



DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

Bulletin

on action by the United Nations system and
intergovernmental organizations
relevant to the question of Palestine

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I. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OPT VISITS REGION

On 5 July, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Mr. Michael Lynk, issued the following [statement](#):

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, begins his annual official mission to the region on 8 July, through Friday 12 July 2019.

The Special Rapporteur will gather first-hand information on the current human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Due to Israel's lack of response to the Special Rapporteur's request to travel to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, he will hold meetings in Amman, Jordan.

During his mission, the Special Rapporteur will meet with officials, community leaders and civil society representatives, among others. He will discuss the human rights situation across the Occupied Palestinian Territory with a focus on gathering evidence and information that will inform his upcoming report.

The Special Rapporteur will present his annual report to the General Assembly in October 2019 on his findings and conclusions.

II. OIC-ORGANIZED SYMPOSIUM FOCUSES ON ISRAEL'S VIOLATIONS OF PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened an International Symposium, "Half century of occupation and discrimination: towards accountability and justice", on the sidelines of the Human Rights Council on 9 July in Geneva. The [press release](#) issued is replicated below:

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation held an International Symposium entitled "Half century of occupation and discrimination: towards accountability and justice", on 9 July 2019, on the sidelines of the 41st session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, in coordination with the Permanent Observer Missions of the OIC and the State of Palestine to the UN in Geneva.

Representatives of OIC Member States, European countries, legal experts, academia and the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission, among many others, have attended the event.

Panellists, including Mr Mandla Mandela – Member of South African Parliament and member of the ANC delegation to Pan-African Parliament; Dr John Reynolds- Professor at International Law at the University of Ireland; Ms Sawsan Zaher, Advocate and Deputy Director General of Adalah Human Rights Centre, have highlighted the impact of the Israeli illegal occupation, colonial practices and discrimination policies and laws on the human rights of the Palestinian people. They underscored the responsibility incumbent on the entire international community in combatting this racist system.

Ambassador Ali Goutali, Director of Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs Department, highlighted in his opening statement on behalf of the OIC General Secretariat that the cause of Palestine is fundamental and central for the OIC, urging international community to act against these violations and play an effective role in launching multilaterally-sponsored peace process to realize the two-State solution.

III. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR SAYS ISRAEL “BENT ON FURTHER ANNEXATION”

On 12 July, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued the following [press release](#):

One of the UN’s independent experts has voiced concern about lack of human rights accountability in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, pointing to the actions of “an occupying power seemingly bent on further territorial annexation”.

Michael Lynk, the UN Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, met with Palestinian and Israeli human rights organisations, and government and United Nations representatives during a week-long visit to Amman, Jordan.

He held these meetings in Amman because Israel, the occupying power, once again refused him entry to the Palestinian Territory. “This refusal is contrary to Israel’s obligations as a UN member to cooperate fully with Experts of the United Nations,” Lynk, appointed by the Human Rights Council, said at the end of his visit.

Over the course of the week, the Special Rapporteur heard about shrinking civic space and the difficulties faced by human rights organisations in carrying out their work. He noted his reliance on their high-quality work, and indeed the importance of this work to the international community as a whole. “Baseless attacks on the credibility of human rights and humanitarian organisations and moves by some states which curtail the organisations’ ability to carry out legitimate and essential work is of great concern,” Lynk said, emphasizing concerns particularly in Gaza where the human rights and humanitarian crisis is especially dire.

Lack of accountability was noted as a pervasive problem across the OPT. Organisations engaging with the Israeli legal system expressed concern that very few of the cases in relation to the 2014 hostilities in Gaza had been investigated, much less prosecuted. “Palestinians seeking redress through the Israeli legal system face a multitude of obstacles such that ultimately, justice is elusive and largely impossible to obtain,” the independent expert said.

Lynk heard about ongoing risk of demolitions in the West Bank, and that there had been a sharp rise especially in East Jerusalem. He heard about the community of Sur Baher in East Jerusalem, which is at risk of demolition. The Rapporteur recalled the fact that demolitions, risk of demolitions, settler violence, and other factors all combine to create a coercive environment in many parts of the West Bank, which may lead Palestinians to feel they have no choice but to leave their homes, raising serious concerns of forcible transfer.

