

## **UAWC's statement on the occasion of Land Day**

### **Protecting Our Land and Supporting Our Farmers**

**30<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.** Our people in all of historic Palestine and in all countries of exile and diaspora are reviving the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Land Day to reinforce their attachment to their own land and their unity to defend their existence in the face of the Israel's colonial project.

The revival of this occasion this year came in the light of many challenges and risks facing our people, at the forefront of these risks are daily killings and constant looting of land and its natural resources in Palestine which is considered flagrant violation of all international conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention and international humanitarian law. These violations in combined with catastrophic division and the absence of consolidated national strategy deteriorate the Palestinian situation

The Israeli occupation has not only replaced the indigenous population with 700,000 Israeli settlers now living in the West Bank including Jerusalem. It also has established and still establishing more outposts and settlement units without paying any attention to Security Council Resolution 2334, which considered the Israeli settlement as "flagrant violation" of international law and has "no legal validity".

Thus, the revival of Land Day shall be accompanied with practical steps that restore the importance of the land as a core of the conflict with "Israel". In other words, revive the Palestinian issue as a national liberation issue that has not yet achieved its objectives.

In addition, the revival of Land Day requires Palestinian government, private sector and civil society organization to put the protection of land as their main priority. As well as, it requires us to link between the production values of the land with its national historical value.

Therefore, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) urges the Palestinian Authority (PA) to take a number of steps to strengthen the steadfastness of the Palestinian people on their land, and support their resistance against the settlement expansion and the Apartheid wall. We also urge the PA to adopt progressive development and socio-economic policies that ensure the rights of small scale farmers.

Moreover, we urge the PA to take the following steps as soon as possible:-

First: Raising the share of the agricultural sector in the Palestinian Authority's budget to suit the important role that this sector perform in the protection of land and strengthen people's

steadfastness, since it is not reasonable that 0.87% is the share of this sector in the total budget.

Second: Activating Risk Prevention Fund, agricultural insurance, and social security for the benefit of poor farmers.

Third: Supporting production inputs for small farmers and not imposing taxes on them.

Fourth: Supporting small investments in the agricultural sector as well as supporting agricultural cooperatives in the face of capitalist's greediness.

Finally, on 30<sup>th</sup> of March, all greetings to Palestinian martyrs and detainees who are calling for united national program to prioritize the protection of land over any other interests.

**Greetings to all Palestinian farmers who resist with their steadfastness**

**Union of Agricultural Work Committees**

**Palestine**