

**Multilateralism - A Powerful Tool for a Better Future,**  
Diplomats from the State of Palestine learn

**“I am a strong believer in multilateralism, and the UN is at the core of it. On the Question of Palestine, I believe that the UN has the power to bring Member States together to achieve the two-State solution” said Mr. Abdelrahman Romana. “I am more confident that the UN will stand steadfast in the face of any aggression and will uphold international law and multilateralism,” said Ms. Loureen Sayej at the end of their trainings.**

*Every year, the Division for Palestinian Rights (DPR) of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) organizes a capacity-building programme for two diplomats from the State of Palestine, as mandated by consecutive General Assembly resolutions, most recently by resolution 73/21 of 2018.*

*Mr. Romana and Ms. Sayej were the trainees of the 2019 programme which took place from 28 October to 6 December 2019. They learned about the work of the United Nations, the functioning of its main organs and major items on their respective agenda, with a special focus on the question of Palestine. Below are their perspectives on the programme and the United Nations as a whole.*

**Mr. Romana:** The key messages I received during our meetings with UN officials was the importance of



multilateralism, that all countries are equal and that no country is more important than others. **Ms. Sayej:** After my training, I deepened my belief in the UN system. I am more confident that the UN will stand steadfast against any aggression and will uphold international law and multilateralism. I am a firm believer that the UN can keep alive the question of Palestine. The UN will always protect those whose voices are muffled and marginalized. the universal character of the Palestinian struggle, as it transcends borders and cultures to unite human rights defenders against injustice and oppression. The intersectionality of the Palestinian struggle with other struggles makes it more relevant to the public and easier to humanize the Palestinian narrative. It resonates with all countries including the peoples of the South and so many are directly and indirectly involved in it.

*Sayej (right) with Ms. DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (left)*

During their stay in New York, the international community observed [the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People](#) in November 2019, marking the adoption of the General Assembly resolution 181 (II) on Partitioning Palestine.

*The photo exhibit: “Palestine: the most universal of national causes”, which featured pictures and quotes by well-known public figures who have expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people, was inaugurated at the UNHQ on 26 November.*

**Mr. Romana:** I liked the message by Nelson Mandela because he survived under the Apartheid regime; Palestinians are also surviving under an oppressive regime.

**Ms. Sayej:** The exhibition presented a new face of Palestine, one that is not war, blood and bombs but one made of human beings: children, men and women, and elders who love life. The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People solidified our beliefs and hopes in the UN system and shed a light on the most venerable UN question still unresolved: the question of Palestine.



*Mr. Romana (right) with Mr. Eugene “Gus” Newport (left), a veteran civil rights activist and former Mayor of Berkeley who was the civil society speaker in the Special Meeting to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People*

*During the training, Women, Peace and Security and Violence against Children were issues on which the trainees focused.*

**Ms. Sayej:** I found that mainstreaming gender and gender-related topics in peace and security has been a bumpy road for all advocates. It was interesting to learn how difficult it was to navigate resolution 1325 (2000) through the UN Security Council.

After going back to Ramallah, I aim to mainstream gender sensitive language, to center women’s voices in political decision-making circles and peace processes while working on international law especially, and political discourse in general. It was also encouraging to learn the due diligence that the UN takes when they monitor violations against children within their mandate.



*Mr. Romana and Ms. Sayej, with Dr. Najat Maalla M’jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (center)*

**Mr. Romana:** The agenda on Women, Peace and Security and Violence against Children are very important subjects and it was so great to see that the UN pays great attention to them. The observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was one of the most interesting events I attended. During the event “Orange the World: Generation Equality Stands against Rape!” everyone was wearing orange as symbol of hope for a brighter future without violence against women. After going back to Ramallah, we will continue to be in touch with the UN officials we met and work together to save the lives of women and children and improve our situation even if under occupation.