Ongoing practices related to detention, including the use of administrative detention, and detention of children, were also noted as issues of serious concern. The Rapporteur heard about the situation of children placed under house arrest, and the strain this puts on parents and particularly mothers who often have the responsibility of being the primary caregiver and thus primary enforcer of house arrest for their own children. The Special Rapporteur was dismayed to hear that children may be sentenced to house arrest or detention after confessions given under duress, and that at present more than 200 children were being held in detention.

The impact of various practices on the environment was described as particularly concerning, including practices such as dumping of hazardous waste in parts of Area C of the occupied territory, which has a negative impact on sources of clean water and the health of nearby Palestinian villages. Lynk addressed serious concerns regarding the environmental practices of the Government of Israel in the OPT in his most recent [report](#) to the 40th session of the Human Rights Council.

Additional issues of concern included the situation of Palestinian refugees in the OPT, settler violence, and access to education and attacks on education. He also raised concerns about collective punishment, including punitive demolitions, the blockade of Gaza, punitive residency revocation, and movement restrictions, the continued expansion of settlements, legislation allowing for the expropriation of private Palestinian land, and targeting of medical workers and attacks on healthcare.

“Israel’s conduct of the 52-year-old occupation is an affront to modern international law,” said the Special Rapporteur. “The United Nations has stated on numerous occasions that the Israeli settlements are illegal, its annexation of East Jerusalem is unlawful, and its violations of the human rights of the Palestinians breach international covenants and treaties. Now is the time for the international community to hold Israel fully accountable for its actions, and to determine whether Israel’s role as the occupying power has crossed the bright red line into illegality.”

IV. EU, PA HOLD A JOINT MEETING TO ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

On 15 July, the European’s Union’s External Action Service issued the following [press release](#) on the meeting of Ministries and institutions of the Palestinian Authority (PA) with representatives from European Development Partners.

On Thursday 11 July 2019, line ministries and institutions of the Palestinian Authority (PA), met with representatives from European Development Partners to enhance their cooperation by discussing progress towards state-building objectives.

The meeting was coordinated by the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, Amjed Ghanem, and the EU Head of Cooperation Alessandra Viezzer. Officials from 17 PA ministries and institutions, including the Office of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Secretariat, together with European Development Partners, represented by 10 European countries and the Office of the EU Representative, discussed achievements and challenges relating to common programmes implemented in Palestine to improve the lives of Palestinians.

V. UN OFFICIALS CALL ON ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TO HALT PLANS FOR DEMOLITIONS IN SUR BAHIR

On 17 July, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Jamie McGoldrick, the Director of West Bank Operations for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ms. Gwyn Lewis, and the Head of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the occupied Palestinian territory, Mr. James Heenan, issued the following [statement](#):

We are following very closely developments in the Sur Bahir area of the Jerusalem governorate. Seventeen Palestinians, including nine Palestine refugees, face the risk of displacement, and over 350 others risk massive property loss, due to the Israeli authorities' intention to demolish 10 buildings, including around 70 apartments, due to their proximity to the West Bank Barrier. One month ago, following the exhaustion of almost all domestic legal remedies, Israeli forces sent the residents, a "Notice of Intent to Demolish" which will expire tomorrow, 18 July.

Demolitions and forced evictions are some of the multiple pressures generating a risk of forcible transfer for many Palestinians in the West Bank. Residents of East Jerusalem and adjacent areas have been particularly affected, with a significant rise in demolitions there in 2019.

Amongst the seventeen Palestinians now at risk of displacement, nine of them are Palestine refugees, including an elderly couple and five children. For many refugees in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacement is both a living memory and an imminent risk. Displacement, particularly for the most vulnerable, is traumatic and has lasting consequences.

We join others in the international community in calling on Israel to halt plans to demolish these and other structures and to implement fair planning policies that allow Palestinian residents of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the ability to meet their housing and development needs, in line with its obligations as an occupying power.

