



**DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS**

**UNITED NATIONS FORUM
TO MARK FIFTY YEARS OF OCCUPATION**

*Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice and Peace for Palestine
29 June 2017*

*Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development, and a Just
Peace
30 June 2017 (Civil Society Forum)*

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Executive Summary

The United Nations Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation was convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 29 and 30 June 2017, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). A day-long event “Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice, and Peace for Palestine” was followed by the civil society meeting on “Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development, and a Just Peace”.

The Forum brought together political figures, academics, civil society activists, intellectuals and diaspora representatives, including many Israelis and Palestinians, based in the Middle East and elsewhere. Participants articulated a constructive analysis of the current situation and suggestions on how to end the occupation. The meeting was very interactive, with an audience of over 200 attendees, in addition to Member States and Observers.

On the first day, the opening session, including statements from the Committee’s Chair and a message from the UN Secretary-General, as well as a speech by the Secretary-General of the PLO Saeb Erekat, on behalf of the State of Palestine, was followed by two high-level panels. In the first, former Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Shlomo Ben Ami analysed the transition of Israeli thinking since 1967 from the secular nation of the pioneers into an ethno-nationalist society. The former Secretary-General of the Arab League and Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Elaraby argued that implementation of existing UN Security Council resolutions should take precedence over further peace discussions. In the second panel, former UN Special Envoy Robert Serry reflected on the role of the UN, seeing it as more part of the problem than part of the solution, and suggesting a bigger role for the European Union instead of the United States.

The second day of the Forum included CSO representatives from Palestine, Israel, the United States, and others. Israel had not granted exit permits to anyone in Gaza to participate in person, and the United States had denied visas to two Palestinian CSO representatives. The speakers from Gaza, participating via audio link from a UN office, emphasized that the Gaza crisis was not a natural disaster but a man-made crisis in which massive human rights violations committed against civilians, for political reasons and without accountability and called for action to stop the blockade.

Speakers criticised the international community for its “complicity” with Israel in failing to enforce international legality. Others argued that there was no need for additional negotiations – all the solutions for the final status issues had been identified, the Arab Peace Initiative had all the necessary elements for a way forward, and only political will was missing.

The presence of Israeli CSOs was a key feature of the Forum; they voiced strong support for an international effort to implement UN Resolutions and to make it clear that the conflict was not between two States, but between an occupying power and an occupied people. They also criticised their Government’s assertion that everyone opposing the occupation was a terrorist, traitor or anti-Semite, which undermined the fight against real terrorism and anti-Semitism.

The Forum sent a strong message about the need to end the occupation, ensure accountability for human rights violations and put political pressure on Israel and its allies to achieve both.

I. Introduction

1. The **United Nations Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation** was convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 29-30 June 2017, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). A day-long event entitled “*Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice, and Peace for Palestine*” was held on 29 June, followed by a civil society forum entitled “*Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development, and a Just Peace*” on 30 June.

2. The Forum brought together international experts, representatives of the diplomatic community, civil society, including Palestinians and Israelis, as well as academics and students of diverse backgrounds and views to discuss the ongoing occupation. A series of moderated interactive panels underscored the importance of ending the occupation as an antecedent step towards a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Forum provided experts and civil society organizations (CSOs) with a valuable advocacy platform to inform policy and diplomatic action on the question of Palestine at UN Headquarters. The final programme of the Forum is annexed to this report.

Day 1 “Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice and Peace for Palestine”

II. Opening session – Day 1

3. The Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, **Ambassador Fodé Seck**, chaired the opening session.

4. The message of **Secretary-General António Guterres**, delivered by Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, noted that ending the occupation is the only way to lay the foundations for an enduring peace that meets both the Israeli security needs and Palestinian aspirations for statehood and sovereignty. Recalling that five decades of occupation have fuelled recurring cycles of violence and retribution, its ending would remove a driver of violent extremism and terrorism in the region. The Secretary-General called for a return to direct negotiations and reiterated his offer to work with all relevant stakeholders to support a genuine peace process.

5. In her own opening remarks, **Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed** emphasized that the two-State solution is the only path to ensure that Palestinians and Israelis can realize their national and historic aspirations and live in peace, security, and dignity. All unilateral actions that undermine the two-State solution, particularly the continued expansion of Israeli settlements which constitute a violation of international law, should end. She highlighted the occupation’s humanitarian costs noting that the most vulnerable are paying the highest price for political failure on the part of various stakeholders, including the international community.

6. The Chair of the Committee, **Ambassador Fodé Seck** (Senegal), highlighted the responsibility of the international community to redouble its efforts to reach a viable two-State

solution on the basis of international law and all relevant UN resolutions. He stressed that ending the occupation is the only way to achieve the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

7. On behalf of the State of Palestine, **Secretary-General of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Saeb Erakat** described the ongoing occupation as an opportune environment for extremism in the Middle East. He called for accountability on the part of the Israeli Government, including with respect to its “apartheid” policies and discriminatory laws. He called for all of the international community to recognize the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, underscored that Gaza is an integral part of a Palestinian State and called on Hamas to end its “coup d’état”. Finally, he expressed hope that the engagement of the US administration would lead to peace.

III. Plenary sessions – Day 1

A. Plenary session I

“The Costs and Consequences of Fifty Years of Occupation”

8. The panel addressing “*The Costs and Consequences of Fifty Years of Occupation*” was chaired by Ambassador Fodé Seck, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations and Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The panel was moderated by **Ms. Michele Dunne**, Director and Senior Fellow of the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and comprised of four expert speakers – **Mr. Saeb Erakat**, Secretary-General of the Palestine Liberation Organization, **Mr. Shlomo Ben-Ami**, Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, **Mr. Nabil Elaraby**, Former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and **Ms. Zaha Hassan**, Former Coordinator and Senior Legal Advisor to the Palestinian Negotiating Team during Palestine’s bid for United Nations membership.

9. The discussion began by recalling that Israel had taken control of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Highs, and the Sinai Peninsula following the June 1967 war. While the Sinai Peninsula was eventually returned to Egypt, other Palestinian territories remain in a patchwork of different arrangements, including under occupation (the West Bank), subjected to a blockade (Gaza), and annexation (East Jerusalem).

10. **Mr. Elaraby** provided a regional perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusing on two general overarching issues – the importance of enforcing international law and the recognition of the “reach of the Palestinian territories”. Describing the ongoing Israeli occupation as an affront to the international legal order, he noted that the narrative around this conflict has shifted over the decades from one of dialogue complemented by concrete steps aimed at implementing relevant UN resolutions, to one of talking without action.

11. He recalled the international community’s attempts to take concrete action to implement Security Council Resolution 242 (1947) at the 1973 Peace Conference in Geneva which was convened in accordance with Security Council Resolution 338 (1973). The current narrative is merely to negotiate without the requisite enforcement of international law. Recognizing the strategic importance of time in peace talks, negotiating without concrete steps or timelines is not constructive. He relied on the authority of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which has repeatedly made it clear that the principles of (i) non-annexation and (ii) welfare of the

population are to be applied in the context of occupied territories.¹ He noted that Israel has repeatedly violated both principles resulting in the growing sentiment that Israel is the “bastion of apartheid and discrimination.”

12. **Mr. Elaraby** concluded by recommending that the international community organize a conference dedicated to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1947) and 338 (1973) – similar to the 1973 Geneva Peace Conference – to devise concrete steps for enforcing the decisions that have already been made. It is not constructive to negotiate about new issues, including land swaps, if previously negotiated decisions cannot be implemented. Before normalization can take place between Israel and Arab States in the region the Arab Peace Initiative must also be implemented. Notwithstanding the fact that certain Arab States have economic relations with Israel, this does not mean these States accept Israeli practices or condone the ongoing occupation. Arab States’ condemnation of the Israeli occupation is evidenced, *inter alia*, by how these States vote on the question of Palestine at the United Nations every year.

13. **Mr. Ben-Ami** provided an Israeli perspective and shared his insights regarding current domestic trends in Israel. He recalled that the 1967 war had two contradictory implications for Israel – (i) military “grandeur” and (ii) moral and political crisis and conflict. The encounter of Israelis with the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria had a historic “messianic” meaning for Israelis and resulted in drastic shifts in mainstream Israeli politics. For example, Israel’s National Religious Party (NRP), which is currently the vanguard of Israeli settlements on Palestinian lands, was one of the most moderate political parties prior to the 1967 war. At the same time that this “messianic feeling” overtook Israeli society following its encounter with the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria, there was also a sense that the long-governing “Labour-dominated establishment” had lost its pioneering impetus which was credited with leading to the creation of the State of Israel. The ensuing void was eventually filled by the National Religious Party, as a new socio-political elite emerging from the 1967 war.

14. Israeli settlements were referenced as a further case in point. While the settlements were started by the ‘Block of the Faithful’, they were sanctioned politically by the Labor government. However, the latter’s distinction between “political settlements” – those in the heart of the West Bank in “biblically sensitive” places – and “security settlements” – those that the government deemed necessary for the security of Israel – became blurred after 1977 when the then Labor Party ceded its leadership to the right-wing Likud party. The rise of the Israeli-right, notwithstanding the fact that it assumed power ten years after the 1967 war, was a gradual and delayed effect of the aforementioned “messianic feeling” that swept across Israel following its military victory in 1967.

15. The post-1967 period has witnessed the gradual decline of the “Tel Aviv Israel” – a secular, modernizing state – and a gradual rise in the “Jerusalem Israel” – a state rooted in an ethno-nationalist ideology. The latter is most forcefully reflected in the present-day government of Benjamin Netanyahu. Putting an emphasis on the Jewish characteristic of Israel and emphasizing that the government prioritizes the interests of Jewish Israelis, instead of all Israelis, has been an important factor in Netanyahu’s re-election. The ensuing ethno-centric policies were not in line with those of a liberal democracy. These are, at least partially, the

¹ See, International Status of South-West Africa, Advisory Opinion: *I.C. J. Reports* 1950, p. 128; see also, Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, *I. C. J. Reports* 2004, p. 136.

result of the persistence of the occupation and the spill over of the practices, attitudes, and mentality from the occupied territories into Israel.

16. Turning to the current domestic mood in Israel, **Mr. Ben-Ami** noted that Israel has never had the kind of global outreach it currently enjoyed and that the “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions” (BDS) movement has had a marginal, if any, impact on conditions inside the country. To the contrary, he credited BDS as serving as a tool for diverting mobilization and consolidating power for the current government. The question of Palestine is no longer the epicentre of Israeli, or indeed regional, foreign policy. While a majority of Israelis are in favour of the two-State solution, it is not a priority for Israeli voters. Israelis do not want a one-State solution – which may end up being a “South African situation without a South African solution” – however, many Israelis wonder why their government should exert efforts towards a two-State solution at time when the economy is booming, international relations have never been better and no longer solely focused on the question of Palestine, there is new, friendly U.S. administration in place, and, according to Prime Minister Netanyahu, Israel has become a tacit member of the Sunni alliance in the Middle East. Notwithstanding international criticism of Israeli practices and the persistence of the occupation, Palestinians are wrong if they think that the international community can change conditions on the ground – the international community is no longer relevant player in this context.

17. **Ms. Hassan** addressed the adverse effects of the occupation on Palestinian youth and the pervasive, oppressive conditions in the Gaza Strip where young Palestinians comprise 60 per cent of the population. The lack of progress since the Oslo Accords has left many Palestinian youth hopeless and disillusioned. Young Palestinians are not looking for a Palestinian State – they have grown up without one. What they want first and foremost is to have their human dignity preserved and put an end to the humiliation and degradation they continue to experience as a result of the Israeli occupation. While Israel may be welcomed by governments all over the world, the people these governments represent are growing in solidarity with Palestinians. Civil society groups are lobbying their capitals to pursue direct action in support of Palestinian rights and the effects of such advocacy will eventually make its way into official government policies. Israelis will eventually have to decide whether they want to be part of a democratic state or a racist pariah state that discriminates against people based on their religion or ethnicity.

