

Why Palestine is a Feminist Issue

Thursday, 6 June 2024 09:00 (1h 30m)

This roundtable will discuss why feminists and feminism should care (more) about the question of Palestine and, more generally, about struggles against settler colonialism, dispossession and imperialist violence. As Global South and feminists of colour have demonstrated, western feminism has been historically complicit with colonial projects, ignoring the structural, epistemic and direct harms caused by empire and even supporting military interventions under the banner of “saving women”. The Hamas attacks of 7 October 2023 and Israel’s ensuing massive bombardment, destruction and total siege of the Gaza Strip (still ongoing at the time of writing) have once again raised questions about the relationship between western feminism and empire, with academic Maryam Aldossari accusing western feminists of being indifferent to the suffering of Palestinian women trying to survive under Israel’s bombs. Meanwhile, Sisters Uncut, a UK anti-domestic violence group that have been mobilising many pro-Palestine actions throughout the period of Israel’s bombing campaign, refused the false binary of opposing justice for Palestinians on the one hand, and feminism on the other, after the Jewish Chronicle newspaper questioned why a feminist group would care about Gaza. Finally, Palestinian women’s groups have called on women and women’s organizations worldwide “to speak up and rise up to support our struggle to end this genocide”. This roundtable will bring together a range of feminist scholars to further discuss the intersections of feminism, the Palestine question and anticolonial struggle more broadly. Some of the issues that will be considered include:

- Building transnational feminist solidarity with Palestinians
- Feminist approaches to imperialism, settler colonialism, war and occupation
- The gendered dimensions of Israel’s settler colonialism
- The gendered impacts of military occupation, siege, war, violence and incarceration
- The experiences and agency of Palestinian women at the intersection of colonial violence and patriarchy
- Palestinian women’s resistance to occupation, siege, war, violence and patriarchy
- History of Palestinian women’s transnational activism
- Palestinian women’s involvement in Palestinian political factions and the national movement more broadly

Track Classification: Gendering International Relations Working Group