"Defending Palestine: Liberating the People, Land, and Animals

Conference Report

Inaugural Year
PALESTINIAN ANIMAL LEAGUE 2018

CONFERENCE REPORT

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Conference Summary and Mission

Palestinian Animal League (PAL) was excited to present its first three-day international conference in Palestine, from May 3-6, 2018. Since 2011, Palestinian Animal League has been re-framing the animal liberation movement in Palestine. Operating within a settler colonial context, the work of PAL challenges not only the systemic abuse of animals under occupation, but the theft of native Palestinian land and life, both human and nonhuman. For PAL, animal liberation cannot be divorced from anti-colonialism, Palestinian liberation and solidarity, and defense of the land and all the life that it supports.

The goal of this project was not to be a traditional conference; it aimed to focus on the shared struggle for liberation of all species in the West Bank, advance the work of international solidarity and intersect with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, challenge the narrative that settler states are anything but destructive for animals and the land, and provide insight into the specific work of animal liberation in settler colonial contexts. Through this conference, PAL sought to undermine Islamophobia, xenophobia, and anti-Arab racism in the animal rights movement.

We worked to ensure that this conference transcended beyond workshops and talks by including tours to three major cities that have been essential in developing our work: Jalizon Refugee Camp, Ramallah, and the village of NabiSalih. We also connected participants to individuals and organizations working in other cities and areas in the West Bank and Jerusalem for an extended period of discovery following the conference.

Our mission also included to use this first conference as a launching point from which we can learn, grow, and expand our future conference, projects, networks, and solidarity groups around the world.
### Conference Schedule of Speakers and Activities

#### Tuesday 3 May, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9:00 AM | 1- Welcoming by the officials of PAL  
          2- Welcome speech by Nasser Qatami, PAL Board Chairman  
          3- Speech by: Badeer Zamari, Exclusive Director of Sharek Youth Village  
          4- Welcoming by Ahmad Safi – PAL’s Executive Director  
          5- Press conference |
| 10:00 AM| **Speaker: Basel Abu Zyadeh**  
          Title: House of Hope, his youth empowerment program in Palestine |
| 12:00 PM| **Speaker: Nimer Khraim**  
          Title: The problem of working animals in Palestine: solutions, obstacles, and methods of intervention |
| 1:00 PM | Lunch Break |
| 2:00 PM | **Speaker: Belal Abu Hilal**  
          Title: TNVR pilot project in west bank |
| 4:00 PM | Leave for Ramallah |
| 5:00 PM | Guided Tour of Ramallah through the lens of animal and human rights issues |
| 8:00 PM | Dinner in Ramallah |

#### Wednesday 4 May, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9:00 AM | **Speaker: Esther Alloun**  
          Title: A critique of the Israeli animal rights movement |
| 10:00 AM| **Speaker: Klaus Petrus**  
          Title: Intersectionality, or: What’s wrong with an animal rights movement that doesn’t care about human rights? |
| 12:00 PM| **Speaker: Issa Manasra**  
          Title: Why Palestine demands more than human rights; why we need an animal rights movement in Palestine |
| 1:00 PM | Lunch Break |
| 2:00 PM | **Speaker: Fatima Da’na**  
          Topic: The Role and Status of Palestinian Women in the Struggle for National Liberation |
| 4:00 PM | Leave for Jalizon Refugee Camp |
| 5:00 PM | Guided tour of the Jalizon Refugee Camp with PAL Executive Director, Ahmed Safi |
| 8:00 PM | Dinner |
### Thursday 5 May, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Ahlam Tarayra</td>
<td>Intersectionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Sandra Guimaraes</td>
<td>The Israeli occupation is not vegan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Francisco Jafier</td>
<td>Solidarity Movement with Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Lunch Break</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>George Guimaraes</td>
<td>Vegetarian Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Maad Abu-Ghazalah</td>
<td>Change from Within - Creating the World In Which We Want to Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Danielle Williams</td>
<td>How to be involved with PAL as a foreigner or living abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leave for the village of Nabi Salih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with family of Ahed Tamimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion of Conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Days Following the Conference

Conference Participants privately organized tours and visits to:
- Bethlehem
- Jerusalem
- Hebron
- Jericho
### Conference Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>15 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*5 additional participants from Gaza were not granted permits to leave the Gaza Strip to attend the PAL Conference by Israeli control

