Demonstration against Gaza massacre in Berlin: “Enough is enough!”

Our reporters
5 August 2014

As the Israeli government intensified its attacks on the Gaza strip last weekend, thousands of people protested throughout Germany against the war crimes committed against the Palestinian people.

More than 500 people gathered at Alexanderplatz in Berlin on Saturday, marching to the Axel Springer building in Kreuzberg. Axel Springer publishes the *Bild* newspaper and *Die Welt*, the weekly news magazine, which have led the way in defending the Israeli attacks and, together with politicians of every party, slandering the anti-war demonstrators.

As in previous demonstrations in Berlin, the police sought to intimidate participants prior to the protest by intervening with a number of police vehicles and checking all banners and placards for allegedly anti-Semitic positions.

Many of the demonstrators who spoke to the WSWS had personal ties to the Gaza region or the Middle East. They angrily rejected claims of anti-Semitism.

Hanan is a 34-year-old Palestinian and read a poem she had written:

“We call with all our heart No,
No to suppression,
No to genocide,
No to the destruction of Palestine!
People around the world raise your voices,
take to the streets and cry Enough is Enough!”

Hanan was born in Berlin after her parents fled from Lebanon. “My family has been badly affected by the war. We constantly listen to the news and cannot enjoy the fasting month of Ramadan at all. I would like most of all to pack my things and fly there.”

She noted the catastrophic conditions facing people in the Gaza strip. “The people have no care, no medicine, no electricity. I work in Berlin in childcare and wonder often how a three-year-old child copes with it there. A small child has to see bombs and bodies?” Hanan was shocked by the stance of the Western governments. “When I think about what happened back then during the Hitler era, I would have expected that in Germany one would not sit back and watch children basically being slaughtered.”

Hanan forcefully rejected the accusation of anti-Semitism: “We are not against any single people, or against Israel. We are against this mass murder being carried out by the Israeli government. The war is above all about power and money. The government is not interested in the people on either side.” She agreed with the WSWS perspective of a joint struggle by Israeli and Palestinian workers against the war.

Angered by the right-wing campaign against the anti-war movement, a 27-year old student explained, “This is not about anti-Semitism. They are trying to conceal themselves behind this pretext. It is mainly the press spreading this propaganda, even though Jews are also protesting against the war. We are not against Jews, but against the Zionist government.”

Mrs. Cimen comes from Turkey and is studying math and chemistry in Berlin. She held up a placard reading, “You don’t need to be a Muslim to stand up for Gaza, you just need to be human.” For her, the bombing of Gaza is a crime against humanity. “Hospitals and schools are being bombed in Gaza and nothing happens. The UN isn’t doing anything and the governments—above all in the US and Germany—are backing Israel’s war.”

Many young people, teenagers and children protested at Alexanderplatz. “We could be in the victims’ situation, that’s why we’re here today,” said Nadwa, 16, who came to the rally with her friend Nadia, 15. Both were Palestinians and several other young people gathered around them. “In Gaza, innocent children are

© World Socialist Web Site

dying. This is actually not a just war, but rather genocide."

Nadwa believed that attempts were being made to suppress the demonstration: "That is why the charge of anti-Semitism is being spread. The media report in detail all the time about Israeli deaths, although thousands of children and babies are dying in Palestine." The girls condemned the German government's position. "But I don't believe the German people are behind the government. The population have never been asked about costly rearming programmes," Nadwa added.

Alongside the speaker's podium stood Momo, 28, a building worker who fled the Gaza strip with his family when he was five. He came with his parents on Saturday. Several small black boxes lay beside him, to symbolise the caskets of dead children in Gaza. One of them read, "Haniyeh Abderrhman Abu Jarad. 2 years old. Killed by Israeli soldiers in the Gaza strip."

Momo had relatives in Gaza, but he had lost contact with them. He was convinced that the crimes were not in the interest of Israeli workers. "There are many [Israelis] who are against the war."

"But it is difficult to struggle against the war. Israel is supported by all of the powers and the media. All we can do is to demonstrate," said Momo, expressing a widespread sentiment on the protest. The solidarity with the people in Gaza was just as strong as the disappointment with the Arab regimes, and the governments in Europe and America.

Members and supporters of the PSG distributed a WSWS statement at the demonstration entitled "The war crimes in Gaza and the bankruptcy of nationalism." In discussions they explained that a struggle against the genocide in Gaza was only possible through the unification of the working class in the Middle East and globally against capitalism.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site