin, 2024)
- Since water from the basins of the occupied West Bank naturally flows down to lands lying at a lower altitude, it is enough for the latter to prevent the Palestinians from extracting the water to get full control. This is done either administratively – by denying authorization to drill wells, often without justification – or physically – by destroying existing infrastructure or not taking care of it. The Israelis help themselves generously, and then sell back to “their neighbors” what is left of the “stolen” resource, choosing its price and amount. (MiddleEastEye, 2016)
- A 2019 report by UNICEF [noted](#) that “96 per cent of water from the [sic] Gaza’s sole aquifer is unfit for human consumption.”(Aawsat,2022)
- Palestinians Forbidden from Collecting Rainwater Because It's Deemed 'Israeli Property'? (Snopes, 2023)



Infrastructure: Mosques and Churches

- The mosques in the old town of Nablus, in the north of the West Bank, reflect the history of the city across different eras, including the Islamic conquests, the Crusades and the Mamluk and Byzantine eras.
- Al-Khadra Mosque: the oldest and largest Mosque of Nablus was converted from a church to Mosque in 1187.
- On Thursday 4 April, the Israeli forces bombarded the Al Khadra Mosque during the invasion of the West Bank town of Nablus. They were trying to enter the Old Town through the mosque and destroyed most of it. The beautifully sculpted and inlaid mihrab was destroyed. (Electronicintifada,2002)



Mosques

- The Grand Omari Mosque was established during Caliph Omar bin al-Khattab's reign. Once a Roman temple and later a church, it became the largest mosque post-Islamic conquest. Located in Gaza's old city, near Palestine Square, it spans 4,100 sqm, with a courtyard of 1,190 sqm accommodating over 3,000 worshippers.
- It said the act violated international treaties, including the Hague Convention of 1907, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and UNESCO conventions on cultural property protection.
- In a series of targeted strikes during its ongoing bombardment of Gaza, the [Israeli](#) army laid waste to dozens of mosques, including the iconic Al-Omari Mosque, renowned for its historical and archaeological significance.
- The ministry noted the mosque's historical roots dating back to a Byzantine monastery in the fifth century CE. It viewed the destruction as a "crime against the cultural heritage of the Palestinian people", symbolizing their connection to the land.
- 604 mosques have been completely destroyed and 200 mosques, along with three churches, have sustained significant damage due to attacks by Zionist occupation forces. (Ilkha, 2024)

Infrastructure: University and School

- Universities
 - There are 14 Universities, 18 University Colleges and 20 Community Colleges in Palestine
 - All universities in Gaza have now been destroyed or at least damaged, WAFA said. (CNN, 2024)
- Schools
 - Up to 280 government schools and 65 UNRWA-run schools have been destroyed or damaged, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Education. Ninety percent of Palestinian Authority schools have been subject to direct or indirect damage. About 29 percent of school buildings are out of service after being demolished or severely damaged.(Al Jazeera, 2024)
- Hospitals
- Cemeteries



Infrastructure: Hospitals

- 31 out of 36 hospitals in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed. Among the destroyed is the Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest medical complex in Gaza, which remains today completely out of service.
- The remaining hospitals in Gaza are partially functioning and operating under severe limitations. Due to the dire situation many of them are on the verge of collapse or had to be closed
- So far, 520 bodies have been recovered from seven mass graves found at three different hospitals across Gaza in recent weeks.(Scmp, 2024)



Cemetery

- The Israeli military occupation forces have damaged or completely destroyed at least six cemeteries in the northern Gaza Strip during their recent ground invasion advancements. (Middle East Monitor, 2023)
- The Israeli military has desecrated at least 16 cemeteries in its ground offensive in Gaza, a CNN investigation has found, leaving gravestones ruined, soil upturned, and, in some cases, bodies unearthed. In Khan Younis, southern Gaza, where fighting escalated in recent days, Israeli forces destroyed a cemetery, [removing bodies](#). (CNN, 2024)



Culture

- Education
 - Teachers, professors, doctors
 - Poets, artists, journalists
- Cultural references – libraries, codex, scripts
- Embroideries
- Religion



Doctors, and Professors

- Adnan Al-Bursh : leading surgeon, head of orthopaedics and professor of orthopedic medicine has chosen to stay with people and was killed by torture in an Israeli prison.