** An additional UK participant was barred from entering and attending the PAL Conference by Israel passport control
**Budget Breakdown**

In the Palestinian Animal League, we are committed to transparency in all of our work and finances. For this reason and for our own learning experience, we have shared the total income and expenses from this conference. We are extremely grateful to our funders and conference participants for their financial support and we recognize the challenges such costs can pose for activists and nonprofit organizations in our field. Because this was our first conference, PAL learned a great deal regarding the realistic number of participants that we could expect and handle. Originally, we aimed to have many more participants and anticipated a significantly greater cost for food, transportation, and materials. In the end, many who wished to attend the conference were limited by a range of factors, unable to come, and our final costs were less than we had first anticipated. Learning from this experience at our first conference will allow PAL to more accurately budget and plan for our future conferences.

**Conference Funding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal People Forum Sponsorship</td>
<td>$1,850 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://animalpeopleforum.org/">http://animalpeopleforum.org/</a></td>
<td>(after taxes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private donation from Australia</td>
<td>$1,470 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private donation from UK</td>
<td>$300 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Well Fed World</td>
<td>$375 (after taxes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://awfw.org/">https://awfw.org/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Participant Fees</td>
<td>$1,400 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,395 USD</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conference Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location Rental</td>
<td>$800 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Transportation</td>
<td>$1,230 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>$1,370 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter Transportation</td>
<td>$820 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed Materials</td>
<td>$890 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound System Rental</td>
<td>$275 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,385 USD</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-Conference Feedback

Notes from the meeting following conference and in post-conference online survey, from participants and leadership (in yellow):

- Marketing
  - Should have created promotional video earlier
  - Should establish consistent branding one year before
  - Should include Arabic on all advertisement

- Logistics
  - More showers necessary at conference residence
  - Provide more fans and cooler areas, kitchen supplies, and mosquito nets/insect repellant
  - Lack of wifi was an issue, must alert people where to get a data plan ahead of time
  - Should have told participants to bring cool sheet for sleeping
  - Should provide sustainable resources like reusable cups/plates
  - Order and have all of the supplies (notebook/badges) long before the conference

- Preparation
  - Communication from PAL to participants was good prior to event
  - Overall was an “unbelievable event”

- Location
  - Sleep was challenging with the number of people per room
  - Too hot this time of year to be in rooms without AC
  - Maybe have a retreat at the Youth Village and then conference elsewhere
  - Next conference: In favor of hosting conference possibly at “Daily Hugs” farm OR at the Al Quds University during their summer holidays

- Food
  - Have a kitchen and use less plastic products
  - Good food, enough
  - More fruit! Fewer breads

- Late-Afternoon Tours
  - If the sites are too far away then participants don’t have the energy to travel and tour
  - Have more flexible time in schedule
  - Have separate busses so some people can return without being out late
  - Don’t have the party on the first night, rather have it on the last night
  - Very good to see Jalizon camp, want to continue to see the camps
  - Have party on the last day, see more intense stuff in the beginning
  - Possibly organize tours after the conference with tour guides

- Speakers
  - Participants need an introduction to the Palestine context at the start of the conference
  - Presenters’ topics at times needed to be more in the theme of the conference
  - “Animals and Stress” lecture was not clear why we had it, should be put in more context
  - Should prepare speakers more about the conference and the theme
  - We should have had an introduction about PAL’s work at the start of the conference
  - Dedicate the first evening to present for 10 minutes each participant’s group or work, ask everyone to prepare prior to the conference
  - Provide more time for discussion at specific times
- Need to hear more about the laws (and lack of laws) protecting animals in Palestine
- Possibly use some of the budget to pay the speakers
- Overall, we should have fewer speakers
- Have 4 lectures a day, only 2 before lunch and 2 after
- We need to include Gaza, record a video from the PAL Gaza team to explain the work that they’re doing
- Include topics related to religion
- **Important to keep a lot of local speakers**
- Should have translator for every lecture so that all lectures are in Arabic and English
- Possibly speak about LGBTQ issues in Palestine
- Explain the PAL “working animals” donkey and horse protection projects

- General feedback
  - Structure conference based on a political program
    - Palestinian solidarity movement, tap into that on an international level
    - Consider where activist energy will be spent once people leave
    - Follow up on solidarity groups following conference
  - Work to get more Palestinians involved to come to conference
  - Include more cultural events
  - Offer scholarships to participants to help them pay for flights
  - Discuss more of the BDS movement and solution-based discussions
  - Volunteer day in the community — have some service work set up after the conference
  - Should have more locals and local price should be more clear to Palestinians

