



## Position Statement from the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) in Solidarity with the Palestinian Peoples

13 June 2020

PsySSA is the professional body representing psychology professionals in South Africa. PsySSA has, since its inception, been dedicated to making a significant contribution to solving the pressing human development problems in South Africa. PsySSA is committed to the transformation and development of South African Psychology to serve the needs and interests of all South Africa's people. PsySSA advances psychology as a science, profession and as a means of promoting human well-being (<https://www.psytssa.com>).

## Position Statement

In support of the Palestinian Peoples' right to self-determination, and following South Africa's recognition of the State of Palestine since 1995, the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) affirms its support for the Palestinian struggle to end the legacies of colonisation and all forms of contemporary occupation, restriction and isolation of Palestinian Peoples.

Noting the ideologically and politically polarised nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we as PsySSA believe that it is important to affirm that we are committed to and aligned with the principles of justice, rights and equality for all. PsySSA therefore denounces racism, various forms of Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment, and condemns anti-Semitism in all its forms.

PsySSA opposes policies, actions and omissions that deny any individual or group access to the requisite psycho-social and material conditions that enable individuals and communities to achieve self-reliance and to thrive economically, culturally, politically and psycho-socially.

As a consequence, PsySSA registers, with grave concern, the plight of the Palestinian Peoples in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Consonant with its social justice orientation, PsySSA is concerned about the lack of full equality offered to Palestinian Peoples, and the gross human rights violations that continue to be committed against Palestinians, including torture, arbitrary detention, imprisonment of children, forced evictions, denial of the right of return for all Palestinian refugees and displaced persons, and systematic restrictions on freedom of movement. Institutionalised racism, mass political violation, economic curtailment and violence have had a catastrophic impact on the mental health and well-being of Palestinians, causing ongoing trauma and social suffering.

Accordingly, PsySSA calls for an end to violence in this region of the world, and the repressive conditions under which Palestinians have been forced to live and suffer for decades. To this end, the Society encourages South African psychologists to desist from participation in, or supporting, all activities complicitous with the occupation and repression of Palestinian Peoples and institutions.

**Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA)  
Johannesburg, South Africa**