

United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

NGO Action News

3 September 2020

Middle East

- On 3 September, [Addameer and Al-Haq](#) informed they had sent a written submission to the UN Human Rights Council ahead of its 45th regular session, calling on the Council to intervene to guarantee the rights to life and health, and safety of Palestinian prisoners during the COVID-19 pandemic. In their submission, the two NGOs highlighted Israel's systematic policy of medical negligence against Palestinians in Israeli detention centre, citing the Israeli Supreme Court's decisions on the rights of prisoners to social distancing.
- On 3 September, [the Cairo Institute for Human Rights and Palestinian organizations](#) informed they had sent a joint written submission concerning the Gaza Strip to the UN Human Rights Council ahead of its 45th regular session, which will begin on 14 September. The joint submission highlights the root causes of the deteriorating situation in the Strip, the prolonged occupation and illegal closure, and called on the Council to put an end to all forms of collective punishment imposed on Palestinians.
- On 2 September, [Adalah – The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel](#) petitioned the Israeli Supreme Court demanding the return of Ahmad Erekat's body to his family, following the Israeli security cabinet's decision to withhold the bodies of Palestinians. Adalah denounced the decision as "extremely problematic" and violating the most basic universal values and international law which prohibit cruel and inhumane treatment.
- On 1 September, [Gisha – Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement](#) informed that Israel has reversed the bans on the entry of fuel, construction materials and other essential goods through Kerem Shalom into Gaza, as well as the maritime closure of Gaza. Gisha reminded that the ban on the entry of fuel imposed by Israel on 13 August resulted in a power shortage, which was a source of great concern, particularly for Gaza's healthcare system and civilian infrastructure and services such as water distribution and sewage disposal.
- On 31 August, [Adalah – The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, Gisha – Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement, HaMoked, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, and Physicians for Human Rights Israel](#) announced they had submitted a joint urgent petition to the Israeli Supreme Court, demanding that Israel reverse all restrictions, including on entry of fuel and other goods through the Kerem Shalom Crossing, a vital lifeline for Gaza's two million residents. In the petition, the five Israeli NGOs emphasized that the implementation of punitive measures, in contravention of international law and previous Israeli Supreme Court rulings, reflects Israel's disregard for its obligation to facilitate normal living conditions in Gaza and to protect residents' basic rights.

- On 30 August, [the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council \(PHROC\)](#), [the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network \(PNGO\)](#), and [the Independent Commission for Human Rights \(ICHR\)](#) issued a joint press release calling on the international community to intervene and support the civilian population in the Gaza Strip as “it faces a potential humanitarian catastrophe.” The group of NGOs warned about the most alarming repercussion of Israel’s recent punitive policies, which included a severe electricity shortage, as it hindered the provision of basic services across crucial sectors such as water and sanitation. They also warned that the medical sector in the Strip is severely underequipped to deal with a pandemic spreading throughout the population, following a surge in positive COVID-19 cases detected within the general population.
- On 29 August, [the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#) sent an urgent appeal to the UN Special procedures regarding the deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip and the tightening of the blockade by the Israeli authorities. Addressed to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the OPT and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, PCHR’s appeal requested an urgent intervention to uphold the right to health of Palestinians in the Strip and urged the international community to support Gaza’s overburdened healthcare system.
- On 28 August, [Peace Now](#) issued a press release following the Israeli High Court’s ruling that houses built on private Palestinian land in the illegal outpost of Mitzpeh Karmim must be evacuated. Peace Now stated the ruling reinforces the “unequivocal ruling striking down the Expropriation Law in June” and confirms that “there was no good faith on the part of the settlers in Mitzpe Kramim, but rather they stole private Palestinian land while attempting to pass the act off as innocent negligence.”
- On 27 August, [Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights](#) issued the press release “Palestinian Detainees in Israeli Custody are Increasingly at Risk of Contracting COVID-19” where it expressed its “grave concern” over reports that an increasing number of Palestinian detainees in Israeli custody are testing positive for COVID-19, despite Al Mezan’s numerous calls on the Israeli Prison Service to release Palestinian prisoners and detainees and to adequately mitigate and prevent outbreaks of the virus in its prisons. Al Mezan stressed that Israel was obligated to uphold the right of Palestinian prisoners and detainees to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health who are entitled to medical treatment as set forth in the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Europe

- On 28 August, [l’Association Belgo-Palestinienne](#) issued the press release “Let’s Open Gaza, its Inhabitants need fuel, not bombs!” calling on the Belgian government and European Union to oppose firmly the Israeli measures of collective punishment and to demand the immediate reopening of crossings allowing for the entry of fuel, in order to provide electricity to Gaza.

North America

- On 4 September, [the Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development](#) will hold the online event “Appeasing Zion: The Israel Lobby and Injustice in Palestine” which will aim to provide an overview of the history of the Israeli lobby and to discuss the crucial role the lobby and the US public opinion are playing in the present and future of the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- On 31 August, [Americans for Peace Now \(APN\)](#) issued a statement on Israel-US-UAE meetings in Abu Dhabi, underling that Israel’s existential dispute is the Palestinian people, who live under an oppressive occupation, which denies them civil and human rights. APN stated that Israeli soldiers continue to patrol the streets in the West Bank, Israeli settlements continue to grow and devour more and more Palestinian land and urged the dignitaries upon their return from Abu Dhabi to think of the future of young Palestinians and Israelis.

United Nations

- On 1 September, [UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967 Michael Lynk](#) issued a press release to express deep concerns about the recent rise in armed violence in Gaza and to welcome the announcement that Israel and Hamas had reached a truce to halt the current hostilities. The Special Rapporteur cautioned that true peace, and the badly needed reconstruction of Gaza, will only come with full respect of the fundamental rights of the two million Palestinians living there. Lynk stated that what Gaza requires is an end to the blockade and tools to chart the course to economic development and self-determination with the rest of Palestine.
- On 31 August, [UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick](#) issued a statement calling for Israel to immediately allow entry of fuel and other essential items in Gaza and for Hamas to end actions risking further destabilization, following the deterioration witnessed in recent weeks in the Strip. He called on Israel to immediately allow the resumption of fuel deliveries into Gaza, in line with its obligation as an occupying power, to ensure that the basic needs of people are met and to prevent a collapse of basic services, and on the Hamas authorities to cease and prevent the launching of incendiary balloons, rockets and other actions that risk further destabilizing the situation. He invited all parties to show utmost restraint and act to protect civilians.

This newsletter informs about recent and upcoming activities of Civil Society Organizations affiliated with the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the UN Secretariat provide the information “as is” without warranty of any kind, and do not accept any responsibility or liability for the accuracy, or reliability of the information contained in the websites linked in the newsletter.



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