VI. UN OFFICIALS ISSUE STATEMENT ON DEMOLITIONS IN SUR BAHIR

On 22 July, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Jamie McGoldrick, Director of West Bank Operations for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ms. Gwyn Lewis, and the Head of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the occupied Palestinian territory, Mr. James Heenan, issued the following [statement](#):

We are following with sadness today the Israeli authorities' destruction of homes in the Palestinian community of Sur Bahir. Initial information emerging from the community indicates that hundreds of Israeli forces entered the community this morning and have demolished a number of residential buildings, including inhabited homes, located in Areas A, B and C of the West Bank on the East Jerusalem side of the Barrier. The large-scale operation began in the early hours of this morning while it was still dark, forcing families out of their homes, and causing great distress among residents. Among those forcibly displaced or otherwise impacted are

Palestine refugees, some of whom today are facing the reality of a second displacement in living memory.

Humanitarian partners are poised to provide emergency response to those displaced or otherwise affected by the destruction of their private property. But no amount of humanitarian assistance can replace a home or cover the massive financial losses sustained today by the owners. Several of the affected people report having invested their life savings into the properties, after securing the required building permits from the Palestinian Authority. What happened today in Sur Bahir is of even greater significance, as many other homes and structures now risk the same fate.

Israel's policy of destroying Palestinian property is not compatible with its obligations under international humanitarian law. Among other things, the destruction of private property in occupied territory is only permissible where rendered absolutely necessary for military operations, which is not applicable. Furthermore, it results in forced evictions, and contributes to the risk of forcible transfer facing many Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ruled against the legality of the construction of the Barrier and found that the parts of the Barrier that run inside the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as we see in Sur Bahir, cannot be justified by military exigencies and thus violates Israel's obligations under international law. Just over 15 years ago, to the day, the UN General Assembly, in Resolution ES-10/15, of 20 July 2004, demanded that Israel comply with its legal obligations as stated in the ICJ's advisory opinion.

Had there been concrete action to ensure respect for these principles, and for international humanitarian and human rights law, generally, the people of Sur Bahir would not be experiencing the trauma they are today, and violations of their rights.

VII. UNRWA URGES LEBANESE AUTHORITIES TO FACILITATE WORK PERMITS FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES

On 22 July, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) released the following [statement](#):

In response to many inquiries received in recent days, UNRWA wishes to clarify the following:

UNRWA strongly supports any measure that allows Palestine Refugees to live in dignity in their host countries pending a just and durable solution to their plight in accordance with UN resolutions.

In Lebanon, the Agency is fully committed to working with the Lebanese authorities and Palestinian representatives to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees. Of particular importance in this regard are measures facilitating the implementation of Palestine Refugees' right to work, in line with the Unified Lebanese Vision for Palestinian Refugees Affairs in Lebanon which was included in the ministerial statement last March. Being able to work in dignity, within the law and protected by the law, is a fundamental human right and constitutes a

contribution to the Lebanese economy and national stability. UNRWA urges the Lebanese authorities to take measures including those aimed at facilitating the issuance of work permits for Palestine Refugees, taking into account the specificity of their situation in the country. The Agency looks forward to this and other issues being resolved through dialogue and in a fair way.

UNRWA for its part remains fully committed to contribute to improving Palestine Refugee living conditions in Lebanon by providing education, health, social, infrastructure and other services according to its mandate as defined by the UN General Assembly. With generous donors' funding, UNRWA in Lebanon employs directly about 3,000 Palestine Refugees and others are employed through a number of projects. In addition, UNRWA supports Palestine Refugees' employment through its Technical and Vocational Education and Training Centre and through four Employment Service Centres which support the employability of Palestine Refugees. UNRWA's Legal Aid programme also provides assistance in addressing employment issues under the labour law.