18. **Ms. Hassan** also highlighted that the five-decade occupation is a symptom of the ongoing failure to resolve a conflict that has persisted for at least seventy years. In addition to marking fifty years since the onset of the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, this year also marks the seventieth year since the displacement of millions of Palestinians from their homes following the adoption of Security Council Resolution 242(1947) which partitioned Palestine into two States - Israel was created shortly thereafter but the world is still waiting for an independent Palestinian State.

19. Providing the Palestinian perspective, **Mr. Erakat** noted that after fifty years of military occupation, seventy years since the expulsion of two-thirds of the Palestinian people from their homeland, and a century since the 1917 Balfour Declaration, the question of Palestine remains the longest running issue on the UN agenda. The tangible costs of the occupation for Palestinians include the killing of thousands of Palestinians, the forced displacement of over five million Palestinians who continue to live in refugee camps in the region, the incarceration of 800,000 Palestinians, the demolition of 50,000 homes, the confiscation of Palestinian lands, and the exploitation of natural resources on Palestinian lands for the benefit Israel.

20. There are also certain intangible costs associated with transforming the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a political to religious conflict. The current Israeli government and certain other forces in the Arab world are actively trying to transform the nature of the ongoing conflict into a religious one. The persistence of the occupation is resulting in the entrenchment of an apartheid system which is bound to lead to a new form of terror that will inevitably become entangled in the larger context of the terror the Middle East is already grappling with. The continuation of the occupation and perception of a religious conflict will inevitably lead to increased terrorism. The growing sentiment in Israel that the cost of negotiating a peace deal outweighs the cost of maintaining the status quo is another intangible cost of the occupation. Israel's occupation and discriminatory policies, such the proposed laws about 'sterilized buses' or 'sterilized roads' currently before the Knesset, should not be rewarded. Palestinians recognize the right of the State of Israeli to exist and want their relationship with Israelis to be transformed from one of occupier to that of a peaceful neighbour.

21. **Mr. Erakat** added that the negotiating parties are close to a peace agreement and expressed his hope that renewed engagement by the United States will not focus on more negotiations but rather on leading Israelis and Palestinians to commit to concrete decisions on real issues. The need for a willing partner in Israel that recognizes the right of the State of Palestine to exist was underscored. Notwithstanding assertions that Israel is a "tacit member of the Sunni alliance", the position of Arab States remains as documented by the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 – that normalization can only take place after Israel has withdrawn to 1967 borders. President Trump also endorsed this position in his recent meeting with President Abbas. To conclude, **Mr. Erakat** called on all States that support the two-State solution to formally recognize both States and not just Israel.

Discussion

22. The Israeli government's rejection of the notion of Palestinian State sends a message of despair and disillusionment to Palestinian youth. Israel is aware that this type of messaging is dangerous and likely to eventually, *inter alia*, push young Palestinians into desperate acts. Given the prevalence of terror threats from groups such as ISIS, continuing to subject emerging generations of Palestinians to the occupation risks providing a convenient breeding ground for the radical ideology of groups like ISIS. Ending the occupation and recognizing a Palestinian State would eliminate one of the potential drivers of terrorism in the region and it is pertinent that all stakeholders work collectively towards this goal.

23. Two scenarios could produce the political shift needed within Israel to bring an end to the occupation – a political earthquake triggered by a major conflict or crisis, or, a unilateral decision by the Israeli government in response to the entrenchment of a "one-State situation" which goes against the will of most Israelis. However, a unilateral withdrawal from the occupied territories is unlikely to result in a friendly Palestinian State. Speakers contended that Zionism has always been more about demography than land.

24. Furthermore, it was argued, the requisite political shift within Israel will be produced by political leadership. Peace is about respect. Israel respected Egypt's leadership under Sadat and Syria's under Assad because both of these leaders "could deliver". This dynamic appears to be lacking in Israel's interactions with Palestinian leaders. Israel's mindset when it negotiates with States like Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, or Syria is different from when it engages with Palestinians who are seen as a "non-State movement". If Israeli leaders can engage with

Palestinian leaders as the legitimate representatives of a Palestinian State, then the seeds planted by people to people relations could flourish. Israel's leadership builds its power on fear – be it the Palestinians, Iran, or BDS. For as long as fear underpins the mindset of the Israeli government, its leaders are unlikely to make progress in the peace-making process.

25. Speakers argued that the *de facto* “colonial reality” in the occupied territories manifests itself in various forms. Real estate provides one case in point. Israeli is a city-state built around two urban centres – Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In the case of the latter, where an orthodox community cannot afford land in the urban areas, they will often settle in settlements adjacent to the Green Line but on the Palestinian side. In such cases, parts of the West Bank provide the affordable suburban residences for those that cannot afford to live in the urban centres. The affordable real estate in the annexed parts of the West Bank, in addition to its economic appeal, serves to shift orthodox Jewish settlers, who are traditionally anti-Zionist, toward a more nationalist ideology. The annexed Palestinian land over which Jewish settlers reside therefore eventually becomes part of the independent (Israeli) economy.

26. A majority of the natural resources and public infrastructure of the occupied territories, including drinking water, are used by Israeli settlers without the payment of taxes to the Palestinians. In some cases, Palestinians even have to buy back their own resources from Israelis for their own usage. Moreover, the variety of settlement products produced by businesses operating on annexed Palestinian lands ought to be boycotted in order to curtail the commercial benefits of the occupation to Israel's economic elite.

B. Plenary Session II

“Beyond Occupation: The Path ahead to Palestinian Independence and a Just Peace”

27. The panel entitled “*Beyond Occupation: The Path Ahead to Palestinian Independence and a Just Peace*”, was chaired by H.E. Neville Gertze, Permanent Representative of Namibia. The panel was moderated by **Mr. Mouin Rabbani**, Senior Fellow from the Institute for Palestine Studies, and comprised of four experts – namely, **Mr. Robert Serry**, Former UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, **Ms. Galia Golan-Gild**, Darwin Professor (Emerita) at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, **Ms. Aida Touma-Sliman**, Member of the Israeli Knesset, and **Ambassador Riyad Mansour**, Permanent Representative of the Observer State of Palestine to the United Nations. At the outset, Mr. Rabbani noted that the importance of recognizing the broader framework within which the fiftieth anniversary of the Israeli occupation is taking place, including with a view to when the first Zionist congress in Basel, Switzerland in 1897, the 1917 Balfour Declaration, the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (1947) providing for the partition of Palestine, Anwar al Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977 which led to the Camp David Accords and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, and the eruption of the first Intifada in 1987.

28. Representing the international perspective, **Mr. Serry**, remarked that the persistence of the occupation for fifty years is a reflection of the failure of the international community. Despite the possibility of renewed US-led peace talks, the foreseeable future will likely entail further deepening of a *de facto* one State reality. In this context, all stakeholders, including the United Nations, the Committee, and the Division for Palestinian Rights, should critically review their respective roles and consider new ways of creating the right conditions for peace talks. An ‘outside-in’ approach to the peace talks led, in part, by the European Union and others is one way forward. A mechanism similar to the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe

(OSCE) could be set up for the Middle East and the EU aimed at addressing not only the Israel-Palestine conflict but other issues of common interest (e.g. security, forced migration, economic cooperation etc.). In the context of the Israel-Palestine issue, the underlying premise of negotiations would be the declaration of non-belligerency and the recognition of the State of Palestine. In other words, Arab States would declare non-belligerency toward Israel in return for the recognition of the State of Palestine by the EU.

29. Regionalizing peace talks, particularly if this means building on an “anti-Iran coalition of moderate Sunni States”, is dangerous and likely to further destabilize the region. Any regional peace initiative must be inclusive to avoid certain predictable pitfalls. Moreover, the Palestinian leadership must address its internal divisions and help stabilize Gaza, which is once again being marginalized in recent discussions pertaining to renewed peace talks. Some analysts are now foreseeing an emerging two-State reality with the Gaza Strip becoming increasingly isolated on the one hand while Israel continues to incorporate the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights on the other.

30. Presenting an Israeli perspective, **Ms. Golan-Gild** noted that the subject conflict is a 100-year old struggle between two national liberation movements demanding, and deserving, self-determination. Notwithstanding the prolonged occupation and Israel’s creeping annexation of the occupied territories, she cited the following three important events/decisions as providing the basis for a way forward toward the desired two-State solution.

- a) PLO acceptance of General Assembly resolutions 181(1947) and 242(1967) in 1988: The PLO officially recognized the two-State solution and the right of the State of Israel to exist – i.e. the creation of a Jewish State and a Palestinian State next to, not instead of, the State of Israel. As a result, the conflict was no longer a zero-sum game. Many Israelis do not appear to be aware of this decision and Israeli government officials ignore it for strategic reasons.
- b) Arab Peace Initiative (2002): Arab States recognized the legitimacy of the State of Israel and offered to (i) end the conflict with Israel, (ii) normalize relations with Israel, and (iii) ensure security for all States in the region, in exchange for (i) Israel ending its occupation, (ii) recognition of the State of Palestine along 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital², and (iii) a mutually agreeable and just solution to the refugee issue in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 194³.
- c) Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016): a practical resolution designed to stop Israel’s creeping annexation of the occupied territories and to “stop the apartheid regime” the current Israeli government is building which seriously undermines the two-State solution. The implementation of the provision calling on all States to distinguish, in their dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied by Israel is a critical part of this resolution. Possible ways to do this include (i) putting product labels on goods from settlements, (ii) not engaging in dealings with or investing in

² Note: The idea of land swaps was added in 2013.

³ General Assembly Resolution 194, *inter alia*, provides that “refugees wishing to return to their heir homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

companies that operate in the settlements, and (iii) boycotting goods produced in the settlements.

31. There is a commonly held position among Israelis, even among left-leaning politicians and military commanders who oppose settlements and the occupation, that it is not possible to reach a peace agreement under the current circumstances. Two primary reasons are provided for this – firstly, because the current Israeli government is “too right-wing” and “ideologically motivated” to engage in genuine peace talk, and secondly, because the Palestinian leadership is too weak and internally divided. Instead, it is argued, that the parties should agree to interim steps, including improving economic conditions in the West Bank, until the environment is more conducive for peace-talks. However, interim arrangements, such as the Oslo Accords, will not resolve this conflict. Prolonged interim arrangements only allow for spoilers to mobilize and create additional obstacles. Interim agreements without clear end goals and defined timelines are not helpful. Any future arrangements that provide for the continued presence of the Israeli military in the West Bank will be tantamount to the continuation of the occupation.

32. Whilst BDS is “a legitimate form of non-violent pressure”, such blanket sanctions are counter-productive and could give the Israeli government a convenient rallying tool. Instead of advocating for BDS, more efforts should be dedicated to accountability and implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 as a vital first step towards realizing a viable two-State solution.

33. The situation on the ground is not static – currently, three alarming facts/trends are worth highlighting: (i) a large segment (over 60 per cent) of the Jewish public in Israel believes that there is no occupation; (ii) extremists (on both sides) are a minority, but increasing in numbers, and strength, as annexation creeps along and frustration grows among the occupied; and (iii) mutual interests between various Arab States and Israel, against Iran or Shi’a States may overshadow, and replace, Arab pursuit of Palestinian interests. Civil society and opposition parties, with help of the international community, play a crucial role in advocating for change and the realization of two sovereign and independent States.

