



## **#StandWithThe6: Madison-Rafah Sister City Project Condemns Persecution of Six Palestinian Human Rights Groups**

Madison-Rafah Sister City Project unequivocally condemns the labeling of six Palestinian civil society groups as “terrorists” by Israeli Minister of Defense Benny Gantz. This designation means that Israel can now subject the individual members and staff of these groups to indefinite detention; prohibit them from speaking outside the country; block their international funding; and physically seize & ransack their offices and property.

Slandering and prohibiting the work of human rights groups who reveal damaging and embarrassing facts about Israel and its apartheid regime has for decades been standard practice of Israel and its allies.

As an organization which has for nearly 19 years educated the citizens of the Madison area about the realities of life for ordinary Palestinians, and provided solidarity and humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Rafah, Gaza, and Palestine in general, we have bitter firsthand experience with the damage caused by these false labels. Our effort to achieve official sister city status in 2004-5 was defeated after heavy lobbying and arm-twisting by supporters of the Israeli government, who loudly, shamelessly and without one shred of evidence declared it to be "support of terrorists" and "anti-Semitic".

To stand with Palestine is to stand with humanity. Madison-Rafah Sister City Project stands in solidarity with [Addameer](#), [Al-Haq](#), [Defense for Children International – Palestine](#), the [Union of Agricultural Work Committees](#), the [Bisan](#)

[Center for Research and Development](#), and the [Union of Palestinian Women Committees](#). We call on ordinary citizens and elected officials alike, whether in the United States or abroad, to publicly rebuke this move.

In particular, we urge our own representative, Congressman Mark Pocan, to further denounce these baseless designations and to cosponsor Congresswoman Betty McCollum's House Resolution 751, "Condemning the repressive designation by the Government of Israel of six prominent Palestinian human rights and civil society groups as terrorist organizations, and for other purposes". We also ask Senator Tammy Baldwin why she has been so conspicuously silent on this issue.

Madison-Rafah Sister City Project also supports the efforts of the [U.S. Palestinian Community Network \(USPCN\)](#), [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), the [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#), and many others to demand that the U.S. State Department, specifically Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Deputy Secretary of State Hady Amr, force Israel to rescind its unjust designation of these six essential Palestinian organizations. See [bit.ly/DefendPaliOrgs](https://bit.ly/DefendPaliOrgs) for resources.