



## Press Release

16 July, 2021  
Canberra, Australia

### Comments made by Mr. Albanese MP on Israeli Apartheid

In a Zoom call organized by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese criticized the use of the term *apartheid* to describe the Israeli political system and structure. He deemed it “not appropriate,” and argued that it “cheapens the struggle against apartheid that occurred in South Africa led by Mandela and others.”

Nobel Peace Prize laureate and anti-apartheid activist Desmond Tutu wrote: "I know firsthand that Israel has created an apartheid reality within its borders and through its occupation. The parallels to my own beloved South Africa are painfully stark indeed."

The term apartheid was created in the context of South Africa, but has since been developed into a universal legal term outlined in a number of international treaties and United Nations resolutions including the 1973 Apartheid Convention, and the 1998 Rome Statute. The three main elements of apartheid (according to the Rome Statute) are:

1. Inhumane acts, which are;
2. Committed in the context of systematic oppression and domination of one racial group over any other group or groups; and
3. The intent to maintain this regime.

Many prestigious organisations and individual experts (including [Human Rights Watch](#), [B'Tselem](#), [The South African Human Sciences Research Council](#), and former UN secretary-general [Ban Ki-moon](#)) have identified that Israel has committed crimes against the Palestinian people which constitute apartheid. Human Rights Watch presented evidence that, “in most aspects of life, Israeli authorities methodically privilege Jewish Israelis and discriminate against Palestinians. Laws, policies, and statements by leading Israeli officials make plain that the objective of maintaining Jewish Israeli control over demographics, political power, and land has long guided government policy. In pursuit of this goal, authorities have dispossessed, confined, forcibly separated, and subjugated Palestinians by virtue of their identity to varying degrees of intensity. [In certain areas] these deprivations are so severe that they amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution.”

The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific calls on the Leader of the Opposition to reconsider and clarify this disappointing, regrettable and ill-informed statement, which is an insult to the Palestinian people struggling for freedom and equality, and undermines the principled decision made recently by the National ALP Conference for the next Labor government to recognise the State of Palestine.

For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific: ph. (02) 6286 9193.