34. **Mr. Rabbani** added that historically the two-State reality was not a Palestinian demand from the international community but rather that of the international community, especially the United States, from the Palestinians. This is a case in point in the broader pattern of Palestinians being compelled to accept certain statements of principle which are then never implemented. In the context of SC Resolution 2334, the question is at which point Israel’s rule over Gaza and the West Bank ceases being an occupation with a recognized status under international law and becomes “something else which is by definition legally and politically untenable”.

35. Presenting an Arab-Israeli perspective, **Ms. Touma-Sliman** highlighted the importance of “reclaiming the word occupation” as a reminder that the occupation must end, instead of focusing solely on achieving the two-State solution as if a State already exists. Recognizing that Israel is still occupying Palestinian territories means recognizing the right of the Palestinians to resist the occupation. The international community has a responsibility to guarantee that the occupation is not profitable, but costly, for Israel. The status quo amounts to a *de facto* one-State scenario wherein Israel is “ruling with a clear tendency to become an apartheid state toward Palestinians – even those Palestinians that are citizens of Israel”. The current path is not leading us toward an end to the occupation – at best, there are another two years to salvage a viable two-State solution. A variety of stakeholders are accountable for the “demise” of the two-

State solution – the international community, Palestinian leadership for failing to end internal divisions, “peace forces” within Israel for not taking responsibility for what is going on within Israel, including the crackdown on freedom of expression and discriminatory laws before the Knesset.

36. While resuming negotiations is important, doing so simply for the sake of negotiating is a futile exercise, particularly given the imbalance of power between Israel, as the occupier, and Palestinians, as the occupied. It is also questionable whether the United States is an honest and objective broker – other international actors ought to get involved in order to ensure that the peace talks are fair and balanced. In this context, there may an opportunity for the Quartet to (re)engage in future negotiations.

37. **Mr. Rabbani** added that, indeed, it is important to remember that the right to self-determination is an inalienable right. One of the issues pertaining to the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination is that the gap between the right to self-determination and an end to the occupation or realizing statehood continues to grow. The challenge remains on how to make these two different concepts compatible – i.e. such that Palestinian people’s right to self-determination is compatible with a viable two-State solution and not the other way around. After twenty-five years of diplomacy under the exclusive sponsorship of a single member of the international community – the United States – it is, indeed, time for a multilateral approach to Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

38. Providing the perspective of the Palestinian Authority, **Ambassador Mansour** underscored four general points:

- a) Steadfastness and resistance of Palestinians in the occupied territories: Palestinians must be unified in order to intensify their struggle and make the occupation as costly as possible for the occupier as way to ending it and realizing statehood.
- b) Palestinian Arabs of the State of Israel: Nearly two-million Palestinian-Arabs are engaged in their own parallel struggle of fighting for their rights as Israeli citizens. New discriminatory legislation before the Israeli Knesset is the Jewish Israelis’ reaction to the successful work of this group, which as a constituency will only grow and become more cohesive, as exemplified by the Unified Block within the Knesset.
- c) Recognition of Palestinian statehood: Palestinians attained Observer State status at United Nations on 29 November 2012. One of the most important implications of this decision is that the United Nations recognized the existence of the State of Palestine – whether a State is an Observer or fully-fledged Member is a separate issue. The United Nations recognized that the State of Palestine exists but remains under occupation. As a result of its Observer State status, the State of Palestine has been able to ratify a variety of international conventions and treaties, including the Rome Statute in order to join the International Criminal Court. At the UN, Palestinian diplomats are focused on strengthening the pillars of the State of Palestine with a view to eventually becoming a full member of the United Nations. The more these pillars are strengthened the more difficult it will be for Israel and the United States to oppose the existence of the State of Palestine.
- d) International community, including civil society: Intensifying diplomatic efforts among European States – particularly Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovenia

and Spain, all of which are advocates of the two-State solution – will create a shift in the discourse regarding the two-State solution. Security Council Resolution 2334(2016) is a priority in the diplomatic context – it is a “settlement plus” resolution that goes beyond SC Resolution 242 because it explicitly provides for the opportunity to “attack settlement enterprises” and demands implementation through the Security Council and a Secretary-General report every three months. The US is retreating from this resolution by refusing to talk about it but all other 14 SC Member States, including the United Kingdom, continue to insist on its implementation.

Discussion

39. In the ensuing discussion, speakers noted that it is important not to conflate diplomacy and negotiation. At the UN, Palestinian diplomats are engaged in diplomatic efforts to strengthen the foundation of the State of Palestine while negotiators from both sides are engaged in peace talks outside of this context. Notwithstanding pressure from the United States, Palestinian diplomats have never aligned their diplomatic efforts, particularly in the multilateral context, with the ongoing negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis. As a result of an uncooperative Israeli government and internal divisions among Palestinians, the focus of contemporary engagement is not on genuine peacemaking but rather interim agreements and partial measures, including improving the economic conditions for Palestinians living under occupation. The Oslo Accords missed two key issues that continue to undermine its efficacy – (i) Israel did not acknowledge and accept that it is the occupying power, and (ii) Israel did not agree to stop the expansion of settlements on Palestinian lands. This type of negotiation, and resulting interim measures, will not result in a just peace – it only serves to perpetuate the occupation. Negotiating for the sake of negotiating without a clear end goal and road-map will eventually leave Palestinians with nothing to negotiate for.

40. Recognizing the extended duration of the Israel’s occupation and the fact that under international law an occupation is intended to be temporary in nature, legal scholars are increasingly of the opinion that Israel’s occupation is no longer a legal occupation under international law. This, inter alia, implies that the occupation must end irrespective of negotiations between the parties (an example of the difference between diplomacy and negotiation). As a member of the International Criminal Court, the State of Palestine now has recourse to address war crimes and crimes against humanity. While the Palestinian leadership is not rushing to make use of the ICC, in the context of implementing SCR 2334, Palestinian diplomats (not negotiators) are nevertheless considering the ICC as possible enforcement tool.

41. Israelis recognize that the situation in the Palestinian territories is not good but many simply do not want to know anything about it. While the idea of “the chosen people” is limited to Israeli settlers, the notion of victimhood is prevalent among the Israeli populous at large. The Israeli government continues to capitalize on this psychological barrier in the context of its fear narrative. It was emphasized that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a religious conflict. The current Israeli administration continues to put a religious spin on it – i.e. that it is a conflict between Islam and Judaism – because this creates a convenient link (i.e. that Israelis are the victims of Palestinian terrorists) to ongoing counter-terrorism efforts in the region. The fight against ISIS or other terrorist groups has nothing to do with Israel-Palestine. Nevertheless, it is helpful for religious leaders – from all faiths – to make supportive statements regarding the two-State solution and the realization of just peace for Israelis and Palestinians.

1. IV. Key Themes & Recommendations – Day 1

42. Notwithstanding the varying views and topics addressed, panellists and participants, first and foremost agreed for the urgent need to end the occupation. The analysis of the shift in Israeli thinking in the post-1967 context provided an insightful backdrop against which the various expert recommendations were considered. A series of questions spanning the role of Israel's economic elite in perpetuating the occupation to the relationship of the occupation, if any, with ongoing counter-terrorism efforts in the Middle East, expanded upon the expert presentations. The following key themes/issues and recommendations emerged from the two inter-connected expert-panels.

43. **Multilateral peacemaking and enforcement of international law, including relevant UN resolutions:** there was a consensus that the lack of concrete action by the international community coupled with the United States' monopoly over the on-again-off-again peace process has seriously undermined the United Nations' ability to enforce relevant legal principles and instruments of international law, including a variety of UN resolutions, and rendered the international community, including the United Nations, irrelevant in the context of ending the occupation and brokering a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Negotiating without concrete goals/timelines and relying on interim arrangements, such as the Oslo Accords, has perpetuated the occupation and resulted in a *de facto* one-State reality on the ground, which resembles an apartheid state.

Recommendations:

- The State of Palestine and its allies should refrain from interim measures or negotiating without concrete goals/timelines – focus on the implementation of decisions that have already been reached, including the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242(1947), 338(1973), and 2334 (2016) as well as the Arab Peace Initiative.
- Peace is about mutual respect among leaders and in this case it requires, *inter alia*, a shift in Israeli leaders' mindsets towards their Palestinian counterparts – Israel must view Palestinian leaders as legitimate representatives of the State of Palestine.
- All stakeholders, including the UN and the Committee, should critically review their roles and consider how they can complement each other's efforts to create the conditions for peace.
- Peace talks should be inclusive and brokered in a multilateral context – one proposal is for the EU to have a more prominent role through a Middle East–EU mechanism similar to the OSCE.

44. **The nexus between the occupation and terrorism in the context of Israel's prevailing narrative based on fear and religion:** several experts noted that the persistence of the occupation and resulting entrenchment of a *de facto* apartheid system is bound to become entangled in the larger fight against terrorism in the Middle East. The perception of a religious conflict promoted by the Israeli government along with Israel's rejection of the notation of a Palestinian State is likely to push Palestinian youth into desperate acts, including joining the cause of radical groups such as ISIS. An occupied population which is deprived of its basic rights and human dignity provides a ripe breeding ground for terrorist groups.

Recommendations:

- Ending the occupation could be used to remove a key driver of terrorism in the Middle East.
- Religious leaders would be useful to advocate for an end to the occupation and the realization of a viable two-State solution and should be engaged as partners.
- The political, not religious, nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be underscored in diplomatic engagements and media messaging

45. **Israel's economic elite and the beneficiaries of the occupation:** the *de facto* "colonial reality" manifests itself in various forms, from the exploitation of natural resources from Palestinian lands for the benefit of Israeli settlers and businesses to the profits reaped by Israeli construction companies capitalizing the expansion of settlements. Israel's economic elite appears to be using the Jewish religion and endangering Israelis and Palestinians in for economic gains.

Recommendations:

- The occupation should be made costly, not profitable, for Israel.
- Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) should be seen and used as a "settlement plus" resolution that, *inter alia*, calls on Member States to differentiate between Israel and the OPT in their relevant dealings; therefore, it provides a practical mechanism whereby States can work towards eliminating the economic benefits of the occupation for Israel's economic elite, including by (i) putting product labels on goods from settlements, (ii) not engaging in dealings with or investing in companies that operate in the settlements, or (iii) boycotting goods produced in the settlements.
- Instead of advocating for BDS, which provides the Israeli government with a convenient rallying tool, efforts should be dedicated to accountability and the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) as a way to exert pressure on Israel to cease settlement activity and move toward ending the occupation.

46. **The (il)legality of Israel's military occupation under international law:** Recognizing the extended duration of the Israel's occupation and the fact that under international law an occupation is intended to be temporary in nature pursuant to the Fourth Geneva Convention, legal scholars are increasingly of the opinion that Israel's occupation is no longer a legal occupation under international law. The forthcoming report of Michael Lynk, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, undertakes to address this question.

Recommendations:

- The argument should be used that, if the Israeli occupation no longer has a recognized status under international law, the occupation must end irrespective of the outcome, if any, of peace talks between the parties.
- As a member of the International Criminal Court, the State of Palestine should use its right to recourse to address war crimes and crimes against humanity and other breaches of international humanitarian law.

Day 2 “Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development and a Just Peace”

V. Opening session – Day 2

1. The Chair of the Working Group of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, **Mr. David Mansfield**, chaired the sessions throughout the day. In his welcome remarks, Mr. Mansfield recalled that in resolution 71/20 (2016), the General Assembly had requested the Committee “to support the achievement without delay of an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967” and stressed that in the implementation of its mandate, the Committee considered cooperation with Palestinian, Israeli and other civil society organizations of paramount importance.

