

December 15, 2011

To: City Council of Rho - Italy

CWP Support for the resolution to condemn Pizzarotti's activity in the occupied West Bank

The Coalition of Women for Peace¹ would like to express its support and appreciation for the City Council of Rho's resolution to condemn Pizzarotti for its activity in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is a brave and necessary step towards raising the awareness of the international community to the participation of companies like Pizzarotti in the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and the continuing oppression of the Palestinian people.

In October 2010, Who Profits from the occupation² published a report on the new Israeli Tel-Aviv-Jerusalem fast train project, in which Pizzarotti is involved³. As indicated in our report, the route of this train line, sometimes referred to as the A1 train, crosses official state borders into the occupied West Bank using occupied Palestinian land, some of it privately owned, for a transportation project aimed exclusively for Israelis.

Pizzarotti is responsible for Section C of the train project through a partnership with S.P.R. Construction under the name Shapir Pizzarotti Railways. The route in this section crosses the Green Line into occupied Palestinian land in Sha'ar Hagay, inside the no-man's land zone of the Latrun Enclave and in Cedars Valley near Beit Surik. The separation wall has *de facto* annexed these areas of the West Bank in order to bring the entire train route onto the Israeli side, cutting these two areas from the rest of the West Bank.

¹ CWP is a feminist organization committed to the struggle against the Israeli occupation and Jewish-Palestinian partnership. Founded soon after the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, CWP today is a leading voice against militarism and for radical social and political change.

² A research project of CWP established with the purpose of investigating corporate activity in the Israeli occupation.

³ Who Profits, *Crossing the Line: The Tel Aviv-Jerusalem Fast Train – A new Israeli train line through occupied West Bank areas*, <http://www.whoprofits.org/articlefiles/WP-A1-Train.pdf>, especially pp. 5-6, 11-15 and 22-27.

Our report indicates that privately owned lands which belong to Palestinians are used both for the train and for a network of access roads leading to the construction sites. The train project also uses extracted material from occupied Palestinian territories not for the benefit of the Palestinian population, in direct violation of international law. Future plans to connect the train line to Ramallah and Gaza seem politically unviable given the conditions of occupation, the siege of Gaza, the closure of the West Bank and the general prohibition on the entrance of Palestinians from the occupied territory into Israel, with few exceptions.

Pizzarotti violates international law, and even Israeli Supreme Court rulings, by taking part in a permanent construction project on occupied Palestinian land, which is not accessible to Palestinians. This violation has an immense impact on the lives, health, livelihood, property and future of Palestinians. Economic activity conducted by firms like Pizzarotti in the occupied Palestinian territories creates an obstacle for the possibility of achieving a just peace between Israel and the Palestinian people.

Sincerely,

The Coalition of Women for Peace

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