

Palestinians call to ban genocidal Israel from Eurovision

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New York, February 7 (RHC)-- The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) and the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate call on the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) to ban Israel from the Eurovision Song Contest – the world's biggest live music event – or face widespread boycotts.

Israel, considered an apartheid state by major human rights organisations worldwide, is accused by South Africa, supported by tens of states, of genocide against Palestinians in Gaza at the International Court of Justice.

A senior UN human rights official and a prominent Israeli scholar of the Holocaust and genocide have described Israel's war on the 2.3 million Palestinians in the occupied and besieged Gaza as “a textbook case of genocide.” Dozens of UN experts and hundreds of international law scholars have also warned of “a genocide in the making.”

Well before Israel's ongoing genocide, PACBI, a founding member of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), the largest coalition in Palestinian society that is leading the global BDS movement, called for suspending Israel's participation in Eurovision.

It said, “by sanctioning Russia for its then days-old invasion of Ukraine, while shielding apartheid Israel from accountability despite its decades-old regime of oppression against Palestinians, Eurovision organisers the EBU display utterly hypocritical, racist and colonial disregard for Palestinian life.”

Should the EBU fail to drop apartheid Israel from Eurovision, Palestinians and the millions who support our liberation struggle will campaign for a boycott of the contest.

Accountability for Israel's genocide and apartheid is urgently needed more than ever. Providing cultural cover for Israel's mass slaughter of tens of thousands of Palestinians, almost half of whom are children, would amount to enabling and covering up war crimes and crimes against humanity. This would be an irony of history particularly given Europe's dark past of centuries of brutal colonialism, slavery and multiple genocides.

According to Israeli media reports, “the official Instagram account of Finland's pre-Eurovision contest hinted that the country may not participate in the contest in May in Sweden, because of ‘the situation in the Middle East,’” which is being interpreted as alluding to a possible “boycott due to Israel's participation.” The Icelandic and Slovenian broadcasters have also raised concerns about Israel's participation.

We applaud the Icelandic Association of Composers and Lyricists, more than 1,400 Finnish artists, official fan associations, several current and previous Eurovision finalists and contestants, and the Swedish Left Party, who have already called for apartheid Israel to be banned from the contest, just like Russia was. We echo their calls.

Participating Israeli state broadcaster Kan recently posted a chilling, genocidal video of Israeli children singing: “We will annihilate them all [Palestinians in Gaza].” This alone should have justified the expulsion of Kan from Eurovision.

Drunk on impunity, Israeli officials have even tried to publicly intimidate the BBC into dropping the UK contestant, who had previously signed an open letter criticising Israel's genocide in Gaza and cynical pinkwashing of its apartheid regime.

The letter the UK contestant had signed read, in part: “we, as LGBTQIA+ people, cannot let others weaponise our struggles for freedom on the basis of sexuality and gender identity to justify systemic

occupation and genocide of a people.”

The year-long BDS campaign to boycott Israel’s hosting of Eurovision 2019 in apartheid Tel Aviv denied Israel its propaganda whitewash. Well over 100 LGBTQ+ organisations, hundreds of leading artists, and millions of people across Europe supported the boycott.

Blanket mainstream media coverage then gave prominence to BDS, labelling the contest “the most political” Eurovision ever. Only a fraction of expected visitors turned up. The word most-tweeted alongside Israel’s official Eurovision hashtag, aside from “Israel”, was “apartheid.”

PACBI calls on all who reject genocide and apartheid to stand together and pressure the EBU to ban Israel from Eurovision, and to boycott the contest should it fail to.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/cultura/346501-palestinians-call-to-ban-genocidal-israel-from-eurovision>



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