In addition, in recent months UNRWA has significantly increased its investment in maintenance works in all its installations and conducted cleaning campaigns in the refugee camps. Starting in August, the Agency will raise its contribution to the more than 61,000 Palestine Refugees living below the poverty line. Subject to funding, UNRWA is also planning additional initiatives to strengthen the quality of its education and health services, all part of its continuing engagement in improving Palestine Refugee living conditions in cooperation with the Lebanese and Palestinian authorities.

VIII. ECOSOC ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS ON PALESTINIAN WOMEN, LIVING CONDITIONS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

At the 36th and 37th meetings of the Economic and Social Council on 23 July, the Council adopted two resolutions. The first, "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" ([E/2019/L.25](#)), was approved by a vote of 40 in favor to 2 against with 9 abstentions. The second, "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" ([E/2019/L.26](#)), was approved by a vote of 45 in favor to 2 against with 4 abstentions. The draft resolutions are reproduced below:

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,¹

Recalling its relevant resolutions and all other relevant United Nations resolutions,

*On behalf of the States that are members of the Group of 77 and China, taking into account also the provisions of General Assembly resolution [73/5](#) of 16 October 2018.

**In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

¹[E/CN.6/2019/6](#).

Recalling also Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) of 31 October 2000, including its call upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, and its emphasis on the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity,

Recalling further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,²

Recalling the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women³ as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Reaffirming the obligations of States and all parties to armed conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, and the need to end all violations of international humanitarian law and all violations and abuses of human rights,

Reaffirming also the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,⁴ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,⁵ the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,⁶ and the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth session,⁷ and reaffirming its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation,

Reaffirming further the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region, and stressing the importance of women’s equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security,

Expressing grave concern about the continuing systematic violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people by Israel, the occupying Power, and its impact on women and girls,

Expressing grave concern also at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that civilian populations must be protected by all parties in accordance with international humanitarian law,

²United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

³General Assembly resolution [48/104](#).

⁴*Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

⁵*Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

⁶General Assembly resolution [S-23/2](#), annex, and resolution [S-23/3](#), annex.

⁷*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 7 (E/2015/27)*, chap. I, sect. C, resolution [59/1](#), annex.

Stressing the need to ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in order to end impunity, ensure justice, deter further violations, protect civilians and promote peace,

Deeply concerned about violence against women and girls in all its different forms and manifestations worldwide, which is underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, and its pervasiveness, which reflects discriminatory norms that reinforce stereotypes and gender inequality and the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability, reiterating the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres in all regions of the world, and re-emphasizing that violence against women and girls violates, and impairs their full enjoyment of, all human rights,

Noting the accession by Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions, as well as other international treaties, and stressing the need to implement fully obligations under those instruments that protect the rights of women and girls, including during and post-conflict,

Underlining the limitations on Palestinian jurisdiction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which undermine the ability of the Palestinian Government to protect Palestinian women and girls in certain areas,

Noting the importance of the agencies, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in facilitating the advancement and empowerment of women in development in line with General Assembly resolution [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women and girls with regard to the fulfilment of their rights, and their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society;

2. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately cease all measures contrary to international law, as well as discriminatory legislation, policies and actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, that violate the human rights of the Palestinian people, and stresses that Palestinian civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by the conflict;

3. *Calls for* urgent measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and as called for by the Security Council in its resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994;

4. *Calls upon* the parties to comply fully with their obligations, including as States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,² taking fully into consideration the concluding observations as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

5. *Acknowledges* the contribution of national coalitions and committees in advancing women's rights, including those pertaining to resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), the Convention and combating violence against women;

6. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Palestinian Government of a national action plan for the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#);

7. *Urges* the international community to continue to give special attention to the promotion and protection of the human rights of Palestinian women and girls and to intensify its measures to improve the difficult conditions being faced by Palestinian women and their families, including those living under Israeli occupation, and recognizes the importance of integrating gender considerations across humanitarian programming by seeking to ensure the provision of access to protection and the full range of medical, legal and livelihood and psychosocial services, including services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, without discrimination, and through ensuring that women and women's groups can participate equally and meaningfully and are supported in being leaders in humanitarian action;