- More women speakers, should have at least half of the presenters be women
  - First day was all men speaking; this gave the first impressions
  - Beginning was not a strong impression because of the number of men

**Conference Goals Moving Forward:**

- Plan to host an international conference every 2 years, the next conference planning to take place in 2020
- Have a wider range of speaker demographics, especially more women
- Support the Vegan Tour group in Bethlehem by incorporating their tours into conference
- In the years between the conference, invite people to come for a 10-day vegan tour and PAL volunteer work
PAL International Solidarity Groups’ Development Goals

To help facilitate the creation of a M.O.U. for all PAL Solidarity Groups

Activities that PAL Solidarity Groups can do:
- Create a list of popular BDS products in their country
- Support and share PAL online campaigns/petitions
- Give presentations about PAL and Palestine issues
- Fundraising events
- Translate articles
- Promote the vegan political tour
- Outreach media
- Photography/Graphics assistance
- Contacting local and national government about issues in Palestine
- Networking
- Offer thoughts on Palestinian issues from an outsider’s perspective
- Serve as a PAL spokesperson in each country
- Identify leaders in the community to spearhead leadership in solidarity group
- Get stores to create solidarity products where percentage of the sales goes to support PAL

Questions Solidarity members should ask themselves:
- How to support Palestinian team without overstepping
- Are we being “saviors”?
- Are we exchanging ideas?
- How to present PAL’s work in all contexts (AR movement/BDS/Human Rights)
- Trust the local activists in Palestine
- Am I oppressing others with my activism?
- How do we deal with Zionism criticism or being accused of antisemitism?
- Are my actions aligned with what Palestinians expect from my international group?

What are Responsibilities and Expectations of PAL solidarity group:
- “We are messengers, not leaders”
- Create list of BDS products to protest
- Educating public on Palestine
- Collecting donations
- Social media sharing
- Connect with universities and create university-related activities
- Circulate petitions
- Representing PAL at international animal rights conferences
- Exposing birth-right and vegan washing
- Fighting Islamophobia within the AR movement
- Share news updates about Palestine
- Registering as an NGO if possible
Resources from Conference Participants

**AUDIO:**

*Radio Interview “Palestinian Solidarity AND Animal Liberation with Michael Addario”*
With Michael Addario featured on KZFR “People Powered Radio

http://kzfr.org/broadcasts/13382

**TEXT:**

*“Postcard from Occupied Palestine”*
Summary of PAL Conference by Esther Alloun, PhD Candidate, Humanities and Social Inquiry

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1md2QaQHkdySvgyzYEM5P1hNDE5dIPWcFG/view

*“Palestine Animal League Conference: Defending Animal and Human Rights”*
Anon., Opinion piece and summary by PAL volunteer on their conference experience:


*“Vegan-Washing”*
Sandra Guimaraes, Article on the vegan-washing phenomenon in Israel

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1smLeJqB-Sd2UVVz23wWLOQhk7KyYjnc/view?usp=sharing

*“Fur PETA’s Sake: The Politics of Animals in the Zionist State”*
Written prior to the conference by Esther Alloun, PhD Candidate, Humanities and Social Inquiry
Includes topics of vegan-washing and intersectionality; also touches on the complexities and nuances of the Israeli movement.

‘Fur PETA’s Sake: The Politics of Animals in the Zionist State’

*“That’s the beauty of it, it’s very simple! Animal Rights and Settler Colonialism in Palestine—Israel”*
Written prior to the conference by Esther Alloun, PhD Candidate, Humanities and Social Inquiry
Deals with both Israeli and Palestinian activism. It was published in the academic journal *Settler Colonial Studies* which also has some very interesting papers on settler colonialism in different contexts, including Palestine.

‘That’s the beauty of it, it’s very simple!’ Animal rights and settler colonialism in Palestine—Israel’

**VIDEO:**

From the conference experience: “Discussion with a religious settler about the Israeli occupation in Hebron, Palestine”

https://youtu.be/0blvuFicOAs

From the conference experience: “Tamimi: Testimonial from a Palestinian mother and activist”

https://youtu.be/t9_LxUnYosU

“Defending Palestine” Promotional Video

https://www.facebook.com/322823654576671/videos/810690495789982/