



**The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
Presents**

A seminar by visiting academic and human rights activist

Dr. Uri Davis
***"Lifting the Veil on Israeli
Apartheid"***

Wednesday June 8th, 2005

12.00pm

**Eastern Avenue Lecture Theatre
University of Sydney**

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Lifting the Veil on Israeli Apartheid
June, 2005 visit to Sydney by human rights activist
Dr Uri Davis

Of his latest book, ***Apartheid Israel: Possibilities for the Struggle Within***, 2003, Zed Books, Dr Uri Davis has written: "*It is my hope that this book will make a significant contribution to the lifting of the veil on Israel's apartheid legislation, leading to the classification by the United Nations General Assembly of the State of Israel as an apartheid state and the imposition of international sanctions against Israel's rogue government.*"

Uri Davis is a dual citizen of the State of Israel and the UK, an academic (specializing in questions of citizenship, democracy and human rights), a long-time active opponent of political Zionism, and an Observer-Member of the Palestine National Council. He has written and co-authored some 15 books on Palestine-Israel, the most recent being *Apartheid Israel*, a groundbreaking study of apartheid, Israeli-style. In his book Uri Davis lifts the veil on a species of apartheid based on a distinction *in law* between Jews and non-Jews, and shows how this is incompatible with the universal values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the standards of international law.

Dr Davis draws a clear distinction between political Zionism (a program for the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish state that attempts to guarantee in law and practice a Jewish demographic majority) and Judaism (a confessional statement belonging to the private realm of the individual), and reveals how Zionism's ethnic cleansing, dispossession, and mass expulsion of the bulk of Palestine's indigenous Arab inhabitants under cover of war in 1948-49 render it unacceptable to all who are committed to the values of an open society, democracy and the separation of religion and tribalism from the state.

Born in Jerusalem in 1943, Uri Davis holds Israeli and British citizenship and now lives in the largely Palestinian Arab town of Sakhnin in northern Israel. A man of uncompromising principle, at 14 he refused to participate in para-military training while in high school. When his time was up for compulsory military service he became a conscientious objector, ending up in a military jail before being transferred to an alternative civil service. At 21 he studied Arabic, met Arab citizens of Israel for the first time, and "*experienced first hand their impossible situation, citizens in a political structure which by definition excludes them from equal participation and denies them equal rights.*" (*Israel and the Palestinians*, ed. Davis, Mack & Yuval-Davis, 1975, Ithaca Press). In 1964-5 he organised a public campaign against the expropriation of Palestinian land and was jailed for entering a closed military area. In jail he went on hunger strike. In 1970 he became the vice-chairman of the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights, working alongside its chairman, the late Israel Shahak. He has been a tireless campaigner for Palestinian rights and genuine democracy for all of Palestine's peoples, Jewish citizens of the State of Israel, Arab citizens of the State of Israel, occupied Palestinians and Palestinian refugees.

Uri Davis' approach to the problem of two peoples in one land is consistent and principled. He campaigns *against* Israel's apartheid structures as a state for Jews only and *for* a bi-national democratic state of Palestine, unitary, federal or confederal, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River based on the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the standards of international law.

Dr Davis will be speaking at Sydney University for the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. We urge you to take advantage of his visit to learn first hand about the moves now afoot in Israel to challenge and dismantle Israeli apartheid from within.

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