8. *Calls upon* the international community, including the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to continue to provide urgently needed assistance, especially emergency assistance, and services, bearing in mind, inter alia, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁸ and national priorities, in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian women and their families, in particular for addressing the humanitarian crisis and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions in the Gaza Strip;

9. *Recalls* the need for all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, and stresses that the situation of the Palestine refugees, including women and girls, continues to be a matter of grave concern and that they continue to require assistance to meet basic health, education and living needs, pending a just resolution of the problem of Palestine refugees in conformity with General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948;

10. *Reaffirms* the necessity of achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in all its aspects, and urges in this regard the intensification and acceleration of renewed international and regional diplomatic efforts and support aimed at achieving, without delay, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative,⁹ the Quartet road map¹⁰ and an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967;

11. *Stresses* the importance of efforts to increase the role of Palestinian women in decision-making and of their equal and meaningful participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and

⁸General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

⁹[A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁰[S/2003/529](#), annex.

encourages Member States and observer States as well as the United Nations system to ensure systematic attention to, recognition of and support for the crucial role of Palestinian women at all levels by, inter alia, promoting women's capacity, leadership, participation and engagement in political, economic and humanitarian decision-making;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those set out in his report, and to include information on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution in his report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan to the Economic and Social Council at its 2020 session.

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [73/98](#) of 7 December 2018 and [73/255](#) of 20 December 2018,

Recalling also its resolution [2018/20](#) of 24 July 2018,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES 10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES 10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES 10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES 10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹¹

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹² to the Occupied Palestinian

*On behalf of the States that are members of the Group of 77 and China, taking into account also the provisions of General Assembly resolution [73/5](#) of 16 October 2018.

**In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

¹¹ [A/74/88-E/2019/72](#).

¹² United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹³ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights³ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁴ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 52 years since the occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁵ and the Quartet road map,¹⁶ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic

¹³ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹⁴ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹⁵ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁶ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,¹⁷

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

¹⁷ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹⁸ and General Assembly resolution ES 10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled “Gaza: two years after”, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction

¹⁸ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied

Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁹

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;²

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of

¹⁹ See [A/49/180-S/1994/727](#), annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplores the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice⁸ and in General Assembly resolution ES 10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1544 \(2004\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁵ and the Quartet road map,⁶ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2020 session.

IX. ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT “LOCKED IN A DANGEROUS PARALYSIS”, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL WARNS SECURITY COUNCIL

The Security Council held its 8583rd Meeting on 23 July on the Situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question. The briefing ([S/PV.8583](#)) by Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo is excerpted below:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to be locked in a dangerous paralysis that is fuelling extremism and exacerbating tensions in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. There is a growing risk of more unilateral actions and the loss of hope that peace can be achieved through negotiations.

This outcome is not inevitable. We need to support creating an environment conducive to advancing peace and paving the way for negotiations on all final status issues, including Jerusalem. In order to get there, we need leadership, political will and the determination to make tangible progress, despite the difficulties. We must work together to bring Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table in order to resolve the conflict on the basis of international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and previous agreements.

Without the prospect of viable negotiations on the horizon, facts on the ground continue to undermine the possibility of achieving a two-state solution.

In June, the District Court in Jerusalem ruled that four houses in the Alei Zahav settlement could be retroactively regularized under Israeli law, despite having been built on private Palestinian land. This decision is the first implementation in practice of the so-called market regularization principle, according to which up to 2,000 housing units in settlements could be legalized. Further, on 8 July the Jerusalem District Planning Committee approved for deposit a plan for the addition of 48 housing units in the Gilo settlement in East Jerusalem. I reiterate that settlements remain a substantial obstacle to peace and are a violation of international law.

Demolitions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures by Israeli authorities also continued. Sixty-six structures were demolished or seized, overwhelmingly on the grounds of lack of Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain. This practice must stop. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), this resulted in the displacement of 90 Palestinians, including 58 children.

