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# **‘You can’t liberate land but not women’: Thousands of Palestinians protest violence against women**

Sunday 6 October 2019, by [Al-BAZZ Ahmad](#) (Date first published: 27 September 2019).

**On Thursday, thousands of Palestinians protested for women’s rights in twelve locations across Palestine/Israel and the diaspora following recent high profile cases of gender-based violence against women in Palestinian society.**



*Ramallah city center, Sep 26, 2019. Photo by Ahmad Al-Bazz / Activestills.org*

Protests took place in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, Gaza, Beirut, and Berlin, among other locations. The protesters, who were overwhelmingly women, chanted against honor killing, patriarchy, Israeli colonization, and held photographs of victims of violence and female prisoners in Israeli jails.

The actions were organized by a Palestinian feminist campaign called “Tal’at” (“coming out” in Arabic) and held under the slogan: “you can’t liberate land but not women”.



*Ramallah city center, Sep 26, 2019. Photos by Ahmad Al-Bazz / Activestills.org*

"You can't divide the concept of freedom. Fighting for women's rights stems from the same concept as fighting Israeli colonization", Lema Nazeeh, one of the organizers in Ramallah, told Mondoweiss. She said the goal of the action is "a homeland empty of all kinds of oppression".

All actions ended peacefully except for one in Jerusalem which met Israeli forces at the Damascus Gate, one of the main entrances to the old city where Israeli forces are always present. Policemen suppressed the protest and tried to take down a Palestinian flag held by the protesters.



*Jaffa city, Sep 26, 2019. The sign on the left reads: "revolution against patriarchy and colonization"  
Photo by Keren Manor/ Activestills.org*

Anas Hamdallah, one of the male participants in Ramallah, told Mondoweiss that "members of the Palestinian society have to reconcile themselves to be more powerful for the stage of liberation from the colonial system".

On the other side of the green line, protests took place in the heart of some of the mixed cities, including Jaffa and Haifa. In a press statement, organizers shared their political positions towards Israeli feminist activists by saying they refused for their struggle to be "used to legitimize the colonizer's violence". The organizers also refused "to interact or engage with any Israeli platform or entity", including Israeli mainstream media.



*Jaffa, 26 septembre 2019. Photos : Keren Manor/ Activestills.org*

One of the organizers in Jaffa told Mondoweiss that the campaign started in Haifa and aimed to reach out to Palestinian communities all over the country. She said two protests also took place in Beirut and Berlin on the same day as well.

"We joined to overcome the dictates of geographic separation and isolation imposed on us by settler colonialism and its various manifestations", said Maya Zebdawi, a Palestinian refugee protester in Beirut.

She said the participation of Palestinian refugees in Beirut highlighted the importance of “re-building the Palestinian collective awareness despite the geographical fragmentation”.



*Haifa city, Sep 26, 2019. Photos by Maria Zreik/ Activestills.org*

The protest wave comes following the suspected “honor killing” of Israa Ghrayeb, 21, by male family members in a village outside Bethlehem in August. According to reports, Ghrayeb, 21, was killed after a posting a video on social media of herself and her soon-to-be fiancé. The case has dominated Palestinian public opinion for the past month.

The Palestinian Women’s Center for Legal Aid documented at least 23 cases of women’s deaths due to gender-based violence in Palestinian society in 2018 [1].

**Ahmad Al-Bazz**

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## **P.S.**

- Mondoweiss. September 27, 2019:  
[https://mondoweiss.net/2019/09/liberate-thousands-palestinians/?fbclid=IwAR3kfgLwWvHK1gRQ41MzEsecspL0MxZXc60fgA3G\\_SuMlB3T4KLoME481tU](https://mondoweiss.net/2019/09/liberate-thousands-palestinians/?fbclid=IwAR3kfgLwWvHK1gRQ41MzEsecspL0MxZXc60fgA3G_SuMlB3T4KLoME481tU)
- Ahmad Al-Bazz, born in 1993, is a multi-award winning journalist, photographer and documentary filmmaker based in the West Bank city of Nablus. Ahmad holds an MA degree in Television Studies from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, and a BA degree in Media and Mass Communication from An-Najah National University in Palestine. Since 2012, Ahmad has been a member of the Activestills documentary photography collective that operates in Palestine/Israel region.

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## **Footnotes**

- [1] [http://www.wclac.org/files/annual\\_reports/2018/o8w1xrico0azfytkhklpv1.pdf](http://www.wclac.org/files/annual_reports/2018/o8w1xrico0azfytkhklpv1.pdf)