2. In her keynote address “*The role of civil society in achieving an end to the occupation, conflict transformation and a just peace*”, Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Ms. Jody Williams** referred to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), which she coordinated from 1992 to 1998, as a successful model of civil society action that could be replicated in other contexts. Effective coordination and concerted civil society action had been key to the success of the ICBL. Against this background, she recommended increasing the number of organizations campaigning for the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) to suspend the membership of the Israeli Football Association, if the latter did not exclude clubs based in illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).

3. Ms. Williams also underscored the importance of systematic documentation in the ICBL strategy to bring about change. In this context, she encouraged civil society to periodically publish independent written reports on the status of implementation of Security Council resolution 2334.

4. She further addressed claims that the call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) was counter-productive because it provided fodder to Israeli right-wing parties. Similar allegations had been made regarding resolution 2334, arguing that it would undermine negotiations, Ms. Williams recalled. As such criticism would leave no options for action other than waiting for the benevolence of the occupying power to end the occupation, she stated by way of conclusion: “This is not how power works; power does not concede power without pressure.”

VI. Plenary sessions – Day 2

A. Plenary session I

“The Gaza Strip: An Integral Part of the State of Palestine”

5. The panel was moderated by **Mr. Robert Blecher**, Senior Advisor and Acting Middle East and North Africa Programme Director at International Crisis Group, and comprised five experts: Ms. Noura Erakat, Assistant Professor at George Mason University; Ms. Tania Hary, Executive Director at Gisha-Legal Center for Freedom of Movement; Ms. Nuriya Oswald, International Advocacy Coordinator at the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Ms. Majeda Alsaqqa, Programmes Director at Culture and Free Thought Association; and

Mr. Mohammed Azaiza, Field Coordinator at Gisha-Legal Center for Freedom of Movement. The latter two experts from Gaza, who had not been able to exit the OPT, participated in the panel via audio.

6. In her presentation, **Ms. Oswald** stressed that, whereas the international community typically stepped up its engagement in Gaza when humanitarian conditions worsened, there was a need for sustained international focus. For example, in Gaza, in the absence of sustained international engagement, items that were vital for reconstruction and development remained on the Israeli list of prohibited dual-use goods until today.

7. Over time, the impact of the closure imposed on Gaza had undermined basic tenets of international law, as the policy involved collective punishment and violations of human rights including the rights to a family life, education and health. Therefore, a purely humanitarian framework was inadequate to address the situation. The international community should thus shift from a largely humanitarian to a human right- and international law-centred framework, which would take into consideration the legal obligations of the occupying power and other duty-bearers in relation to the Gaza Strip.

8. **Ms. Oswald** also cast doubt on the effectiveness of the GRM and its compatibility with international law. As an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) brokered by the UN, which operated within the parameters provided by Israeli closure policies, the GRM was reinforcing and perpetuating these measures. This, in turn, raised concerns about potential UN complicity in the management of the closure and associated violations of international law.

9. Speaking directly from Gaza, **Mr. Azaiza** illustrated how the electricity crisis was impacting daily life in the enclave. With an estimated 100 litres of untreated sewage flowing every day into the Mediterranean Sea, contact with the polluted water posed health risks. This was of particular concern to child welfare, since for lack of alternatives to enjoy their right to play and recreation, families continued to go to the beach.

10. Also, the limited availability of electricity (4 hours per day) had heavily impacted the health sector. For example, a major hospital for children in Gaza City was forced to rely on overworked generators to provide oxygen in its intensive care unit, always under the impending threat of a generator breakdown. Since the entry of new generators and spare parts required for repairs was prohibited by Israel, the breakdown of a generator in this hospital could have dramatic consequences, **Mr. Azaiza** warned. The electricity crisis was partly a political issue, which Israel, as the occupying power, the PA and Hamas had the responsibility to resolve.

11. **Ms. Erakat** emphasized that discussions on the Gaza Strip should highlight that humanitarian conditions were not the consequence of a natural disaster but a human-made crisis, which had been caused by political, and thus reversible, decisions. Against this background, she wondered why no remedial action was taken, especially considering the warning by UN agencies that by 2020 Gaza might otherwise become an unliveable place.

12. She further recalled that Gaza had been under full closure since 1993, before Hamas carried out its first suicide bombing. Against this background, she questioned the logic of justifying the closure with security concerns and demands that Palestinian groups disarm as a condition for its ending.

13. Stressing the prohibition on collective punishment under Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, **Ms. Erakat** called for analyses through four applicable frameworks (humanitarian, human rights, political and military) to define a threshold of crisis that would trigger the lifting of the blockade without any preconditions.

14. **Ms. Hary** pointed out that since 2007, Israeli officials had often used the term “separation policy” to characterize Israeli policy on Gaza. However, the Israeli Security Cabinet had rarely discussed official policy on Gaza nor was much information about it publicly available. In fact, rather than being part of a coherent policy, Israeli measures on Gaza seemed to be a set of tactics driven by international pressure, inertia and demographic goals.

15. On the ground, the Israeli “separation policy” had expressed itself in measures causing both the isolation of Gaza and a separation between the West Bank and Gaza. Some members of the Israeli Government saw separating the Gaza Strip from the West Bank as a means of maintaining perpetual control over the latter. Describing Israeli policy goals in the West Bank as a key driver of action on Gaza, Ms. Hary advised to look at Gaza not only through the humanitarian lens but as an issue that was deeply connected to policy toward the West Bank.

16. While stressing that Gaza was an indispensable part of the State of Palestine, **Ms. Erakat** warned that questions regarding internal Palestinian political divisions should be discussed without losing sight of the bigger picture: the lack of a clear political horizon for Palestinian independence and the inadequacy of the peace process, as bilaterally defined by Israel and the United States under the framework of the Oslo Accords.

17. Asked to reflect on the relationship between the West Bank and Gaza, **Ms. Alsaqqa** advised discussing the situation in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza in the larger context of the question of Palestine rather than as separate issues. While Palestinians in Gaza faced unique challenges, they shared with Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the feeling of being under the same psychological pressure and “torture”.

18. To illustrate how closure policies were fragmenting the Palestinian social fabric, Ms. Alsaqqa shared the anecdote of Gazan children wondering whether Jerusalem was a foreign country in which people spoke a foreign language and did not celebrate Ramadan. In addition, the occupation had managed to keep Palestinians busy “sorting out details”, preventing cohesive advocacy efforts while even non-violent resistance was being quashed.

19. Emphasizing a sense of frustration that the facts were well known, she called on the international community to stop talking about Palestine as a humanitarian problem and to focus instead on ensuring accountability. “We are not asking for a gift from the world. We are asking for our rights”, she declared. **Ms. Oswald** agreed that closure policies had resulted in a growing separation of the West Bank from Gaza. For example, after years of fruitless attempts to obtain the necessary exit permits, students from Gaza had stopped seeing an education in the West Bank as a viable option.

20. Asked to elaborate on possible ways forward and cracks in the Israeli system that might offer opportunities, **Ms. Hary** explained that the human rights discourse had little currency in Israel. Advocacy efforts emphasizing that a change of policy would advance Israeli security and national interests had greater chances of success. Gisha had therefore compiled on its website quotes by senior Israeli security and political figures highlighting the linkages between the wellbeing of the population in Gaza and the security of Israel. Another strategy to reach the

Israeli public pursued by Gisha was to draw attention to the socio-economic potential of Palestine and its young and creative population.

21. **Ms. Hary** further explained that the legal work of Gisha included filing petitions with Israeli courts, seeking to enable Gazans to exit the Strip. While this engagement had not prompted any meaningful change of policy, it had nevertheless made a difference in the lives of hundreds of individuals who had obtained an exit permit. It had also been pivotal in obtaining access to policy documents on Gaza based on the Freedom of Information Act. Those documents were posted on the Gisha website and showed that many Israeli policies on Gaza were not driven by security concerns but rather seemed a way to manage the situation as is.

22. Asked to elaborate on ways to provoke change, **Ms. Oswald** explained that in the context of the 2014 Gaza War, engagement with the office of the Israeli Military Advocate General had not ensured accountability. In most of the cases submitted, no criminal investigations were opened; and in the few cases where investigations were launched, those did not meet international standards. Nevertheless, CSOs continued to pursue justice by working through national jurisdiction courts in view of understanding the system and providing third States and international institutions with evidence that Israeli legal mechanisms were flawed.

23. Addressing the limitations of the International Criminal Court (ICC), **Ms. Erakat** pointed to the structural flaws of the court and its political predicaments. Alternative mechanisms might offer better chances to ensure accountability within a reasonable time, e.g. implementing the recommendations included in the report by the 2009 UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict⁴ and those flowing from the 2004 Advisory Opinion⁵ on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the OPT. Other examples of alternative measures that could be taken by the international community were imposing an arms embargo on Israel or reconvening the High Contracting Parties to reaffirm the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to Gaza after the Israeli unilateral disengagement in 2005.

24. If the international community lacked the political will to do something to ensure accountability, at least it should refrain from doing anything that helped normalize and legitimize the blockade on Gaza, such as participating in the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, **Ms. Erakat** said.

Discussion

25. Audience members argued that large parts of the international community were complicit in the blockade of Gaza. The latter had not only been imposed on Hamas but also on the National Unity Government composed of Hamas, Fatah, Al Mubadara, PFLP, DFLP and other parties together representing 96 per cent of Palestinian voters. The rationale for Israeli closure policies was to separate Gaza from the West Bank in order to annex the West Bank and prevent the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

26. A participant pointed out that while the international community allowed Israel to violate international law with impunity, those demanding accountability measures were accused of anti-Semitism. However, this was a false claim and a tactic to smear those calling for

⁴ See <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SpecialSessions/Session9/Pages/FactFindingMission.aspx>.

⁵ See <http://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/131>.

accountability and the upholding of international law. In addition, the view was expressed that without raising the cost of the occupation through sanctions and boycotts, no change could be expected.

27. Concerns that legal work on individual cases had not led to the desired policy changes prompted the question whether civil society organizations could instead bring to court a principled case, challenging the legality of the blockade on Gaza. In response, others argued that a principled petition challenging policy on Gaza would not stand a chance in Israeli courts. Nevertheless, it was concluded that in addition to filing individual petitions, civil society organizations should address, in parallel, larger policy issues regarding the closure. In this context, it was mentioned that in 2016 Palestinian human rights organizations had made a submission, urging the Office of the ICC Prosecutor to examine the closure as the crime of persecution under the Rome Statute.

28. Participants stated that, while EU Member States supported the ICC, they did not support Palestine engaging with the court. Neither was there a political will to use alternative mechanisms. The ICJ Advisory Opinion and UN reports issued over a decade contained critical recommendations to ensure accountability for violations of international law in the OPT. Recently, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights had compiled recommendations in a comprehensive report⁶ but UN Member States were not using the tools at their disposal. Neither was the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights using his position to recommend practical steps. However, unless Israel was held accountable, no change could be expected.

29. In this context, the view was expressed that the framework guiding the US-led Middle East process was informed by the idea that adherence to international law would be at odds with a negotiated political solution. Any accountability measures based on universally recognized legal principles were therefore seen as undermining the peace process. That discursive framework, which had been widely accepted, was meant to paralyze advocacy efforts and had to be discarded in order to proceed with initiatives to ensure accountability.

30. Since the struggle seemed to be on enforcement of international law, attention was drawn to the precedent of the UN General Assembly calling for sanctions against the State of Israel in 1982 and 1983. However, if UN Member States were currently unable or unwilling to act, in view of the urgency on the ground questions arose regarding the role of civil society, specifically the option of boycotting Israel as a form of civil society sanction.

