

**what to do
when you
too,
become a
“terrorist”**

**a guide for a practical and
political response to being
designated**

samidoun
PALESTINIAN PRISONER SOLIDARITY NETWORK

congratulations!

You are here because the ruling class considers you a threat to its existence - what an honor, truly. If you as an individual or your organization is being listed or threatened with listing, you are in good company, and you are not alone

Like the Zionist entity fears the Palestinian resistance, so do the imperialist powers fear the Palestinian diaspora and their supporters that have been rising up again and again, especially since the start of operation Al-Aqsa Flood and the Zionist genocide. They fear a strong, popular movement that threatens their economic and political interests in Palestine and the region.

Repression is a sign of strength for the Palestinian movement and the international solidarity movement. This movement has mobilized the largest demonstrations for Palestine in history, has cost Israeli and Zionist companies billions of dollars in losses, it has united millions of people from across the world as well as virtually all social movements in every country for the Palestinian liberation struggle.

combat isolation

Terrorist designations are an attempt to isolate the international popular cradle from the Palestinian resistance and the victories of our prisoners movement. Let us be clear, these “designations” are acts of genocide, plain and simple. The latest round of designation from the US treasury department makes this clear - all of these designations are clearly intended to advance the US-Zionist genocidal starvation policy currently being carried out against the Palestinian people as a whole, and particularly in Gaza.

These attacks aim to cut off the independent Arab, Palestinian, Islamic and international aid and lifelines of support for Palestinians under siege and genocide, and seek to subjugate the Palestinian people to the conditional “aid” provided by the imperialist powers and complicit institutions.

In the face of criminalization, it is crucial to keep your comrades close, maintain and sustain your organizing relationships, and do not disappear. Do not do the state’s work of retreating and isolating yourself. Collectivize risk by moving as one united front in the face of repression.

The response to “terrorist” designations of any kind cannot be to isolate the designated organizations, warn movement organizations against “coordinating” with them or refuse to speak about them.

we keep us safe

At the end of the day, the most pressing security issues any organization and movement faces is the wrong people having access to sensitive decisions and information. The imperialist state or zionist movement doesn't need to use a hacking tool like Pegasus if there is someone undesirable taking screenshots of messaging threads or recording meetings.

Remaining true to our politics is one of our best protections. No matter the level of risk currently involved or the clandestinity of your particular operation, if your collective is ironing out and regularly attending to areas where your political line might be lacking or you may not all be on the same page, then in the worst case you can more easily be aware of those around you who may be operating in bad faith or who can be disruptive in other ways (e.g. government infiltrator).

In the best and most typical case, it will help strengthen your political line and increase genuine harmony in your group.

The "better" and more developed your politics, the harder it is for infiltrators to either skew the direction your org takes, sow discord, or remain under cover.

Good politics are not something an infiltrator can easily mimic fluently, without something seeming distinctly off; they must be cultivated with time, care, and collective labor.

***WE DO NOT LET
REPRESSION MAKE US
WATER DOWN OUR
DEMANDS, TACTICS, OR
POLITICAL LINES OUT OF
FEAR THAT THE MEDIA
OR GOVERNMENT WILL
TARGET US - THEY WILL
DO THIS REGARDLESS***

we defy, we defend

DON'T PANIC, DON'T DISAPPEAR

For many decades the imperial core and its colonial outposts like "Israel" have used terrorist lists and designations to criminalize liberation movements.

Because you or your organization have been deemed a "terrorist" by an imperialist entity does not mean you have done something wrong, in fact, we must remember that to be attacked by the enemy is not a bad thing, but a good thing. **This work must continue regardless of the name or organization.**

The very framework of "terrorism" and being considered a "terrorist" is white supremacist logic that exists to justify settler-colonial and imperialist projects like that of the Zionist project.

We must demand the abolition of the so-called terrorist list instead of a supposed reclamation of the use of the term "terrorism" (such as in claiming "Israel" is the Real terrorist) which ultimately does not serve us. Rather, we should be specific and accurate in naming our enemies as Ibrahim Traoré has recently reminded us, **"it's not terrorism, it's imperialism"**.

we defy, we defend

GROUND IN THE HISTORY OF OUR MOVEMENT

We know these designations are an attack on the Palestinian liberation movement as well as the right of Palestinians in exile and diaspora to organize.

Many Western countries and imperialist-backed governments – see, for example, the Duterte regime in the Philippines new Anti-Terror Bill, used against activists, peoples' rights workers and revolutionary movements – have based their anti-terrorism legislation in many aspects on the U.S. list of "foreign terrorist organizations."

