

Local Authorities Forum -- Free Palestine

Final Statement

As a result from a joint initiative between Brazilian and Palestinian Municipalities, and in the context of the global mobilization to support the Palestinian cause through the World Social Forum – Free Palestine, the Local Authorities Forum was held on the 27th of November in Canoas, Brazil.

The conference was the occasion to discuss and raise awareness on the suffering and the life of Palestinians under occupation, in particular during these last weeks that saw the attack on the Gaza strip, which occasioned the killing of over 180 people and the destruction of many houses and large parts of the infrastructure, in an area that has already been suffering from siege for many years.

Many presentations were done during the conference that gave an overview of the challenges and difficulties encountered by Palestinian cities in the West Bank, and by Jerusalem, in the face of occupation policies that often breach international laws that are also binding on local authorities.

Following the conclusions drawn from the papers, speeches and workshops, the Brazilian and Palestinian Municipalities as part of the Local Authorities Forum call for:

1 – Stressing the importance of the final document of the Local Authorities Forum agreed upon by Brazilian and Palestinian Municipalities as a foundation for the action of solidarity movements around the world based on the reference document for the WSF/Free Palestine.

2 –Developing and reinforcing relations between Palestinian and Brazilian municipalities through educational, economic, social, political, cultural, youth, media and experts exchanges, and the signing of more twinning agreements.

3 – Calling for Brazilian municipalities to cooperate and act in solidarity with the Palestinian cause, and to support their rights, in particular the right of return.

4- Urging Brazilian Local government to mobilize their government and civil society to gather support for the Palestinian bid for the status of UN permanent observer and to press for Palestinian statehood.

5 – Working towards raising awareness on difficulties faced by Palestinians to visit Palestine, in violation of their religious and personal rights, according to the UN resolutions.

6 – Demanding Brazilian Local governments to commit to responsible investment by avoiding contracting with parties that support or benefit from occupation or violate related prohibitions under international law.

- 7 – Defending Palestinian right to protect their cultural heritage.
- 8 – Exchange of good practices between Palestinian and Brazilian local authorities.
- 9 – Mobilizing cities to know the reality of Palestine (in loco).
- 10 – Initiatives with city's networks to support the Palestinian causes.
- 11 – Working jointly towards realizing a local authorities conference to be held in Palestine and attended by many Brazilian local authorities and in partnership with Brazilian local authority associations.

Canoas, Brazil - 27^h November 2012