



Press release

Gaza: CGIL endorses the humanitarian and non-violent initiative promoted by the Global Sumud Flotilla.

We invite everyone to take to the streets to demand an end to this barbarity on 6 September.

The Italian Government must commit to promoting peace, justice and international law.

In recent days, the Israeli government and army have been carrying out one of the gravest violations of humanitarian and international law in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israeli Government has decided to maintain its siege of the Gaza Strip through a further military escalation, which entails the displacement of the Palestinian population into uninhabitable refugee camps lacking security, food, water and medical care, with the subsequent intention of reoccupying the territory following such transfers. Furthermore, there has been an announcement of plans to isolate Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, with the E1 project providing for a new Jewish settlement on territory designated for the state of Palestine. These plans confirm the Israeli Government's true objective: to eliminate any viability of "two states for two peoples" and the very possibility of a Palestinian state, which many governments now claim they wish to recognize, albeit with culpable and serious delay.

The project will lead to the tragic loss of the lives of the hostages still held by Hamas. It uses hunger as a weapon of war and tramples international law, the only guarantee for peace and common security. This marks a definitive point of no return.

We are unable to remain silent. We must not allow this to happen. The time for words is over. Democratic states and governments, members of the United Nations, signatories to agreements, treaties and conventions for the respect of human rights, legality, justice and humanitarian law must take action to put an end to this barbarity. "We are no longer able to accept the killing with impunity of children, women, humanitarian workers, health workers and journalists, and the continued destruction of remaining civilian infrastructure, starting with hospitals and schools.

For this reason, we renew our commitment to mobilising as widely as possible, and to extending support to those who have rebelled in Israel in recent days. We endorse the demands put forward by the global trade union ITUC to all Heads of State and Government, including the Italian one, in order to: cease the delivery of weapons, achieve a ceasefire and guarantee the

immediate entry of unlimited humanitarian aid, release all hostages and political prisoners, recognise the state of Palestine, end the occupation and stop trade with illegal settlements, and strengthen democracy in order to achieve lasting peace throughout the region.

We also reiterate the requests that the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), together with the European trade union federations, has made to the European Commission to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement and stop all trade in goods produced in illegal settlements.

For these reasons, we support the humanitarian and non-violent initiative promoted by the Global Sumud Flotilla. This grassroots movement is mobilising individuals from all over the world to break the embargo and isolation of the besieged and starving Palestinian population of Gaza.

We are also continuing and relaunching the CGIL solidarity fundraising campaign. This campaign enabled us to send two containers of basic necessities in the months immediately following the Israeli attack. We also financed the production of “family packs” of vegetables grown in Gaza by Palestinian women's associations. Their distribution took place in the Al Amal Al Taawony refugee camp set up in Gaza City. Thanks to the financial resources we have obtained, we will soon be able to buy and distribute “family packs” and hot meals for about thousand families. We are working together with the Association of Italian NGOs and the CISS in Palermo – International Cooperation South South - to make this happen.

For these reasons, the CGIL invites workers, pensioners, students, associations, artists, intellectuals and journalists to join together in all the squares of Italian cities for an initial mobilisation on Saturday 6 September to demand an end to the ongoing barbarity and for the Italian government to take a stand for peace, justice and international law.

Rome, 27 August