



NEHAWU

National Education Health & Allied Workers' Union

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MEDIA STATEMENT-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEHAWU SUPPORTS PALESTINIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS HUNGER STRIKE AND UPCOMING DAY OF ACTION

Wednesday April 26, 2017

The National Education Health & Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] supports the collective hunger strike by Palestinian political prisoners which began on April 17 (on the day observed by Palestinians as Prisoners Day).

The hunger strike, held under the slogan "Freedom and Dignity," highlights a number of key demands of the Palestinian prisoners, including family visits, appropriate medical care, ending abusive conditions and stopping the use of solitary confinement and administrative detention, imprisonment without charge or trial.

As the strike begins, Israeli jails hold approximately 6,500 Palestinian political prisoners. This number includes nearly 300 children. More than 500 of them are imprisoned without charge or trial under Israel's notorious "administrative detention".

This is the largest collective hunger strike of Palestinian political prisoners since 2012 and before that, 2004, when mass hunger strikes united thousands of Palestinian political prisoners for key demands, many of which were achieved in those strikes. There is a lengthy history of collective hunger strikes in Israeli jails organized by the Palestinian prisoners' movement, stretching back decades.

During the apartheid regime of the National Party, hunger strikes were used by political prisoners in South Africa to fight against detention without trial and other horrid apartheid conditions. NEHAWU calls on the Israeli government to immediately release all Palestinian political prisoners.

NEHAWU throws its full weight and support behind the South African campaign in support of the Palestinian political prisoners. With other progressive South African organizations, unions and parties we will be joining the upcoming solidarity events and activities. In particular NEHAWU will mobilize its entire membership to participate

in the upcoming 15th of May 24 hour fast and day of action in solidarity with the Palestinian political prisoners and their hunger strike.

Issued by NEHAWU Secretariat

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