31. Emphasizing that closures of Gaza had started in 1993, questions were asked regarding the responsibility of Hamas for the recent deterioration, pointing out that even under conditions of closure, Gaza residents had been better off with the PA. Should Hamas not draw the consequences and step aside, allowing the PA to take over? And if Hamas was collecting taxes, why did the PA have to pay for electricity in Gaza?

32. In response, it was underscored that closure policies imposed on Gaza did amount to collective punishment, as prohibited under international humanitarian law. Placing the focus on who was administering the blockade better – the PA or Hamas – implied an acceptance of an

⁶ Report of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights on ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/HRC/35/19).

illegal framework that should be uncompromisingly rejected. The focus should be placed on ensuring a complete lifting of the closure.

33. Moreover, as the recipient of the Palestinian national budget and the diplomatic face of the Palestinian people, which had access to international organizations such as the UN, the PA continued to have a responsibility for the welfare of Palestinians in Gaza and should therefore refrain from strengthening the blockade in order to fulfil political goals.

34. Reference was made to a Security Council tradition of visiting crisis areas, which in the case of Gaza had never been followed, apparently due to a lack of consensus. In this context, the proposal of setting up a civil society delegation to periodically visit Gaza and report back to the United Nations was put forward.

35. Whereas Israel as occupying power had primary responsibility for Gaza, it was pointed out that Egypt also had humanitarian obligations and that the closure of Rafah Crossing Point (RCP) had exacerbated the situation. A representative of Egypt responded that due to political developments, the functioning of RCP had been disrupted since 2007 by the suspension of the Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA), signed by Israel and the PA, and the temporary halt of operations by the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Rafah. Being a party to neither agreement, the resumption of operations under the AMA and EUBAM frameworks did not depend on Egypt. Anti-terrorism operations related to the situation in northern Sinai and efforts to destroy illegal tunnels had also temporarily affected passage at RCP. Still, even though Israel had primary responsibility, Egypt had cooperated with the parties concerned to alleviate suffering, e.g. through a recent supply of diesel fuel.

B. Plenary session II

“Enforcement of International Law & Accountability: How to Make a Difference?”

36. The panel was moderated by **Ms. Mona Khalil**, Legal Advisor at Independent Diplomat, and comprised five experts: Mr. Wesam Ahmad, Head of Legal Research and International Advocacy at Al Haq; Ms. Dalit Baum, Director of Economic Activism at American Friends Service Committee (AFSC); Mr. Hagai El-Ad, Executive Director at B'Tselem-The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories; Ms. Muna Haddad, Lawyer at the Civil and Political Rights Unit of Adalah-The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel; and Mr. Omar Shakir, Israel-Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch.

37. **Ms. Baum** noted that in the Israeli-Palestinian context, civil society action to change policy had been more successful with corporations than with governments. Success factors were the promotion of international standards for corporate responsibility, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and corporate sensitivity to public opinion. Corporations, particularly those relying on a consumer base, had proven risk averse and sought to avoid having their brands tarnished by controversy.

38. Government efforts to promote corporate responsibility, e.g. through National Action Plans, stood in stark contrast to the impunity they granted to corporations complicit in the Israeli occupation. Ten years after the Coalition of Women for Peace launched an initiative leading to

the establishment of the “Who Profits from the Occupation”⁷ independent research centre, monitoring corporate activity in illegal settlements was still just a grassroots effort. Her committee had developed the “Investigate” database, which monitored corporate complicity in human rights violations around the world, including the OPT. A yawning gap between declared standards and practice also characterized the policies of some multinational companies operating in the OPT. For example, while Hewlett Packard (HP) was known to advocate for human rights worldwide, at the same time the company was involved in projects linked to the Israeli occupation such as the development of biometric ID systems used to track and control Palestinian movement in the OPT.

39. The aim of establishing databases of corporations complicit in human rights violations was to create new standards of corporate behaviour. During the last ten years, 10 out of 30 corporations, from which AFSC had recommended divestment, had changed their behaviour and withdrawn from ‘controversial’ business. Moreover, other corporations were using the database to vet potential vendors and sought to avoid links to businesses that might prompt an inclusion in the list.

40. Identifying corporations, which had profited from business in or with illegal Israeli settlements in the OPT, and thus undermining Palestinian rights, was part of a new approach spearheaded by civil society. After decades of documenting human rights violations in written reports and calling on States to take action to no avail, many organizations had changed course. New strategies sought to influence policy from the grassroots level up by educating citizens about their complicity in sustaining the occupation and encouraging methods of nonviolent non-cooperation. Tracking down the economic relationships was a good way to expose such complicity and to help individuals and institutions in making fully informed decisions as shareholders of companies involved in violations of international law. For example, when U.S.-based churches asked for divestment from companies such as Caterpillar, a company manufacturing machines used to demolish Palestinian houses in the OPT, their aim was not to target the company but to help their members act in accordance with their values and avoid complicity in the violation of Palestinian rights.

41. Referencing the keynote speech by Ms. Williams, who had underscored the importance of creating lists in efforts to ensure accountability, Ms. Baum called upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to publish the database of business enterprises involved in activities related to settlements, as requested by the Human Rights Council in resolution 3136 (2016). Such a database compiled by the UN would be taken very seriously by the business community and thus represent a huge step forward.

42. **Mr. Omar Shakir** affirmed that although Israel had withdrawn from Gaza all its settlers and most of its ground forces in 2005, it remained an occupying power that *inter alia* controlled the borders, the airspace and the no-go zone encompassing 17 per cent of Gazan land.

43. As an occupying power, Israel was under significant international legal obligations. For example, the Israeli travel ban, imposed on Gaza as a blanket policy rather than on the basis of individualized security assessments, was disproportionate to any security threat and thus unlawful, **Mr. Shakir** asserted. Human rights workers were not exempted from closure policies, affecting primarily Palestinian groups but also international organizations that were unable to enter Gaza to do critical documentation work.

⁷ See <https://whoprofits.org>.

44. In its arguments against the ICC moving from a preliminary examination of the situation in Palestine to an investigation, Israel had put forward that it was conducting investigations itself, and that although Israeli criminal investigators did not enter Gaza, they relied on the work of human rights groups as a source of information. However, in fact human rights investigators had been systematically blocked from Gaza. This suggested that Israel was either unwilling or unable⁸ to facilitate their access, undermining efforts to hold all parties to account for violations of international law, Mr. Shakir concluded.

45. Against the background of criticism that Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) had made a negotiated political settlement harder to achieve, **Mr. El-Ad** stated that the peace process seemed an endless process with no peace in sight while human rights violations were ongoing on a daily basis. This begged the question whether, under the guise of peace-making, the peace process had actually allowed the occupation to continue while fending off any international consequences.

46. Noting lack of progress in its implementation, **Mr. El-Ad** stressed that resolution 2334 contained provisions that concerned neither the Government of Israel nor the Palestinian leadership but explicitly addressed UN Member States. Such was, for example, its operational paragraph five, calling on all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. Yet, progress reports to the Security Council contained no updates with regard to the implementation of this paragraph. “If Member States do not take the resolution seriously, why should Israel?” Mr. El-Ad asked.

47. Discussing the limits and opportunities for Palestinians to pursue justice in Israeli courts, **Ms. Haddad** expressed the view that the chances to ensure accountability through national jurisdiction courts were close to nil. Based on the experience of Adalah with cases that *prima facie* involved violations of the right to life, she concluded that where Palestinians were concerned – whether as residents of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, of Gaza or as Israeli citizens – Israeli authorities were plainly unwilling to investigate.

48. Regarding the work of Adalah in the context of the 2014 Gaza War, **Ms. Haddad** referenced a joint submission with Al Mezan to the Israeli Military Advocate General and Attorney General, asking that investigations into 28 clear cut cases be opened. Three years after the incidents happened, investigations had only been opened in 3 of the 28 cases; one of those had since been closed, and Adalah was waiting for a reply with regard to the other two.

49. Following the release of new rules of engagement for the Israel Police in September 2015, Adalah had filed five complaints requesting investigations into what *prima facie* seemed extra-judicial killings in East Jerusalem; all had been closed without anyone being held accountable. Neither had there ever been accountability for the killing of 13 Palestinians, 12 of whom were Israeli citizens, by police during protests and demonstrations held in Israel in October 2000.

50. **Mr. El-Ad** added that, looking back at 20 years of work, B’Tselem had reached a painful conclusion: rather than ensuring accountability, the investigative mechanisms concerned were providing cover for impunity through the semblance of an exhaustive legal

⁸ Human Rights Watch: Unable or Unwilling: Israeli Restrictions on Access to and from Gaza for Human Rights Workers, April 2017.

process, which helped Israel dodge international consequences. Considering that the mechanism deserved no credibility, in 2016 B'Tselem ended its engagement with the Military Advocate General Office, he said, referring the audience to two B'Tselem reports⁹ issued in 2016 for further details.

51. **Ms. Haddad** argued that by continuing to engage with Israeli mechanisms, Adalah was trying to exhaust all legal remedies to make clear that the time for change had come. When asked whether civil litigation might be an alternative avenue to ensure a certain measure of accountability, she expressed the view that in cases involving loss of life, civil litigation could never be an alternative to criminal proceedings. In addition, attempts to pursue justice through that avenue also faced significant obstacles. Amendments to the Civil Liability of the State Law and broad interpretations thereof had effectively rendered it nearly impossible for Palestinians in the OPT to obtain compensation for killings and destruction of property by Israeli security forces.

52. Discussing the potential for cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian civil society, **Mr. Ahmed** said that in the past, too much emphasis might have been placed on the nuances of distinction between different NGOs at the expense of focusing on common elements and interests. To identify those, he proposed examining the economic incentive structure underlying the conflict, e.g. by looking at the exploitation of natural resources in the OPT. Analysing who was benefitting from the occupation might help identify common interests between ordinary Israelis and Palestinians, paving the way for new conversations and new alliances. In relation to the “anti-normalization” paradigm, he clarified that Al Haq was open to work together with any group or individual willing to address the occupation and use international legal mechanisms to challenge it.

53. Regarding accusations of anti-Semitism or anti-Israel bias against independent human rights organizations and the Human Rights Council, **Mr. Ahmed** remarked that by broadening its scope to include criticism of Israeli policies, Israel was actually undermining the meaning of the term ‘anti-Semitism’. Furthermore, failing to distinguish between criticism of Israeli Government policies and anti-Semitism, which he defined as animosity against those practicing the Jewish faith, risked bringing religion into a conflict that was clearly not religious.

54. Levelling accusations of anti-Semitism sought to silence organizations using international law in their advocacy and engaged within the system set up to maintain the international order. That seemed a short-sighted strategy, which risked weakening the international human rights system as a whole with far-reaching consequences, he warned.

55. **Mr. El-Ad** agreed that accusations of anti-Semitism were systematically used as a silencing tool in order to continue the occupation. Moreover, equating anti-Semitism with anti-occupation activism risked hindering efforts to fight genuine anti-Semitism – a risk some ministers in the Israeli Government seemed to be willing to take in order to continue the occupation with zero international consequences.

56. **Ms. Baum** stated that anti-BDS legislation passed in the United States at the state level, purportedly to fight anti-Semitism, had led to a remarkable irony whereby state authorities

⁹ B'Tselem: *The So-Called Investigation of Operation Protective Edge*, September 2016 and *The Occupation's Fig Leaf: Israel's Military Law Enforcement System as a Whitewash Mechanism*, May 2016.

responsible for promoting human rights were trying to penalize corporations that had decided to withdraw from business in order to avoid complicity in human rights violations.