"IF I MUST DIE"

BY REFAAT ALAREER

If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself—
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up above
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love
If I must die
let it bring hope
let it be a tale

(A poem written before the author's death in an airstrike by the Israeli military.)

www.tsevistaartworks.com

If I must die



Refaat Alareer

Poets

- They—just like the more than 200 Palestinian journalists killed in Gaza in the line of duty; just like every one of the more than 40,000 innocent people massacred in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel —deserve to be remembered.

Yousef Dawas

- In January 2023, Yousef published an essay entitled “Who will pay for the 20 years we lost?” In the essay, he recounts the destruction of his family’s orchard by an Israeli missile strike in May 2022. The orchard trees produced olives, oranges, clementines, loquat, guavas, lemons and pomegranates, and its loss “destroyed an important piece of our past. Our family’s history. Our heritage.”

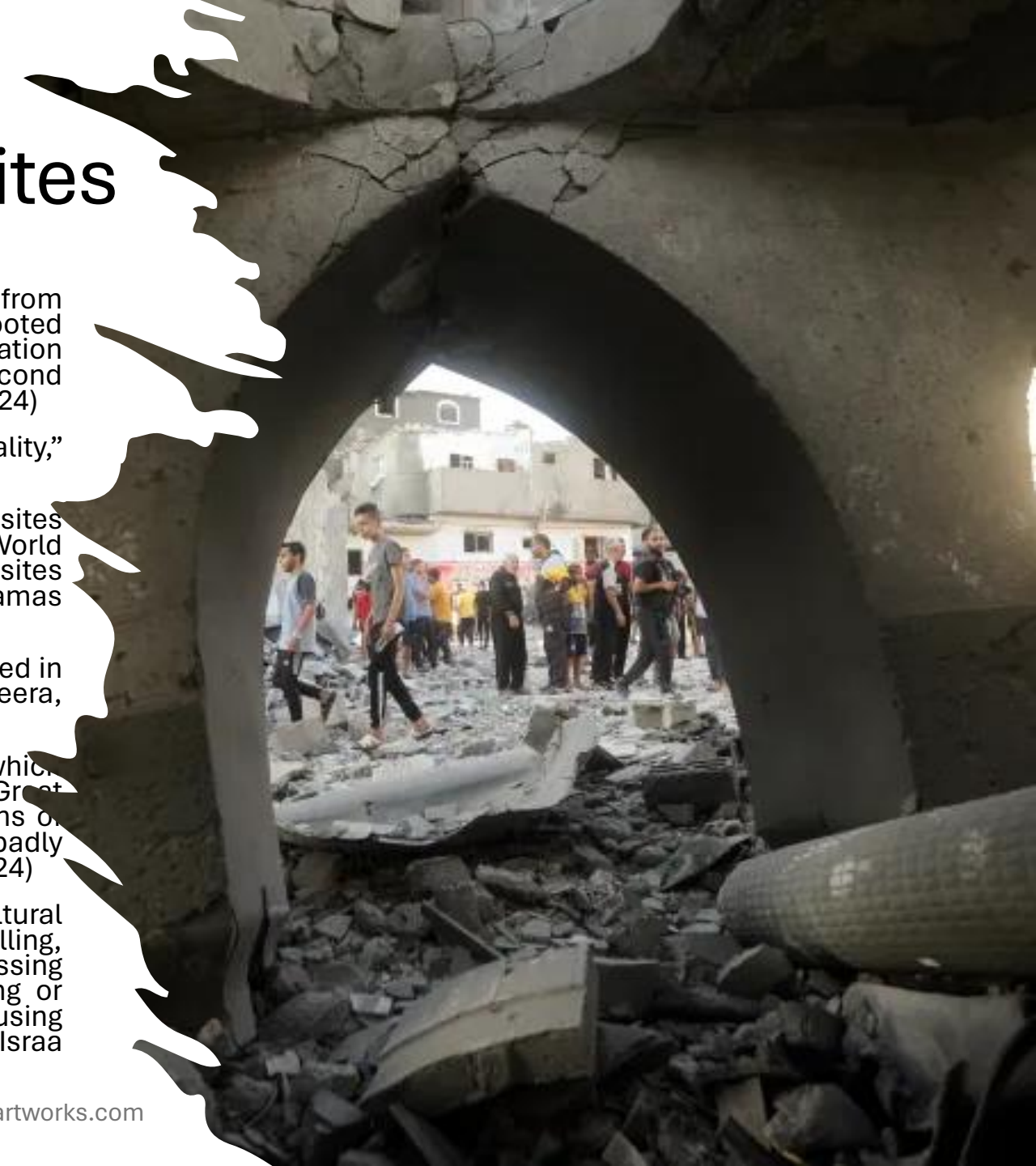
Heba Abu Nada

- In 2017, Abu Nada won the Sharjah Award for Arab Creativity for *Oxygen is Not for the Dead*.

