**PALESTINE CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY, MAY 2011**

**Temperatures rising!**

**Australian civil society & Palestinian freedom:**

**analyses, resistances, solidarities, activisms**

University of Technology, Sydney 14-15 May 2011

initiated by the Coalition for Justice & Peace in Palestine (Sydney) and

Cosmopolitan Civil Societies, University of Technology (Sydney)

It’s not just climate change: temperatures are rising with the uncertainty of government in Lebanon, the overthrow of the dictators in Tunisia and Egypt, the ever-widening intifada across North Africa and West Asia, the leaks which show the world the intransigence of the Israeli government… all of which interact with the deepening conflict in Palestine. 2011 is a time of decisive changes.

It’s time for a two day conference to analyse current political dynamics in the Middle East and help strategise how to make Australian solidarity with Palestinian self-determination more effective. It’s time to re-focus on the core rights of Palestinians, rights to national freedom, equality, democracy, land and peace… and fundamentally, the right of the refugees to return to their homes. The conference will invite speakers from a range of groups across Australia, and will take place on the 63rd anniversary of the Nakba. The conference will have talks, panel discussions and workshops. Some of the papers will be academic, some will be less formal. Taking part will be academics, activists, community members, students, and civil society advocates.

International guest speakers include Ms Ghada Abu Ghalyoun, representing the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions, based in Nablus, and Dr Ibrahim G. Aoudé, Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

Local speakers include Professor Ghassan Hage, of the University of Melbourne, Professor Emeritus Stuart Rees, of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney, journalist Antony Loewenstein, Senator Lee Rhiannon (The Greens), Professor Heather Goodall & Associate Professor James Goodman of UTS, Dr Gennaro Gervasio of Macquarie University, Associate Professor Bassam Dally of the University of Adelaide, Ms Samah Sabawi, the advocacy officer for Australians for Palestine, and Mr Bishara Costandi from CJPP.

A draft conference timetable (.doc) is now available. Please note that small changes may still be made to this timetable.

The conference will have discussions to:

• Analyse the current political dynamics of Palestine, the Israeli state, and neighbouring countries

• Analyse contending pro-Palestine and pro-Israel forces in Australia, in media, unions, religious and ethnic communities, universities, political parties, local councils

• Reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the history of Palestine solidarity campaigns in Australia

• Research and strategise to build effective activism, particularly in relation to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign

To contact us, please email: sydpalconf@coalitionforpalestine.org