57. Further elaborating on tactics used to deter activism and independent human rights advocacy, **Mr. Shakir** explained that those differed depending on the groups or individuals targeted. Palestinian human rights defenders had been detained on spurious charges, Israeli organizations had to comply with onerous reporting requirements, and in many cases, international groups faced access restrictions – Mr. Michael Lynk, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the OPT, was cited as a case in point.

Discussion

58. A participant stated that, rather than an attempt to turn the conflict into an inter-religious one, accusations of anti-Semitism were part of a psychosocial manipulation of Israeli society. Exploiting deep-seated fears, the Israeli public was made to believe that Palestinian resistance was not directed against the occupation but driven by hatred against Jews.

59. Against the background of human rights violations in the OPT and across the Middle East, as well as the rise of populism and its stance against universal values, providing hope to Palestinian and Israeli youth was discussed as a challenge facing adults. Some participants pointed out that the wish to give youth hope was one of the drivers for civil society action to document abuse and demand accountability. Inverting the terms of the question, others noted that watching youth engage in renewed activism, using the wealth of information available and new strategies based on the lessons learnt from decades of experience, was a source of hope and inspiration for older generations.

60. Discussing simple, practical steps Palestinians could take to make the cost of the occupation such that Israel would be persuaded to end it, it was suggested that they buy Palestinian rather than Israeli products to support the development of a Palestinian industry and strengthen resilience, as well as to include chess in the school curriculum to help youth develop strategic thinking. Israeli society was, however, uniquely placed to convince its own Government that ending the occupation was in best interest of Israel. Nevertheless, although political change had to be driven from within, considering the extent to which Israel enjoyed international support it was difficult to envisage an end to the occupation without external pressure.

61. Highlighting acquiescence or tacit support by the international community as a key factor enabling the occupation to continue, the importance of UN Member States ensuring the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), including its operational paragraph 5, was underscored. The injustice of the occupation should be rejected just as the conscience of the world had previously rejected slavery and apartheid. Others argued that the most effective way to raise the cost of the occupation was for individual citizens to track down lines of complicity and practice non-cooperation in the context of worldwide BDS campaigns.

C. Plenary session III

“Beyond Occupation: In Search of a Just and Lasting Peace”

62. The panel was moderated by **Ms. Helena Cobban**, President of Just World Educational, and comprised five experts: Mr. Mustapha Barghouthi, Secretary-General of Al Mubadara (The Palestinian National Initiative); Mr. Diego Khamis, Youth Board President at Club Palestino Santiago de Chile; Ms. Jessica Nevo, Coalition of Women for Peace and Pre-Transitional Justice Programme Coordinator at Zochrot; Ms. Rebecca Vilkomerson, Executive Director at Jewish Voice for Peace; and Mr. David Wildman, Executive Secretary, Human Rights and Racial Justice at General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church.

63. According to **Mr. Barghouthi**, three main factors had allowed the occupation to continue for fifty years, as well as the displacement of most Palestinians since 1948 and a system of ‘apartheid’: the imbalance of power that was exacerbated by the Oslo Accords, US support for Israel, and the complicity of many players in the international community. Raising the cost of the occupation and ‘apartheid’ and redressing the imbalance of power were the entry points to ending the occupation and achieving freedom and justice – whether through the establishment of a single State or two States.

64. A change in the balance of power could be achieved through a strategy based on five pillars: (i) reclaiming the principles underlying the first Intifada (e.g. self-organization and self-reliance) to guide popular Palestinian resistance on the ground as the most important form of resistance; (ii) endorsing BDS as the most effective non-violent tactic; (iii) strengthening the steadfastness of Palestinians on the ground in order to enable them to stay on the land; (iv) overcoming internal political divisions; and (v) integrating all Palestinians – in the OPT, inside Israel and in the diaspora – into a comprehensive strategy.

65. Asked what international civil society could do to support Palestinian rights, **Mr. Barghouthi** mentioned advocating vis-à-vis States for their recognition of the State of Palestine, framing the situation as an occupation involving the oppression of one party by another rather than as a conflict between two equal parties, and requesting EU Member States to withstand pressure to discontinue funding civil society organizations that support BDS.

66. Referring to BDS as the most effective instrument available, he further asked international civil society to strengthen that movement, promote visits to Palestine and critically analyse the language used in the media and public discourse to challenge false narratives.

67. Those who believed in the two-State solution should be aware that the facts created by Israel on the ground could kill any chance for its fulfilment. The immediate outcome would be one State in which the existing system of ‘apartheid’ would be further consolidated, **Mr. Barghouthi** warned, as he called for urgent action to prevent such a scenario.

68. **Ms. Nevo** noted that the Forum panels had discussed neither feminist perspectives on the conflict nor the Nakba. A challenging question often posed by women peace groups was how male-dominated militarized perspectives, which determined the current conflict dynamics, could possibly be drivers for peace without undergoing fundamental change.

69. Whereas most Israeli civil society organizations focused on the occupation that began in 1967, Zochrot worked to promote understanding and acknowledgment of the Nakba in 1948 and the right of return of Palestinian refugees. The fact that in Israel merely talking about the Nakba was widely perceived as a threat to the very existence of the State, made the work of Zochrot particularly challenging, **Ms. Nevo** stated.

70. Denial, which was promoted by the educational system and the media in Israel, was one of the mechanisms to maintain a system of settler colonialism. Zochrot saw its role in countering this mindset and making the object of denial visible, e.g. through uncovering the names of Palestinian villages and streets erased in 1948. The impact of educational activities conducted by Zochrot and other organizations could be seen in the fact that the term “Nakba” had entered the mainstream discourse in Israel.

71. According to **Ms. Nevo**, one of the reasons for the failure of the Oslo Accords was its avoidance to talk about the events of 1948. The approach taken to peace-making was to leave history behind and to focus on the future. However, transitional justice research in different parts of the world had shown that in order for communities affected by conflict to heal, they needed to deal with the past, receive acknowledgment of injustices suffered and engage in a process of restorative justice.

72. The transitional justice research by Zochrot had focused on the use of the moral tool of ‘apology’ in South Africa and the Americas. An example was the 2008 Statement of Apology by Canadian Prime Minister Harper to former students of the Indian Residential School system. In other instances, the moral tool of ‘apology’ had been used even before the official start of a political transition process and the availability of resources for material reparations.

73. In 2015, Zochrot coordinated an apology ceremony involving 1948 Palestine refugees and IDPs and members of the Jewish community in South Africa. Unaware of the historical context, the latter had for years contributed through the Jewish National Fund to the planting of trees on the South Africa Forest in Israel, which covers Lubyia, a Palestinian village destroyed in 1948. The apology of those South African Jews was an act of taking responsibility, which represented a crack in the official discourse. It constituted an example of the use of the language of apology as a form of reparation, which Zochrot was encouraging.

74. **Ms. Vilkomerson** argued that, in addition to Christian Zionist groups and the ‘military industrial complex’, Jewish organizations had played a key role in ensuring almost unconditional US support to Israeli policies. However, there had been a shift of opinion in the Jewish community, as part of a broader shift among liberals in the United States. This development was evidenced by the 28 June letter signed by [32 Members of the U.S. Congress](#) in support of Issa Amro, a Palestinian human rights defender facing charges within the Israeli military court system. In this context, grassroots organizing, which had to step in when governments were not able or willing to act, had played a crucial role.

75. As opposed to the political establishment, grassroots movements working to create the conditions for political and social change imagined and promoted new frameworks of law and policy to help realize the vision of a future involving an end to the occupation, respect for the right of return and equal rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel. The annual conferences jointly organized by Badil and Zochrot to discuss with professionals the practical implementation of the right of return were inspirational in this regard, **Ms. Vilkomerson** said.

76. The BDS movement had provided the global movement for Palestinian rights with a set of tools and tactics to tip the current imbalance of power. It was important to keep in mind that the call for BDS had originated from within Palestinian civil society.

77. As U.S. citizens who opposed the role of their government in enabling Israel to continue its oppressive policies, JVP aimed to create space for the Jewish community to support full

freedom and equality for all people in Israel/Palestine. At the same time, JVP was working to build partnerships and alliances that could be a model for the future, geared towards co-resisting oppression rather than mere coexistence, as experienced for years during the weekly non-violent demonstrations against the Wall in the West Bank village of Bil'in.

78. **Mr. Wildman** advised that to move beyond occupation, the international community should start by acknowledging its collective failure to protect the individual and collective rights of Palestinians and extract the lessons learned. Complicity at the individual and institutional level should be exposed; every U.S. taxpayer was financing weapons shipments to Israel, which were used to aid and abet collective punishment against Palestinians. In 2004, churches in the United States had started shifting their focus from recommendations to governments and international organizations to examining “what can *we* could do to end the occupation” – that was the context in which phased selective divestment policies were adopted.

79. Vetoes cast by the United States in the Security Council since the 1970s had been a major barrier to international action on the question of Palestine, just as for many years they had blocked international action against the crime of apartheid in South Africa. With the Security Council paralysed, civil society had turned to BDS to fight apartheid as an effective non-violent tool of change and moral act of conscience, which churches and other institutions had successfully used in the past to advance human rights and social justice elsewhere.

80. Part of the slow, continuous work required to erode the occupation involved staying on message, staying on course and challenging the framework asserting that the conflict was one of two equal parties rather than one of systematic discrimination, systematic dispossession, ‘apartheid’ and colonization, **Mr. Wildman** declared.

81. The first requirement for a just and lasting peace was ending the occupation, which should not be regarded as an Israeli concession but the fulfilment of international legal obligations **Mr. Khamis** stated, adding that anything else would be meaningless.

82. The occupation had impacted the Palestinian people as a whole, including the Palestinian diaspora. By way of example, in recent times, an average of ten members of the Palestinian Chilean community were stopped each year at Tel Aviv airport, barred from visiting Israel and the OPT, and deported back to their countries of origin. Those policies aimed at creating a disconnect between the Palestinian diaspora and their homeland, preventing visits and depriving the OPT from financial investment and human capital.

83. The role of Palestinian diaspora in the search of a just and lasting peace was multifaceted. In their host countries, they worked to retain the national identity within their communities and sought to raise awareness about the question of Palestine among the public. They also played a pivotal role in advocacy with their respective governments, highlighting third State obligations towards the OPT.

84. Diaspora communities also had a role to play inside Israel and the OPT, re-connecting with their families and places of origin, providing moral support and sharing capacity. Based on success stories in their host countries, members of diaspora communities contributed expertise, skills and talent to Palestinian society, providing hope for a better future.

85. Within Palestinian political organisations, diaspora Palestinians were ready to contribute to both the renewal cadres and decision-making.

Discussion

86. In relation to the criminalization of Palestine activism in the United States, reference was made to the work of organizations protecting the rights of activists such as Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights. Major significance was attached to the fact that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) had taken a stance against anti-BDS legislation in the United States. Addressing a different angle, it was remarked that churches and other groups were challenging the non-profit status of US-based groups funnelling money to Israeli settlements.

87. In the case of Israeli settlers with dual nationality, the question arose as how the governments concerned could disincentivise colonization and settler violence by their nationals.

88. Having gone through interrogations and deportations at Tel Aviv airport, Palestinian diaspora representatives wondered about ways forward to maintain the links with the homeland. In this context, it was advised to publicize instances of prominent figures such as Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mairead Maguire or the academic Noam Chomsky having been refused entry to Israel/OPT. Moreover, UN Member States whose citizens were concerned could take measures based on the principle of reciprocity.

89. Concern was expressed that while the international community distinguished between the territory occupied since 1967 and the territory of the State of Israel, by calling for a full boycott of Israel, the BDS movement was blurring that distinction. This had led to perceptions that the real aim of BDS was to undermine Israel's right to exist.

