

Dear Lisa-Kainde and Naomi

We are writing to you as fans of your music – we particularly value your internationalism, the spirituality of your work and the celebration of your Yoruba roots.

We were therefore very disturbed to learn that you are booked to perform in Tel Aviv in the near future.

Performing in Israel today is the equivalent of performing in Sun City South Africa during the apartheid era. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and former South African government minister Ronnie Kasrils have repeatedly declared that Israel has created a form of racial apartheid that is far worse than anything that existed in South Africa. We urge you not to lend your name to cover up Israel's crimes.

But this appeal isn't just from us.

1,090 UK artists have signed a pledge '...to accept neither professional invitations to Israel, nor funding, from any institutions linked to its government until it complies with international law and universal principles of human rights.' (<http://artistsforpalestine.org.uk/>)

On 19th October the Palestinian Performing Arts Network reiterated their call to cultural workers around the world when they published the following appeal:

We, organizations and individuals that make up the majority of the Palestinian cultural sector; musicians, circus artists, actors, and dancers, call upon our fellow cultural workers and organizations around the world to condemn Israel's deliberate and systematic policies of occupation, settler colonialism and apartheid against the Palestinian people.

Despite all the hardships, Palestinian arts and cultural institutions continue to work in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, using the arts to mobilize and educate.

In recent weeks, the occupying Israeli military and armed Israeli settlers have deliberately killed and targeted innocent children and youth, burned farming lands, homes, mosques and churches, and have instituted policies of attacking and dividing Palestinian Holy Sites. These premeditated policies of provocations, collective punishment and deep rooted racism against the Palestinian people requires now more than ever a voice of support, courage and humanity to be heard in Palestine and across the world.

Please find links depicting Israeli aggression and blatant racism against the Palestinian people:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3535PnzqnE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGGp4e2oUhk>

https://www.facebook.com/Raya.fm/videos/1107195715957221/?comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22O%22%7D

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnX4UyzQqjk>

We call upon our fellow artists and cultural workers and organizations to:

- *Discredit and oppose mainstream manipulation of news and facts;*
- *Continue your solidarity, advocacy and lobbying with regards to the injustice that Palestinian people have witnessed;*

- *Pressure your governments to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine, dismantling the Israeli settlements and Separation wall and barriers and support international protection for Palestinians;*
- ***Support and endorse the Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), thereby boycotting and refusing to be complicit in the ongoing occupation until Israel fully abides by International Humanitarian Laws.***
- *Share your statement or action with us by e-mailing to info@ppan.ps*

<http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=2750>

What's more, Israel is notorious for its racism against black Africans.

Israel has been notoriously harsh in its treatment of refugees, particularly Africans. The Israeli government has [granted refugee status to just 0.07% of African asylum seekers](#).

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has also drawn attention to the vitriolic strain of anti-black racism in Israeli society. In its September 2014 report "Make Their Lives Miserable": Israel's Coercion of Eritrean and Sudanese Asylum Seekers to Leave Israel details how "Israeli authorities have labelled Eritreans and Sudanese a 'threat,' branded them 'infiltrators,' denied them access to fair and efficient asylum procedures, and used the resulting insecure legal status as a pretext to unlawfully detain or threaten to detain them indefinitely, coercing thousands into leaving."

HRW writes that "Israel's policies are well summed up in the words of former Israeli Interior Minister Eli Yishai who said that as long as Israel cannot deport them to their home countries, it should 'lock them up to make their lives miserable.'"

(See more at: <http://mondoweiss.net/2015/02/refugee-african-seekers#sthash.UhBma4rm.T1q0Cjt3.dpuf>)

Until recently, nearly two thousand refugees were held in internment camp-like conditions in the Holot detention centre. [Israeli politicians refer to African refugees as "infiltrators."](#)

Member of Knesset Miri Regev, now Israel's minister of culture, went so far as to call African asylum-seekers a "cancer"—and [a poll found 52% of Jewish Israelis agreed with her](#).

You will also have heard of the lynching, on 18th October, of an Eritrean man by a mob of racist Israelis who wrongly identified him as a 'terrorist'.

In these circumstances we feel that it would be a grave betrayal of human rights for you to give your support to Israel by performing there.

We see that you are coming to perform in Brighton on November 2nd and would welcome the opportunity to review these issues with you in more detail.

Yours

Sarah Cobham

Ann Hallam

Brighton and Hove Palestine Solidarity Campaign