On 11 June, Israel’s High Court dismissed a petition by the Palestinian residents of the Wadi Al-Hummus/Sur Baher neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, giving them until 18 July to demolish nine buildings, owing to their proximity to the separation barrier. The structures were demolished by Israeli authorities on 22 July, resulting in the displacement of 24 Palestinians, including 14 children. As Deputy Special Coordinator McGoldrick stated yesterday, Israel’s policy of destroying Palestinian property is not compatible with its obligations under international humanitarian law and contributes to the risk of forcible transfer facing many Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

On 27 June, six Palestinian-owned structures in the Bethlehem community of Zatarah Al-Kurshan were demolished, displacing some 46 people. On 10 July, a Palestinian family was evicted from a property in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. This was done after the

Court ruled in favour of an Israeli organization that had obtained ownership of the majority of the property.

The past month has again seen a reduction of violence in Gaza, while protests at the perimeter fence have continued. One Palestinian was killed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and another 736 were injured, including 234 children and 39 women. There were also fewer launchings of incendiary balloons and kites by Hamas and other Palestinian militants from Gaza. Despite this, some 130 fires were started by some 100 devices in Israel during the reporting period.

Similarly, there has been a reduction in the number of rockets launched by militants towards Israel since the last dangerous escalation in May. Two rockets were fired during the reporting period, causing no injuries or damage. The launching of rockets and mortars towards Israeli civilian populations is prohibited by international humanitarian law. Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad must cease this practice immediately.

Sadly, the reporting period also saw continued violent incidents in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. On 27 June, a 21-year-old Palestinian was shot and killed by an Israeli policeman after he allegedly shot fireworks towards Israeli forces during clashes in East Jerusalem. Clashes ensued in the area for several days, during which 88 Palestinians were injured.

On 12 July, a 9-year old Palestinian boy was shot and severely injured during clashes with the Israeli security forces in the West Bank village of Kafr Qaddum. I call on Israel to promptly launch a thorough investigation and reiterate that children's lives and rights must come ahead of any other consideration. They must be protected from all forms of violence. In addition, Israeli security forces injured 154 Palestinians, including 14 children, in clashes that erupted across the West Bank. On 6 July, a vehicle driven by a Palestinian reportedly rammed into a group of IDF personnel near the entrance of Hizma village, north of Jerusalem, injuring five soldiers.

Settler-related violence also continued. According to OCHA, six Palestinians were injured in six attacks by Israelis. At the same time, two Israelis were injured by stones thrown by Palestinians. I condemn all attacks on Palestinian and Israeli civilians alike and call on all sides to refrain from violence. All perpetrators must be held accountable for their acts.

Allow me to return to the situation in Gaza.

The United Nations continues to work closely with Egypt to mediate and de-escalate tensions. While our joint efforts are beginning to bear fruit, I remain deeply concerned by the humanitarian, economic and political situation there. The shortage of medicines, equipment and personnel continues to impede the ability of health providers to meet the needs of patients, including those severely injured during the weekly protests at the perimeter fence.

Since the last round of United Nations and Egyptian-led mediation, the Gaza fishing zone has been expanded from 10 to 15 nautical miles. Israel has also returned 44 confiscated fishing boats to the Gaza Strip and eased some of the conditions for travel of Gaza-based businessmen. I welcome these developments and urge the continuation and expansion of such actions.

In line with agreed understandings, the United Nations is accelerating the implementation of the September 2018 and April 2019 packages of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians, which include interventions that have already started to improve the situation in Gaza. In this context, the United Nations efforts on job creation through the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East have thus far created some 9,000 job opportunities, including around 3,000 for women.

UN-Women has also initiated a smaller programme, targeting some 250 vulnerable women in Gaza. A recent assessment of the programme to date revealed that 91 per cent of the beneficiaries had not earned any income prior to this programme. About 83 per cent of the women said that the opportunities improved their livelihoods; 71 per cent said their interhousehold tension has decreased due to the availability of income; and 55 per cent reported that the earned income allowed them to participate in decision-making at the household level.

The current calm must be sustained in order to gradually introduce longer-term interventions that will support Gaza's sustainable development. I take this opportunity to thank the Member States that have contributed to date and strongly urge others to support these vital efforts, particularly in the areas of job creation, health care, water and sanitation, and energy.