And so many more...

Libraries and archeological sites

- In 1948, during the Nakba, 30,000 books and manuscripts were looted from Palestinian homes; in 1982, during Israel's invasion of Lebanon, Israel looted and confiscated the library and archives of the Palestine Liberation Organization; libraries and archives were damaged during the Second Intifada, and have been repeatedly targeted in Gaz (The Conversation, 2024)
- 'Israel destroyed Central Archives of Gaza City': Head of Gaza Municipality," Middle East Monitor, November 29, 2023.
- Gaza is rich in cultural treasures, with some 325 registered heritage sites within just 141 square miles—including three designated for Unnesco's World Heritage tentative list. The Omari Mosque is one of over 200 ancient sites damaged or destroyed in Israeli raids since the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack. (Businessmirror, 2024)
- Nearly 200 sites of historical importance have been destroyed or damaged in Israeli air raids on the Palestinian enclave in the past 100 days. (Al Jazeera, 2024)
- Along with the complete destruction of the Central Archives of Gaza (which contained 150 years of records pertaining to Gaza's history) and the Great Omari Mosque (which contained one of the most significant collections of rare books in Palestine), at least 13 different libraries have been badly damaged or destroyed entirely since Israel's latest assault on. (lithub, 2024)
- They say scholasticide includes the intentional destruction of cultural heritage: archives, libraries and museums. Scholasticide includes killing, causing bodily or mental harm, incarcerating, or systematically harassing educators, students and administrators. It includes besieging, closing or obstructing access to educational institutions. It can also include using universities or schools as a military base (as was done with Al-Israa University). (The Conversation, 2024)



Journalism

- ISRAELI OFFICIALS Shut down an Associated Press video feed of Gaza and confiscated recording equipment because one of the news outlets receiving the images was Al Jazeera, which was recently banned from Israel with the passing of a new media law.
- Israel's cabinet unanimously voted to shut down Al Jazeera in the country on Sunday, immediately ordering the closure of its offices and a ban on the company's broadcasts.
- Additionally, the Al Jazeera television channel is completely banned in Israel
- The shutdown comes a month after Israel's parliament, the Knesset, passed a law on April 1 that allowed Israel to temporarily shut down foreign media outlets — including Al Jazeera — if it deems them a threat to security.
- Israeli authorities raid Al Jazeera after shutdown order
- More than 200 Journalists have been murdered.