90. In reply, participants noted that BDS was not a centrally-led movement, which specified the level of action required from each individual or institution, and some supporters of BDS limited boycotts to settlement products. However, some argued, as in the case of South Africa, in the case of Israel and its occupation of the Palestinian territory it was important to call for a full boycott. During the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, talk was not about the destruction of South Africa but about the transformation of South Africa into a State of all its citizens. Ultimately, BDS would not only serve Palestinians but also Israelis since it sought to change policies that were destroying the future of both peoples.

91. While welcoming the organization of conferences, steps to make a difference in the lives of Palestinians were required. A participant from the West Bank village of Bil'in requested the Committee to close the two-day Forum with a declaration announcing a boycott of the Israeli occupation and requesting UN Member States, particularly the United States, to stop supporting the occupation and discontinue financial assistance to the Israeli military.

92. Regarding the role of Christian Zionist groups in the United States, it was noted that they had been among the most ardent supporters of US military engagement in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria as well as the annexation of Palestinian land by Israel. It was, however, important to distinguish between some Christian Zionist leaders and common practitioners and to engage in constructive conversations with the latter.

93. Regarding the question whether the time was ripe for a new Palestinian political initiative, it was clarified that the five-point plan presented the previous year by Al Mubadara

intended to be a unifying strategy, which remained open to discussion and amendments. Hopes were expressed that all Palestinian movements would adopt it; the question was whether there was a will to move forward in that direction and to depart from approaches that had not worked for over 20 years.

VII. Key Themes & Recommendations – Day 2

Panel I

- The international community should place accountability for all violations of international law at the centre of any policy to address the situation in the OPT including the Gaza Strip and to achieve an end to the occupation and a just peace.
- The international community, in cooperation with civil society, should discuss, design and implement policies to address the situation in Gaza within the larger context of the question of Palestine.
- To reverse negative trends on the ground, humanitarian action to support residents in Gaza during particularly acute crises should give way to longer-term strategies involving sustained international engagement.
- The international community, including civil society, should shift from a largely humanitarian to an international law and human rights-centred framework, which takes the legal obligations of Israel as occupying power and other duty-bearers into consideration.
- Because the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip amounts to collective punishment, as prohibited by international law, beyond appealing for the easing of access restrictions on humanitarian grounds, concrete and effective steps should be taken to ensure the complete lifting of the unlawful closure.
- The international community should refrain from acts that implicitly normalize and legitimize the closure; in this context participating in the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM), which has been criticized as incompatible with international law, should be examined.
- All UN Member States should act in accordance with the legal requirements of the 2004 ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- The recommendations contained in the 2009 UN Fact Finding Mission Report on Gaza and the 2017 Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Ensuring Accountability and Justice for all Violations of International Law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory should be implemented.

Panel II

- The international community should call on Israel to end the generalized ban on travel to and from Gaza and permit the free movement of people and goods to and from Gaza, subject to individualized security screenings.
- In accordance with operational paragraph five (OP 5) of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), all UN Member States should distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. All measures taken by UN Member States to implement OP 5 should be included in writing in the Secretary-General reports to the Security Council on progress in the implementation of resolution 2334.
- In accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 31/36 (2016), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should publish the database of businesses that have enabled or profited from settlements.
- As a way forward to raise the cost of the occupation, concerned citizens and civil society organizations should track down the lines of complicity in economic relations and engage in non-cooperation.
- To support the development of the Palestinian economy, Palestinians in the OPT should buy local products.

Panel III

- To end international complicity and ensure compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territory, Member States and the private sector should conduct business and foreign policy in accordance with established third-party obligations.
- In line with the universally recognized right to freedom of opinion and association, governments should respect the space for non-violent civil society engagement to defend and promote human rights including the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.
- Donors should refrain from using civil society involvement in non-violent action to defend human rights and provoke changes in policy (e.g. through the call for BDS) as a criterion for funding decisions.
- Diplomats, policymakers and mediators should incorporate the perspectives of women peace groups active in civil society in all conflict prevention, mediation and peace-building efforts related to Israel/Palestine.
- Diplomats, policymakers and mediators should extract the lessons learned from the failure of the Oslo process for current and future peace initiatives. Rather than side-lining issues related to the 1948 War / Nakba from peace-making efforts, use transitional justice paradigms to address the past and build a better future for all.



UNITED NATIONS FORUM TO MARK FIFTY YEARS OF OCCUPATION

Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice and Peace for Palestine
29 June 2017

Conference Room 3, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Programme

10.00 - 12.00

OPENING SESSION

H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Fodé Seck

Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People

H.E. Dr. Saeb Erakat

Representative of the State of Palestine

PANEL I

The Costs and Consequences of Fifty Years of Occupation

H.E. Dr. Saeb Erakat

Secretary-General of the Palestine Liberation Organization

H.E. Dr. Shlomo Ben-Ami

Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel

H.E. Dr. Nabil A. Elaraby

Former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

Ms. Zaha Hassan

Former Coordinator and Senior Legal Advisor to the
Palestinian Negotiating Team

Moderator: **Dr. Michele Dunne**

Director and Senior Fellow, Middle East Program
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

12.00 - 13.00 **Statements by Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations**

13.00 - 15.00 *Recess*

15.00 - 17.30 **PANEL II**
Beyond Occupation: The Path ahead to Palestinian Independence and a Just Peace

H.E. Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa
Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine

H.E. Mr. Robert Serry
Former United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

Dr. Galia Golan-Gild
Darwin Professor (emerita)
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Hon. Ms. Aida Touma-Sliman
Member of the Israeli Knesset from the Joint List

Moderator: **Mr. Mouin Rabbani**
Senior Fellow
Institute for Palestine Studies

17.30 - 18.00 **CLOSING STATEMENTS**

<p>18.30 - 21.00 <i>Reception hosted by H.E. Mr. Fodé Seck</i> <i>Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People</i></p> <p><i>(Visitor Lobby, General Assembly Building)</i></p>
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UNITED NATIONS FORUM TO MARK FIFTY YEARS OF OCCUPATION

*Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development and a Just Peace
30 June 2017 (Civil Society Forum)*

Conference Room 3, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Programme

10.00 - 11.00

WELCOME REMARKS & KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The role of civil society in achieving an end to the occupation, conflict transformation and a just peace

Ms. Jody Williams

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1997)

Chair, Nobel Women's Initiative

11.15 - 13.00

PANEL I

The Gaza Strip: an integral part of the State of Palestine

Ms. Majeda Alsaqqa

Programmes Director

Culture and Free Thought Association (*via Skype*)

Mr. Mohammed Azaiza

Field Coordinator

Gisha-Legal Center for Freedom of Movement (*via Skype*)

Ms. Noura Erakat

Assistant Professor

George Mason University

Ms. Tania Hary

Executive Director

Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement

Ms. Nuriya Oswald

International Advocacy Coordinator

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

Moderator:

Mr. Robert Blecher

Senior Advisor and Acting Programme Director

Middle East and North Africa

International Crisis Group

13.00 - 15.00

Recess

15.00 - 16.40

PANEL II

Enforcement of international law and accountability: How to make a difference?

Mr. Wesam Ahmad

Head of Legal Research and International Advocacy
Al Haq

Dr. Dalit Baum

Director of Economic Activism
American Friends Service Committee

Ms. Muna Haddad

Lawyer, Civil and Political Rights Unit
Adalah

Mr. Hagai El-Ad

Executive Director
B'Tselem

Mr. Omar Shakir

Israel-Palestine Director
Human Rights Watch

Moderator: **Ms. Mona Khalil**
Legal Advisor
Independent Diplomat

16.45 - 18.00

PANEL III

Beyond occupation: in search of a just and lasting peace

Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi

Secretary-General
Al Mubadara (Palestinian National Initiative)

Mr. Diego Khamis

Youth Board President
Club Palestino Santiago de Chile

Ms. Jessica Nevo

Coalition of Women for Peace
Coordinator, Pre-Transitional Justice Programme
Zochrot

Ms. Rebecca Vilkomerson

Executive Director
Jewish Voice for Peace

Mr. David Wildman

Executive Secretary, Human Rights and Racial Justice
General Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church

Moderator: **Ms. Helena Cobban**
President
Just World Educational

18.00

CLOSING STATEMENTS

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UNITED NATIONS FORUM TO MARK FIFTY YEARS OF OCCUPATION

*Ending the Occupation:
The Path to Independence, Justice and Peace for Palestine
29 June 2017*

*Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development, and a Just Peace
30 June 2017*

United Nations Headquarters, New York

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

The **United Nations Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation** was convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 29 and 30 June 2017, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). A day-long event entitled "*Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice, and Peace for Palestine*" was held on 29 June, followed by a civil society forum entitled "*Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development, and a Just Peace*" on 30 June.

The Forum brought together international experts, representatives of the diplomatic community, civil society, including Palestinians and Israelis, as well as academics and students of diverse backgrounds and views to discuss the ongoing occupation. A series of moderated interactive panels underscored the importance of ending the occupation as an antecedent step towards a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Forum provided experts and civil society organizations (CSOs) with a valuable advocacy platform to inform policy and diplomatic action on the question of Palestine at UN Headquarters.

At the inaugural session, the message of **Secretary-General António Guterres**, delivered by Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, noted that ending the occupation is the only way to lay the foundations for an enduring peace that meets both the Israeli security needs and Palestinian aspirations for statehood and sovereignty. Recalling that five decades of occupation have fuelled recurring cycles of violence and retribution, its ending would remove a driver of violent extremism and terrorism in the region. The Secretary-General called for a return to direct negotiations and reiterated his offer to work with all relevant stakeholders to support a genuine peace process. In her own opening remarks, **Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed** emphasized that the two-state solution is the only path to ensure that Palestinians and Israelis can realize their national and historic aspirations and live in peace, security, and dignity. All unilateral actions that undermine the two-state solution, particularly the continued expansion of Israeli settlements which constitute a violation of international law, should end. She highlighted the occupation's humanitarian costs noting that the most vulnerable are paying the highest price for political failure on the part of various stakeholders,

including the international community. **The Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Fodé Seck (Senegal)**, highlighted the responsibility of the international community to redouble its efforts to reach a viable two-state solution on the basis of international law and all relevant UN resolutions. He stressed that ending the occupation is the only way to achieve the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. On behalf of the State of Palestine, the Secretary-General of the **Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Saeb Erakat**, described the ongoing occupation as an opportune environment for extremism in the Middle East. He called for accountability on the part of the Israeli Government, including with respect to its ‘apartheid’ policies and discriminatory laws. He called for all of the international community to recognize the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital and underscored that Gaza is an integral part of a Palestinian state and called on Hamas to end its ‘coup d’état’. Finally, he expressed hope that the engagement of the US administration would lead to peace.

Following the Opening Session, Regional Organisations and Committee Members read out official statements. The statements of other States were published on the Committee website.

The first panel on *“The Costs and Consequences of Fifty Years of Occupation”*, recalled that Israel had taken control of East Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula following the June 1967 war. While Sinai was eventually returned to Egypt, the other territories remained in a patchwork of different arrangements, including Israeli occupation. Other speakers described the ongoing Israeli occupation as an affront to the international legal order. An Israeli speaker argued that for his country, 1967 had brought military grandeur but moral collapse, pointing out that the rise of the Israeli right could not be separated from the 1967 war. He added that Israel has never had the kind of global outreach it enjoys today, and the “Boycott, Divestment Sanctions” (BDS) campaign has had only a marginal, if any, impact on conditions inside the country. While Israelis do not want a one-state solution, many question why the country should make any effort towards two states now, when its economy was booming, international relations had never been better, and there was a friendly US Administration in place. Another speaker noted the pervasive oppressive situation in the Gaza Strip particularly for young people, where they represented more than 60 per cent of the population. Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, first and foremost want their human dignity preserved. Speakers recalled that the question of Palestine was the longest-running issue on the United Nations agenda and asserted that Israel was getting away with ‘apartheid’ without serious accountability. Israel had to transform from the occupier of the Palestinian people to their neighbour.