Yet, the root of Gaza's problems remains political. I call on all Palestinian factions to take concrete steps to ensure the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under a single, democratic and legitimate national Government. Gaza is and must remain an integral part of a future Palestinian State as part of the two-State solution.

While discussions aimed at resolving the financial crisis in the Palestinian Authority (PA) are ongoing, no solution has yet been found. For the fifth consecutive month, the Palestinian Government has refused to receive Israel's partial transfer of tax revenues owed to it. Despite the PA's announced austerity measures and the support package committed by Qatar, the PA remains under tremendous strain and may soon reach the breaking point. The Palestinian economy is increasingly showing signs of decline, with a noticeable reduction of purchasing power contributing to an overall reduction in economic activities. I call on both sides to engage in a constructive manner to ensure compliance with the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations.

In the meantime, it is critical to adopt temporary measures to address the PA's fiscal crisis, and I encourage Israel and the Palestinian Authority to work together to find such solutions. The recent decision of the League of Arab States to support with up to \$100 million per month the Palestinian Authority should provide a welcome respite until a viable solution is found. The recent memoranda of understanding between the Government of the Palestinian Authority and Jordan in the areas of energy, health and transportation are also welcome.

During the reporting period, we saw additional international support for Palestine's economic development. I note the third high-level Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, under the co-chairpersonship of Japan and Palestine. I also note the Peace to Prosperity economic workshop that took place in Bahrain on 25 and 26 June, and which was attended by Government officials, business leaders, representatives of international organizations and religious leaders, among others.

Humanitarian and economic support for the Palestinian population is crucial to creating an environment conducive to viable negotiation. Such measures should be followed by a comprehensive peace agreement that addresses all final status issues.

In closing, I would like to emphasize the severity of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and the urgent need for tangible steps to reverse the negative trajectory. The circumstances will hardly ever be ideal for advancing peace, but let us do our utmost with conviction, hope and creativity to support the creation of those circumstances. The United Nations remains committed to supporting Palestinians and Israelis in their efforts to end the conflict and to realizing the vision of two States, living side by side in peace and security.

X. ESCWA HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST PALESTINIANS

On 24 July, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) issued the following report, “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” ([A/74/88-E/2019/72](#)). Below are the conclusions from the report:

123. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories. The negative impact of the occupation and the Israeli policies and practices is multilayered, and their cumulative repercussions affect the future of the populations living under occupation.

124. Current social and economic trends in the Occupied Palestinian Territory indicate that the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals will be almost impossible if there are no drastic positive changes to the existing conditions. Israeli-imposed restrictions, expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development in the occupied territories, but also cause humanitarian crises that necessitate the diversion of national and international efforts from development to immediate relief.

125. The funding crisis facing UNRWA is another factor that only exacerbates the conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who already live in harsh conditions. The Secretary-General reiterates his appeal to the international community to guarantee that the vital support for the rights of the Palestinian refugees is upheld and to maintain the same level of financing for UNRWA in 2019.

126. The closures imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures, recurrent escalations and declining donor funding have created a severe situation in Gaza that requires further and immediate action by the international community.

127. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory and others may

amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which would be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is prohibited under international law.

128. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all the people living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation.

129. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.

XI. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS CALL ON ISRAEL TO HALT DEMOLITION OF PALESTINIAN HOMES IN EAST JERUSALEM

On 26 July, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Mr. Michael Lynk, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, Ms. Leilani Farhais, issued the following [press release](#):

Two UN human rights experts have condemned Israel's demolition of 10 buildings comprising approximately 70 housing units in Sur Baher, a Palestinian neighbourhood of East Jerusalem.

"We are following the developments in this matter very closely," said Leilani Farha, the Special Rapporteur for the right to housing, and Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur for human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.

"We are deeply concerned that, following the dismissal by the Israeli High Court on Sunday of a petition by the residents of the designated housing units against the impending demolition order, the buildings have now been demolished.