The first iteration of today's list of "foreign terrorist organizations" was created by the United States government specifically to attack organizations that aimed to "disrupt the Middle East Peace Process" – that is, the Palestinian and Arab resistance that rejected the attempt to liquidate the Palestinian struggle through the Oslo process. This political framework – the use of "terrorist" designations to punish noncompliant Palestinians and those who refuse to relinquish their rights or their vision for liberation – continues to define the use of "terrorist" listing against Palestinians today. The "terrorist" label is used to impose conditions of defeat or surrender on the Palestinian people, while those that reject such conditions and continue to resist are criminalized.

the people, united

PLAN YOUR DEFENSE STRATEGY

Forming an arrest plan for you and your comrades is a good way to ensure that your personal and political needs are met in the case of political incarceration. Put together a Personal Information Form that answers questions ranging from what you may need inside (i.e. daily meds) to the specifics of a defense campaign. Remember, knowing the “letter of the law” is useful but is not a place from which your political defense strategy should be formed. If the law was moral and just, “terrorist” designations would not happen in the first place.

Despite advice lawyers may provide you, a politic of innocence and denying our right to resist does not advance our movement. Any movement or organization that is fighting for Palestine must stand up first and foremost alongside the Forces of the Regional Resistance and strive to do everything we can to live up to the example they are setting on a daily basis.

JUST KEEP GOING

We know that the primary way to confront these designations is by intensifying our organizing, action, mobilization, and resistance to bring down the structures of colonialism, implement the right to return for Palestinian refugees, and support the liberation of all Palestinian prisoners and of Palestine, from the river to the sea.

strengthen operational security

*remember, OPSEC is important and mitigates risks, but does not protect against them entirely

secure operating systems

Google Pixels can install the **Graphene** operating system. This will make it as difficult as possible for an adversary to geo-track your device, intercept messages, or hack it. iPhone users can turn on **Lockdown Mode** in their settings to protect from cyber attacks including state spyware, however, this significantly limits a lot of user features. Many PC users can install **Tails** operating system on their computer. Tails is a free and portable operating system that protects against surveillance and censorship and operates using a USB and Tor network to run. When removing the USB or shutting down the computer, it leaves no trace on the computer and you can go back to your usual OS.

make stronger passwords

State actors can use brute force technology to easily bypass 6 digit passwords. Use an alphanumeric passcode for enhanced security on your devices and **turn-off biometric** device access (touch and/or face ID).

“THE IMMEDIATE AIM OF THE POLICE IS MORE TO KNOW, THAN TO REPRESS. TO KNOW, IN ORDER TO REPRESS AT THE APPOINTED HOUR, TO THE EXTENT DESIRED—IF NOT ALTOGETHER.

VICTOR SERGE

backup your digital accounts

- You absolutely cannot rely on the "reasonability" of your online materials, such as never praising the Resistance or never posting about figures like Yahya Sinwar, from social media bans (or of course, "terrorist" designations)
- Create backup Telegram and Meta accounts, and backup your Youtube channel to Odysee, Rumble, or Peertube-- upon a ban (or before) you can re-direct people to these new channels,
- **Begin this backup process ahead of time**
- Get your organizational domains **outside** of the US, UK or any western state; register it outside of any country where criminalization is likely. **Why?** When you are designated as a terrorist organization, companies and organizations are prohibited from providing any services to the listed organization (usually the consequences for this are large fines)
- Transfer your contact lists and other resources to aligned organizations or coalitions **before designation** so that they can continue to be used
- To avoid ruling-class censorship we ultimately must become less and less reliant on the digital sphere and be more and more creative in our practices

VPNs & internet browsing

VPNs are virtual private networks that mask your IP address from your internet service provider (ISP) which protects your online activity from being tracked. VPNs that do not log your data and host multiple devices are Mullvad and Surfshark.

Brave or Tor browser should be used for enhanced security when browsing the internet. Both shield against tracking, cyber fingerprinting, and do not collect your data. Tor also prevents someone watching your connection, like your ISP, from knowing what websites you visit. When using Tor, all anyone monitoring your browsing habits can see is that you are using Tor as a browser. Because of Tor's enhanced security, it runs slower than a browser like Brave.

Tor + VPN?

A VPN runs through an app on your device which means all of your device's web traffic is encrypted, not just what you type into your browser. This includes the Tor browser when it is being used. This combination is referred to as **Tor over VPN** or **Onion over VPN**. If you connect to a VPN first and then connect to Tor afterwards, you will have successfully done this. Tor over VPN ensures that anyone watching cannot even see that you are using Tor. This extra layer of privacy means the browser will run slower, too. Launching Tor browser first and then connecting to a VPN after does not enhance anonymity.

encrypted messaging

In-person, device-free conversations are always best for communicating sensitive information, but of course this is not always possible. Signal, Molly for Androids, and Element (the latter functioning similarly to Discord) are **open-source** messaging apps that use **end-to-end encryption**. Although apps like Telegram, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp all host end-to-end encryption options for online communication, they are closed source softwares which means users cannot identify other possible concerns that may impact their security. Meta, Telegram, and other Big Tech corporations also have a history of police cooperation.

the state of your device matters

The state of your device, whether it is on or off, significantly affects an adversary's ability to access it with technology like Cellebrite or MSAB's XRY.

