



## UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

### Newsletter on Recent and Upcoming Activities – No. 5 / July-September 2020 –

#### 1. Meeting of the Committee



On 14 July, the Committee held a virtual meeting, in line with General Assembly rules and guidelines during COVID-19 pandemic period. The main points of discussion related to the call for sustained international action to stop the threats of annexation of parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israel, the occupying Power, recent pledges by the Member States to UNRWA, and support to the Palestinian people in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. For more details, documents and video, click [here](#).

#### 2. Annual meeting of the Bureau of the Committee with the Secretary-General



On **16 July**, the Bureau of the Committee met with Secretary-General António Guterres. The Chair, Ambassador Cheikh Niang, provided an update on Committee activities and commended the Secretary-General's principled position expressed at the Security Council meeting of 24 June. The Secretary-General outlined his vision on the question of Palestine and efforts to restart dialogue within an international framework. The Secretary-General and the Bureau agreed on the need for sustained financial support for UNRWA.

#### 3. Committee participates in Security Council debate on the situation in the Middle East



On **21 July**, the Security Council held its quarterly debate (virtually) on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question. The Chair, Ambassador Cheikh Niang, delivered a statement on behalf of the Committee. The recording of the meeting can be accessed on <http://webtv.un.org/>. The Chair's statement can be accessed [here](#).

#### 4. Annual retreat of the Bureau of the Committee

On **22 July**, the Bureau met for its annual retreat and discussed activities and priorities for the remainder of 2020, and 2021. The Bureau agreed to support UN and other efforts to overcome the current impasse on the question of Palestine, to stepped-up outreach to key partners and continued to adapt the Committee's working methods in the COVID-19 pandemic context.

#### 5. Committee co-organizes the International Conference on Jerusalem (Part I)

The first panel of the virtual Conference, co-organized with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation



(OIC) was held on **28 July** and titled "*Annexation in Practice – Palestinian Lives in Jerusalem*". The panel was moderated by Committee Vice-Chair Ambassador Rodríguez (Cuba) and included Ms. Maha Abdallah (Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Jerusalem), Ms. Hagit Ofra (Peace Now, Jerusalem), and Mr. Osamah Khalil (Syracuse University, USA). Speakers asked the international community to follow

statements of condemnation of Israeli policies and measures with tangible actions, including sanctions against Israel, the occupying Power. The event was livestreamed on UNTV and UN social media channels, with a total of 11,000 viewers watching it on UN WebTV, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. For more details, click [here](#).

#### 6. Committee co-organizes the International Conference on Jerusalem (Part II)



The second panel of the virtual conference on "*Annexation in Practice – Palestinian Lives in Jerusalem*" took place on **27 August**, moderated by OIC Assistant Secretary-General Samir Bakr. H.E. Mr. Fadi Hidmi, Minister of Jerusalem Affairs of the State of Palestine gave a keynote address followed by interventions from Mr. Micha Kurz, former Grassroots Jerusalem and Breaking the Silence; Ms. Reem Natsheh, Women Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling; and Ms. Rochelle Watson, Friends of Sabeel North America. Speakers highlighted that the *de jure* Israeli annexation of Palestinian lands had commenced

decades ago – with East Jerusalem – and continued with the ongoing *de facto* annexation of parts of the West Bank. Member States were called to hold Israel accountable for violations of international law and international human rights law, including through divestment and sanctions.

A total of 10,828 viewers watched the conference on UN WebTV, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube where they had an opportunity to make comments and pose questions to the panelists. For more details, click [here](#).

#### 7. Adoption of the Annual Report of the Committee

On **1 September**, the Annual Report 2020 of the Committee to the General Assembly for the period from 4 September 2019 to 1 September 2020 was submitted by the Committee Secretariat to the Committee members and observers for silence procedure approval. The approved report was

subsequently submitted to the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) for final production on 8 September.

#### 8. Committee sponsors Palestinian officials for UNSCC course



The Committee in collaboration with the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) supported the participation of three Palestinian Foreign Ministry officials in a 5-week online training on “Effective Writing Skills” from **9 September – 7 October 2020**. The training course provides an opportunity to enhance the ability of the officials to effectively draft a variety of documents through increased sensitivity to language, structure, and content.

#### 9. Bureau meeting with Dr. James Zogby

On **9 September**, the Bureau held a virtual informal exchange with Dr. James Zogby, founder and president of the Arab American Institute (AAI), a Washington, D.C.–based organization, that serves as a political and policy research arm of the Arab-American community, and discussed recent developments related to the question of Palestine and ways to enhance advocacy efforts on the rights of the Palestinian people.

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- Read the latest [Monthly Bulletin](#) on UN and other International Organizations’ action on the question of Palestine
  - Read the latest [NGO Action News](#)
  - Read [the Compilation of UN Resolutions and Decisions Adopted in 2019](#)
  - Visit the Committee’s Website: <http://www.un.org/unispal>
  - Like the Committee’s page: <http://www.facebook.com/UN.palestinianrights>
  - Follow the Committee at @UNISPAL: <https://twitter.com/UNISPAL>
  - Subscribe on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/UNpalestinianrights/>

*\* This Newsletter on recent and upcoming activities of the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is produced and distributed on behalf of the Committee by the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat.*