The second panel *“Beyond Occupation: The Path Ahead to Palestinian Independence and a Just Peace”*, noted that while there was a possibility of renewed US-led peace talks, it would be overly optimistic to expect that these would yield a lasting peaceful solution. Speakers cautioned against regionalizing peace talks as this would risk reinforcing ongoing regional instability, and called for a bigger role for the European Union. Similarly, partial measures were viewed as perpetuating the occupation and support was expressed for the Arab Initiative that spelled the endgame. It was also pointed out that direct negotiations were unhelpful when the balance of power was so unequal. An Israeli scholar highlighted the PLO’s 1988 decision to recognize Israel and the recent Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) designed to stop Israel’s creeping annexation of Palestinian land. She stressed that civil society and opposition parties, with help of the international community, play an important role in advocating for change and the realization of two sovereign and independent states. Others reminded that the international community had a responsibility to guarantee that occupation was

not profitable, but costly, for Israel. The efforts of anti-occupation civil society, particularly in the United States and among the Jewish community, were mentioned as being important.

In his welcome remarks on the second day, the Chair of the CEIRPP Working Group and Deputy Representative of Malta to the United Nations, **David Mansfield**, recalled GA resolution 71/20 which requested the Committee “to support the achievement without delay of an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967”. In the implementation of its mandate, the Committee considered cooperation with Palestinian, Israeli and other CSOs of paramount importance.

In her keynote address “*The role of civil society in achieving an end to the occupation, conflict transformation and a just peace*” Nobel Peace Prize laureate Jody Williams recalled the Campaign to Ban Landmines as a model of civil society action that could be replicated in different contexts, stressing the importance of coordinated action and systematic documentation in efforts to bring about change. Governments change policy when civil society pushes them to move and power never concedes power without pressure, she stated.

The first panel “*The Gaza Strip: An Integral Part of the State of Palestine*” called for sustained international engagement on Gaza and a shift from a humanitarian to a human rights framework, which would take into account the legal obligations of the occupying power and other duty-bearers. Speakers emphasized the indispensability of the Gaza Strip to the broader question of Palestine; and how Gaza should be dealt with as a political issue rather than as a national security and military challenge. Also highlighted was the connection between the West Bank and Gaza, pointing out that Israel’s policy documents showed that many of the policies on Gaza were not in fact grounded in security concerns. Providing examples of living conditions in Gaza, speakers reported that continued electricity cuts were resulting in an environmental disaster and emphasized the need to put accountability at the centre of the debate.

The second panel “*Enforcement of International Law and Accountability: How to Make a Difference?*” discussed how the travel ban imposed on Gaza was undermining efforts to document abuse as required to hold all parties accountable for violations of international law. Lack of accountability also affected Palestinians with Israeli citizenship, while labelling human rights organizations and the Human Rights Council as ‘anti-Semitic’ or ‘anti-Israeli’ in order to silence criticism risked undermining the international human rights system. Noting lack of progress in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), a speaker focused on the need to operationalize its call on all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. Stressing that civil society action had been more successful in changing corporate behaviour than government policy, another speaker highlighted the relevance of soft law, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and called on OHCHR to publish the database of businesses operating in settlements as mandated by the Human Rights Council.

The third panel “*Beyond Occupation: In Search of a Just and Lasting Peace*” emphasized the need to change the balance of power through popular Palestinian resistance; engaging in BDS, restoring internal unity, and reintegrating all Palestinian people in one common strategy. An Israeli speaker stressed the importance of acknowledging the Nakba, the right of return and gender perspectives, and encouraged the use of the language of apology as a crucial form of pre-transitional justice. Highlighting that a growing segment of the Jewish community in the United States supports Palestinian rights, a panellist asserted that grassroots movements must step in when States are unwilling or unable to act, which can create conditions

to realize an end to the occupation, the right of return and equal rights for Palestinians in Israel. One speaker noted how churches had shifted their focus to ‘what groups and individuals can do themselves’ to challenge the occupation, such as purchasing Palestinian goods rather than just boycotting Israeli goods. BDS could be a form of non-violent resistance that in the past had proven effective. Diaspora representatives argued that they had a role in raising awareness on the question of Palestine as well as contributing to policy inside the Palestinian structures.

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Statements of Member States and Intergovernmental Organizations

Following the first panel on 29 June, the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, Kuwait – in its capacity as the Chair of the **League of Arab States** – and three Committee Vice-Chairs (**Cuba, Nicaragua, and Indonesia**) as well as the Committee Rapporteur (**Malta**) read out official statements marking fifty years of the Israeli occupation that began in 1967. The statements are annexed herewith.

The following Member States were also acknowledged by the Chair for providing written statements, which were subsequently made available online at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B8kzV8oZ-KOEU0JiTDhNS1prUIE>

- Ecuador
- Pakistan
- Turkey
- Tunisia
- Bangladesh
- Malaysia
- Brazil
- Saudi Arabia

*List of Participants***Speakers**

Mr. Wesam Ahmad	Head of Legal Research and International Advocacy, Al Haq
Ms. Majeda Alsaqqa	Programmes Director, Culture and Free Thought Association (via Skype)
Mr. Mohammed Azaiza	Field Coordinator, Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement (via Skype)
H.E. Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa	Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine
Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi	Secretary-General, Al Mubadara (Palestinian National Initiative)
Dr. Dalit Baum	Director of Economic Activism, American Friends Service Committee
H.E. Dr. Shlomo Ben-Ami	Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel
Mr. Robert Blecher	Senior Advisor and Acting Programme Director, Middle East and North Africa, International Crisis Group
Ms. Helena Cobban	President, Just World Educational
Dr. Michele Dunne	Director and Senior Fellow, Middle East Program Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Mr. Hagai El-Ad	Executive Director, B'Tselem
H.E. Dr. Nabil A. Elaraby	Former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States
Ms. Noura Erakat	Assistant Professor, George Mason University
H.E. Dr. Saeb Erakat	Representative of the State of Palestine
Dr. Galia Golan-Gild	Darwin Professor (emerita), Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Ms. Muna Haddad	Lawyer, Civil and Political Rights Unit, Adalah

Ms. Tania Hary	Executive Director, Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement
Ms. Zaha Hassan	Former Coordinator and Senior Legal Advisor to the Palestinian Negotiating Team
Ms. Mona Khalil	Legal Advisor, Independent Diplomat
Mr. Diego Khamis	Youth Board President, Club Palestino, Santiago de Chile
Ms. Jessica Nevo	Coalition of Women for Peace Coordinator, Pre-Transitional Justice Programme Zochrot
Ms. Nuriya Oswald	International Advocacy Coordinator, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights
Mr. Mouin Rabbani	Senior Fellow, Institute for Palestine Studies
H.E. Mr. Robert Serry	Former United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
Mr. Omar Shakir	Israel-Palestine Director, Human Rights Watch
Hon. Ms. Aida Touma-Sliman	Member of the Israeli Knesset from the Joint List
Ms. Rebecca Vilkomerson	Executive Director Jewish Voice for Peace
Mr. David Wildman	Executive Secretary, Human Rights and Racial Justice, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church
Ms. Jody Williams	Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1997) Chair, Nobel Women's Initiative

Representative of the Secretary-General

H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed

Deputy Secretary-General
of the United Nations

Member States

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Kenya	Nicaragua	South Africa
Austria	Egypt	Kuwait	Nigeria	Sri Lanka
Bangladesh	Finland	Laos	Norway	Sweden
Bahrain	Germany	Lebanon	Pakistan	Tunisia
Belarus	Greece	Libya	Panama	Turkey
Belgium	Guyana	Luxembourg	Paraguay	United Arab Emirates
Bolivia	India	Malaysia	Peru	Venezuela
Brazil	Indonesia	Malta	Philippines	Zambia
China	Iraq	Mauritania	Portugal	
Costa Rica	Italy	Mexico	Senegal	
Cuba	Japan	Morocco	Serbia	
Cyprus	Jordan	Namibia	Singapore	

Non-member States having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining Permanent Observer Missions at Headquarters

Holy See
State of Palestine

Intergovernmental Organizations

League of Arab States
Organization of Islamic Cooperation

United Nations Organs, Agencies and Bodies

Department of Political Affairs
Department of Public Information
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
World Food Programme

Civil Society Organizations

1for3

Actions pour la Réhabilitation et la Promotion Sociale

Adalah

Al-Awda

Al-Shabaka

American Civil Liberties Union

American Friends of Combatants for Peace

American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

American Friends of the Jenin Freedom Theatre

American Friends of the Parents Circle

American Friends Service Committee

American Muslims for Palestine

Americans for Middle East Understanding

Amuta for NGO Responsibility

Apex Development Foundation

Arab Studies Institute

Association de l'Intervention pour les Meres

Association Humanitaire pour le Développement International

Association of International Development Agencies

Atonement Friars

Augustinians International

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

Barinu Institute for Economic Development

Bi'lin Popular Committee

Brooklyn for Peace

Canadian Friends of Sabeel

Canadian Palestinian Solidarity

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

Care Queen & King Foundation Global Family Network Inc.

Caritas Internationalis

Catholic Near East Welfare Association

Center for Constitutional Rights

Centre Africain de Recherche Industrielle

Cercle de Recherche sur les Droits et les Devoirs de la Personne Humaine

Churches for Middle East Peace

Club Palestino

Coalition for the International Criminal Court

Combatants for Peace

Dayemi Complex Bangladesh

Dominican Sisters of Blauvelt
Defense for Children International – Palestine
Federacion Palestina de Chile
Forum of Peace City Youth
Friends of the Elderly Community Based Organization
Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
Green Ladies
Healing Across the Divides
Human Rights Watch
Independent Diplomat
Institute for Peace and Transformational Leadership
International Association of Democratic Lawyers
International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists
International Federation for Peace and Sustainable Development
International Council of Jewish Women
International Crisis Group
International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
International Youth Forum
Inter-Parliamentary Union
Intersections International
Jewish Voice for Peace
Jssor Youth Organization
Just Vision
Kairos USA
Kikandwa Rural Communities Development Organization
Lajee Center
The Light Millennium
Ligue des Peuples Arabes
Lutheran World Federation
Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
MasterPeace Karachi Club
Mennonite Central Committee
Mini Global Hetavad Skills Networks International
New Future Foundation
New Israel Fund
New York Legal Assistance Group
Nocofo
OneVoice Movement
Open Society Foundations
Palestinian American Community Center

Palestinian Association for Development and Reconstruction
Palestinian Solidarity
Palestinians Without Frontiers
Pathways to Peace
Pax Christi
Pedglitz Youth Development Foundation
People's Movement for Human Rights Learning
Permanent Assembly for Human Rights
Polyphony
Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations
PROGRESPECT
Public Committee Against Torture in Israel
Quaker United Nations Office
Reach the Youth Uganda
Reconsider
Reso-Femmes International
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
Save Israel Stop the Occupation
Somaliland National Disability Forum
Students for Justice in Palestine, SUNY Purchase
Temple Israel of New Rochelle – Israel Action Committee
United Network for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel
Upper Hudson Peace Action
Ururka Dhalinyarada Gobolada Waqooyi Somalia Ee Midnimo
U.S. Peace Council
We Yone Child Foundation
Women of Reform Judaism
World Council of Churches
World Federalist Movement Institute for Global Policy
World Federation of United Nations Associations
World Jewish Congress
World Union for Progressive Judaism
World Youth Organization
Zamani Foundation

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