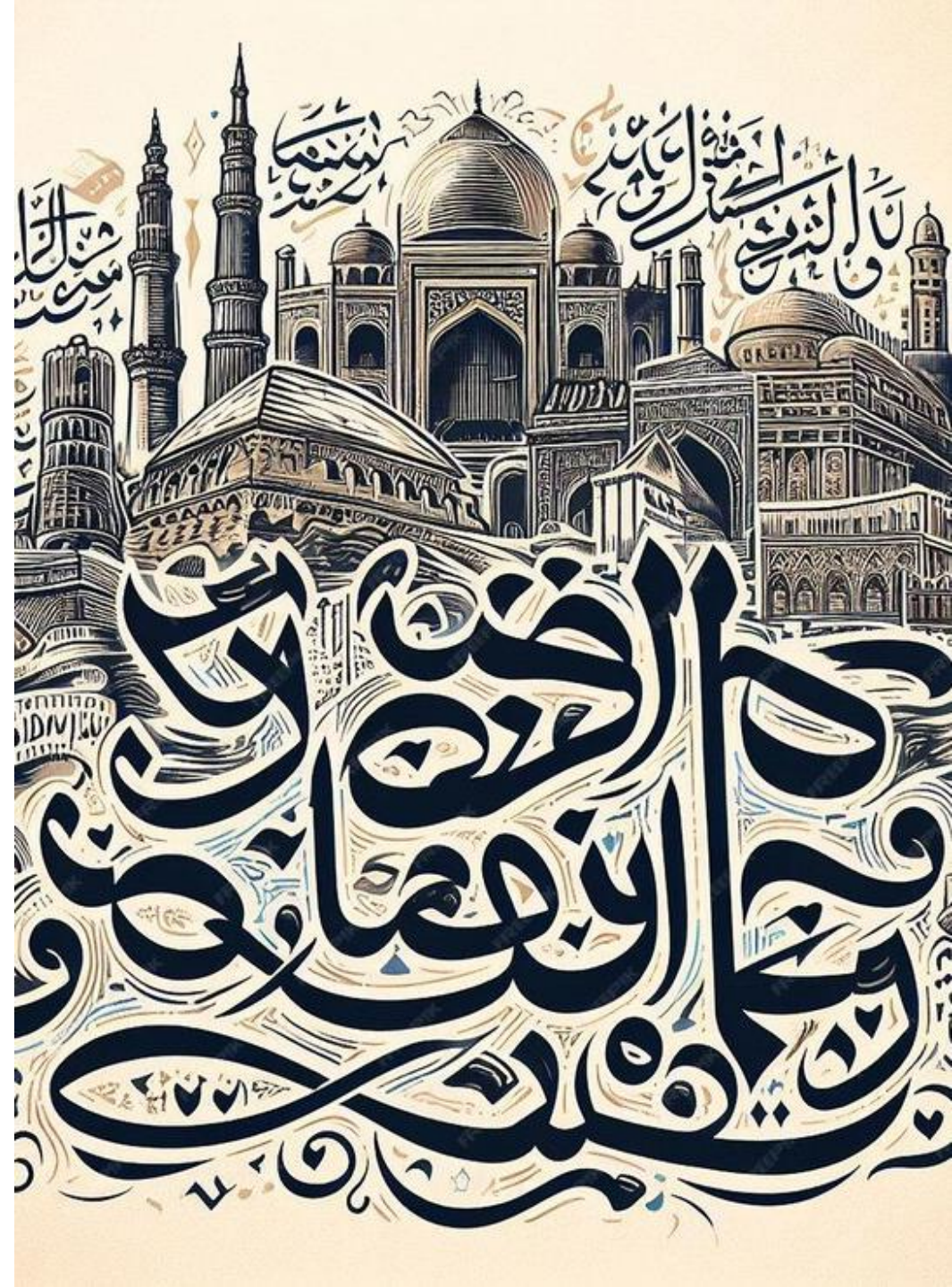
Palestinian Embroidery

Palestinian embroidery is a centuries-old art form that's passed between generations orally, like from mother to daughter or grandmother to granddaughter. But the art form's survival has become more and more precarious — Israeli militia and settlers have displaced generations of Palestinians, who've fled or were expelled from their land. The dispossession has made handmade tatreez more and more rare and harder yet for Palestinians to discover and learn from. In that dearth, Palestinians are creating communal resources and digital spaces for each other in an attempt to digitize and reclaim the art form.



Sunni, Shita and Sufi Islam

- Sunni Islam, the largest branch, is known for its emphasis on the Prophet's traditions and consensus among the Muslim community.
- Sunni is more concerned with attaining the right path in order to get rewards from God. The reward is promised in the next life.
- Shia Islam, characterized by its reverence for the lineage of Imam Ali, offers a profound interpretation of leadership and divine guidance.
- The Sunnis believe that Muhammad did not designate a successor. But the Shiites believe he did: his cousin and son-in-law, Ali
- Meanwhile, Sufi Islam, often seen as the mystical dimension of the faith, seeks direct and personal experiences with the divine, transcending the boundaries of conventional religious practices.
- Sufi believes in divine love and focuses on meeting God directly by adopting the state of 'Fana' which means to purify your heart and soul of worldly desires and expectations.

