

Irish club shows support for Palestine with new football shirt

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Irish top-flight club Bohemian FC aims to create awareness about the Palestinian cause and to raise funds for children in the Tulkarm refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

Dublin, February 20 (RHC)-- Irish top-flight football club Bohemian FC has released a new football kit to help create awareness about human rights violations in Palestine by Israel, and to raise funds for children in Tulkarm refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

Bohemian FC, a 132-year-old football club based in Dublin, released a new white shirt on Thursday in support of the Palestinian cause.

The shirt carries the Palestinian colours in a repetitive pattern across the front and back, as well as a dove icon below the collar. “Ten percent of the profits from the jersey will provide sports equipment to the Palestine Sport for Life project in Tulkarm,” the club said in a statement.

The Tulkarm camp was established in 1950 and is one of the most densely populated – built on an area of 0.18sq km (0.069sq miles) – refugee camps in the occupied West Bank, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The camp was severely affected during the second Intifada by Israeli incursions, arrests, raids and curfews

The club said funds raised from this initiative will go towards a Palestine-based sports NGO working on “empowering girls, especially in marginalised areas, in their right to play football and to develop their life skills” “This 2023 shirt is aiming to assist children in Palestine who face unimaginable challenges and human rights violations each and every day,” Daniel Lambert, chief operating officer of the club, said in a statement.

Ireland has a long history of supporting the Palestinian cause. It was the first member of the European community to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1980, with others following a few months later, and became a stalwart advocate for the two-state solution, hosting and meeting with PLO leader Yasser Arafat on several occasions, sometimes to the ire of the Israeli government.

Although Ireland has never broken with European Union foreign policy and still officially supports the two-state solution set out in the Oslo Accords, leaders from across the Irish political spectrum have sharply criticised Israel’s settlement policy, breaches of human rights, and undermining of the peace process.

The Palestinian cause has also been long supported by Scottish football club Celtic, whose fans fly the Palestinian flags and sing songs in support at every home match Last year’s FIFA World Cup in Qatar also saw widespread support for Palestine from Muslim football players, as well as fans from across the world.

Players of the Moroccan football team posed with the flag after each win, while football fans from across the Muslim world sported armbands, kaffiyehs, and scarves in Palestinian colours.

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