"The demolition of these apartment buildings aggravates the coercive environment that many Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, face. The international community has critically commented on a number of occasions about the extremely low rates of housing construction permits allowed by the Israeli authorities for Palestinians seeking to build, or add to, homes in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem."

The demolition of these housing units in Sur Baher is part of a larger pattern of home demolitions occurring in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. According to information available to the UN experts, Israeli authorities have demolished a total of 63 East Jerusalem housing units so far in 2019. Over the same period in 2018, 37 East Jerusalem housing units were demolished.

“What is required in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are fair and equitable planning policies for the construction of housing,” said the UN experts.

The area in Sur Baher where the housing units were located is technically within the West Bank, but it lies on the Jerusalem side of Israel’s separation wall. The apartment buildings were built with the proper construction permits issued by the Palestinian authorities. However, the Israeli military issued an order in 2011 prohibiting construction within 100-300 metres of the wall.

According to the Fourth Geneva Convention, any destruction of private property by an Occupying Power is prohibited except where it is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations. “As the International Court of Justice found in its 2004 advisory opinion on the construction of the separation wall, the route of the wall, including those parts of the wall which are constructed inside of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is not justifiable on the basis of military exigencies nor by national security,” Lynk said.

“The home demolitions in Sur Baher appear to be forced evictions in violation of article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other human rights,” the experts said, calling upon the Government of Israel to ensure that it upholds its obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Earlier this week, the UN human rights experts raised their concerns directly with the Government of Israel.

XII. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS CALL ON ISRAEL TO HALT DEPORTATION OF PALESTINIAN JOURNALIST FROM JERUSALEM

On 31 July, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Mr. Michael Lynk, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. David Kaye, issued statements reflected in the following [press release](#):

Two UN human rights experts have called on Israel to halt its efforts to deport the Palestinian photojournalist Mustafa Al-Nadir Iyad Al-Kharouf, and to regularize his status in Jerusalem.

During the night between 21 and 22 July, the Israeli authorities attempted to deport Mr. Al-Kharouf to Jordan, a country where he does not have residency rights. Jordan did not accept the deportation, and Mr. Al-Kharouf was returned to Israel.

“The effort by Israeli authorities to deport Mr. Al-Kharouf to Jordan, where he has never lived and does not have any legal residency rights, raises serious concerns under both international humanitarian law and international human rights law,” said Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.

The Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits forcible transfer and deportation of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of any other country. “Forcible transfer is considered a grave breach of the Geneva Convention, and is defined as a war crime and a crime against humanity by the Rome Statute,” he said.

Mr. Al-Kharouf has previously been questioned about the nature of his work as a photojournalist. His application for family unification, which would allow him to continue to live in East Jerusalem with his wife and child, was denied on the basis of secret evidence in December 2018. The Israeli authorities arrested him in January, alleging that he has been illegally residing in Israel. Since his arrest, he has been imprisoned, without charges, in Givon Prison, within Israel.

He was born in Algeria to a Palestinian father and an Algerian mother, and he has lived in East Jerusalem since the age of 12. His family’s attempts over the years to regularize his status were unsuccessful due to the bureaucratic and legal obstacles related to the legal status of Palestinian Jerusalemites. In 2014 he was granted a visa on humanitarian grounds which was not renewed in 2015 for unspecified and undisclosed “security considerations”.

“The detention and deportation of Mr. Al-Kharouf directly interfere with Al-Kharouf’s legitimate exercise of rights to freedom of opinion and expression as a photojournalist,” said David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Both rapporteurs urged the Government of Israel not to deprive Mr. Al-Kharouf of his liberty arbitrarily, and to ensure that his rights to freedom of opinion and expression were protected.

Palestinians living in East Jerusalem face serious challenges to their residency in the city, with family unification and other types of permits becoming increasingly precarious. “The precedent which could be set by this case, should we see a Palestinian deported to a country where he has no ties and no legal status, on the basis of secret evidence, is highly problematic. We take this opportunity to remind the Government of Israel of its solemn obligations under international law,” the experts said.