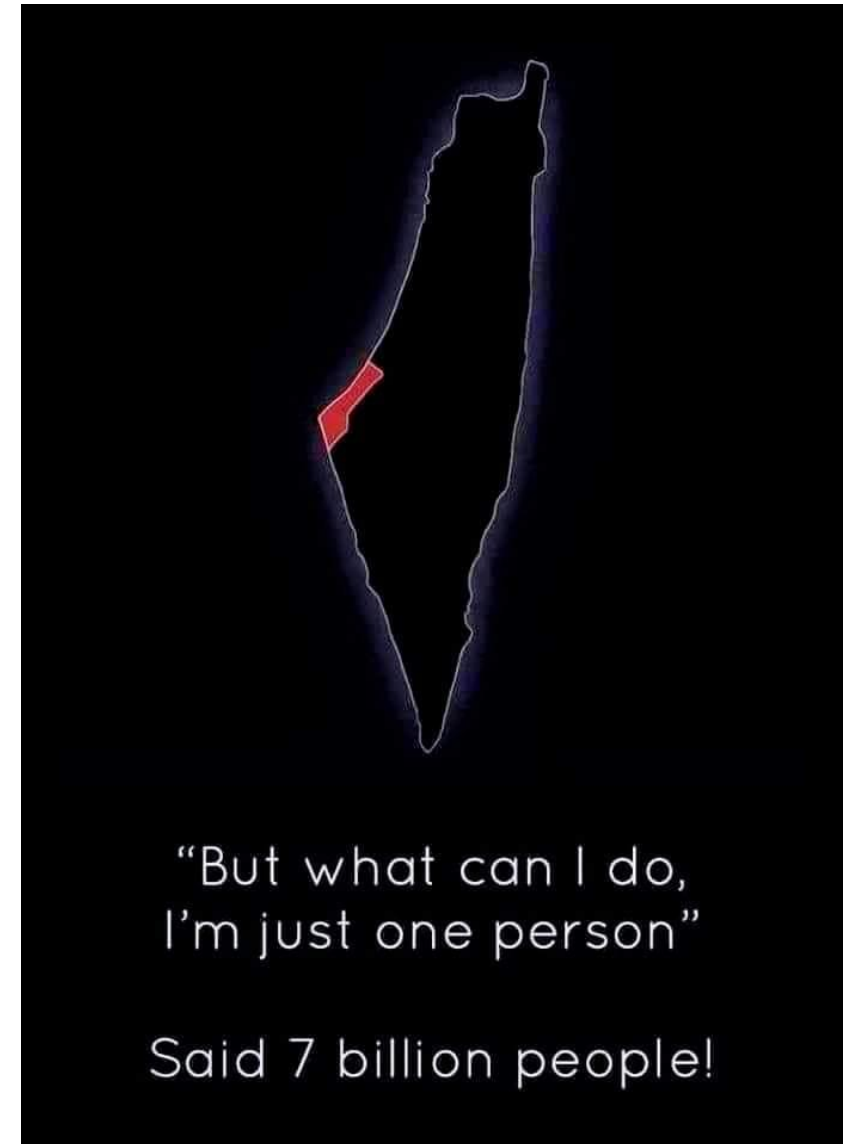


What can we do?

Even just watching how a horrific massacre unfolding against an entire indigenous tribe and its sacred culture is devastating, and it brings a feeling of uselessness.

But we are the people who can make the change if we unite and collaborate.

- Speak out
- BDS:
 - Boycott:
 - Boycott products which supporting genocide
 - Blockout2024: block celebs who has not spoken out
 - Divest
 - Sanction
- Donate



Maram

- A 23 years old medical-student who was preparing for her graduation when her university and her home were bombed. She was forced to leave her home together with her family and she was replaced one location after another in tents for almost 7times.
- Her dream is to becoming an official doctor and save lives.
- As soon as she reached the designated safe-zone in Rafah and set up their tent, she volunteered in Kuwaiti hospital, which is the last operating hospital in Gaza.
- Since the invasion started against Rafah, she was forced to evacuate.
- She needs your help and support by sharing and donating.

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/fundraising/394ed24b-ce7e-4e8e-8de6-6d8fab766759>

HELP GAZA

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gofundme

Hamza Ahmed

- He is a nurse working in a 24/7 nonstop duty in European hospital, in Khan Yunis area. He takes 3 shifts in one since there is not enough crew left and the hospital is operating beyond full capacity.
- Other than his work in the hospital, he also volunteered to go to medical-tent to assist and organize help to the people.
- He is collecting donation to evacuate his wife Iraa and his 2 children Hisham and Yousef.
- He needs your support and donation.

<https://gofund.me/99b26f3f>

HELP GAZA

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