Before First Unlock (BFU) mode is likely your phone's most secure state. If you are expecting your device to be seized, it is best practice to turn it off to re-encrypt it. Times when this may be necessary could be before a direct action, before going to bed, or before you cross an international border. Take a look at this [guide*](https://discuss.grapheneos.org/d/14344-cellebrite-premium-july-2024-documentation) to see if your device is vulnerable to Cellebrite access as it depends on your phone model, the operating system, if it's unlocked, and more.

*<https://discuss.grapheneos.org/d/14344-cellebrite-premium-july-2024-documentation>

No online or digital activity is ever truly anonymous or untraceable, but practicing operational security can help us evade state intervention, sabotage, surveillance, and criminalization. This is especially important when our organizing activities challenge the law-- **laws that are oppressive, genocidal, and must be challenged in order to advance liberation struggles of all kinds.**

In our security practices, though, we must be cognizant about not self-censoring or policing one another's actions. This benefits the imperialist war machine that has historically relied on a "divide and conquer" strategy through tools like fear-mongering about "outside agitators". OPSEC decision-making must be grounded in our anti-imperialist politics and be goal-oriented. Think critically about why you are choosing certain practices. Ask yourself important questions, like: how can I collectivize the risk I want to take? How does this risk advance our struggle? De-centralize OPSEC info to empower yourself and your comrades with knowledge. **When we know how to keep each other safe, we are better prepared to take on risk. Practicing OPSEC and building a disciplined security culture allows us to keep going in the face of repression.**

Lastly, just because your adversaries know who you are does not mean you shouldn't have good security practices. Similarly, just because they know who you are does not mean they will act on it. The less they know the better.



Samidoun Network
@SamidounPP



After becoming the US/Canada equivalent of this, this is the least surprising memo we've ever seen. There's nothing unique about this, unfortunately -- it's the standard large Western imperialist based NGO approach to designations, proscriptions and political bans.

**let's learn the
lesson this
time,
and act**



Asa Winstanley @AsaWinstanley · 22h

While @Pal_action is fighting for its life against proscription, @PSCupdates threatens its branches with consequences if they support them.

I've obtained an internal PSC email which shows @BenJamalpSC has ordered his branches:...

[Show more](#)

**it's that
every time
the reaction
[to
repression]
is as
described
above, the
imperialist
powers
learn that
surely, they
can get
away with it**



Samidoun Network @SamidounPP · 22h



An enormous amount of time and energy is spent on isolating groups subjected to such measures, and even on trying to do so with the actual resistance leading the movement, as they are also designated & proscribed, in the apparent belief that this provides some form of protection.



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Samidoun Network @SamidounPP · 22h



There is no shortage of "wise" and "smart" advice about how you should never: attend international events if someone or a group designated by the US/Canada/UK/EU will be there; speak to people from such groups as it may be "coordination"; doing otherwise is "putting ppl at risk"



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Samidoun Network @SamidounPP · 22h



People will even hold briefings about how to engage in compliance management most efficiently, and re-label this a service to the movement. Never mind all the advice about how you should never mourn Yahya Sinwar, Ismail Haniyeh, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, let alone Mohammed Deif.



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Samidoun Network @SamidounPP · 22h



This isn't a matter of alienating allies at a dangerous time, when the proscription of @Pal_action requires the organizing of all to fight. It's that every time the reaction is as described above, the imperialist powers learn that surely, they can get away with it.



Samidoun Network @SamidounPP · 21h



If we don't rally - for real, even w/ risks - behind those who are targeted, and especially @Pal_action w/ its leadership in direct action materially resisting the Zionist-imperialist war machine, we encourage the state to do this MORE. So let's learn the lesson this time & act.

we stronger together

What is important to remember in the face of political repression and counterinsurgency is the importance of remaining true to your principles. Despite attempts to isolate you and your comrades from the movement, it is urgent to continue the work and fill in the gaps that others refuse to.

Members of Samidoun across North America continue to organize in the face of state counter-terrorism efforts because we know that risk and sacrifice is required in struggle.

We also know that escalation is required to advance our struggle,

are

and if we retreat now we are ultimately doing the state's bidding in this post-designation era.

We must find ways to be creative and continue organizing for Palestinian liberation, from the river to the sea. As "terrorist" designations become the norm, our rejection and refusal of these tools of genocide must also be normalized.

If you or your organization have become designated "terrorists" or are facing related terror charges, contact Samidoun at samidoun@samidoun.net. We are stronger together.

Further reading

- Theirs and Ours: Terrorism's "Inclusivity" Argument by Musa D. Springer
- Not Liking Someone Doesn't Mean They're a Cop: On Bad-jacketing
- Samidoun: Sanctions on Addameer and five Palestinian charities are acts of genocide by U.S. imperialism
- Reflections On Victor Serge's "What Everyone Should Know About State Repression by James Yaki Sayles
- The War Before, by Safiya Bukhari [Chapters 4 & 5]
- IBON: A Quick Guide for Human Rights Defenders
- War at Home: Covert Action Against U.S. Activists and What We Can Do About It by Brian Glick
- Unityoffields.net

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