

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

NGO Action News

24 March 2022

Middle East

- On 22 March, [Al Mezan](#) published an article to mark World Water Day, highlighting Israel's selective control and exploitation of groundwater sources in Gaza. Al Mezan informed that in the Gaza Strip, 95.4 percent of water comes from groundwater, with the remainder coming from desalinated water (2.6 percent) or purchased from Israel's national water company Mekorot (2 percent). However, in the absence of a coordination policy between Israel and the Gaza water utility, both have extracted an excessively large amount of water from the coastal aquifer, endangering the sustainability of this vital resource for Gaza residents. In addition, the frequent attacks against civilian objects by the Israeli military have also caused massive destruction of water, water treatment, and sewage infrastructure. On the same day, [Gisha](#) published an article informing that, since May 2021, Israel has delayed and prevented the entry into Gaza of items needed urgently for maintenance and improvement of Gaza's water and sewage systems, putting them at risk of collapse.
- On 21 March, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights](#) organized a workshop titled as "Palestinian Water Rights in Light of Israeli Violations", and it was attended by the Palestinian Water authority, Palestinian Environment Quality Authority, Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, Palestinian Hydrology Group, and Water and Environment Studies Institute at An-Najah National University in addition to human rights activists and academics. Participants recommended the importance of using international law tools to obtain Palestinian water rights and stop Israeli violations.
- On 21 March, [Al-Haq](#) published an article marking International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and stressed that a number of key reports that have been produced by Palestinian and international human rights defenders on what the organization considers a continuing Israeli apartheid against the Palestinian People. Al-Haq added links to several reports from partner organizations addressing this issue, emphasizing on the different measures implemented by the Israeli authorities against human rights defenders. Al-Haq called on the international community to hold Israel accountable for its institutionalised regime of oppression and domination imposed over the Palestinian people. [Al Mezan](#) also published an article on that day calling for decolonization, freedom and justice for all Palestinians.
- On 17 March, [Peace Now](#) reported that the Israeli Civil Service Authority allows and recognizes volunteering at illegal outposts as national/civil service. Peace Now further informed that, according to the Civil Service Authority's list, there are 638 volunteers currently serving in settlements in the West Bank, most of them in education and welfare institutions.

The Civil Service Authority is responsible for supervising and approving national service for those who wish to volunteer in public goals defined by law instead of their military service.

- On 16 March, [Al-Haq](#) delivered an oral statement under the general debate on item 3 on the promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, as part of its engagement with the Human Rights Council 49th session. The statement addressed the importance of grounding the regulation of transnational corporations and business enterprises in human rights standards, highlighting that the regulation of business enterprises involved in the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and the appropriation of natural resources is crucial.

Europe

- On 23 March, [Amnesty International](#) published an article informing that the Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Michael Lynk, has submitted a report to the Human Rights Council, concluding that the situation in the OPT amounts to apartheid. Amnesty International's February 2022 report sets out how Israel is enforcing a system of apartheid against Palestinians wherever it has control of their rights, including within Israel.

United Nations

- On 23 March, the [United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) conveyed the virtual event "Impact of forced displacement on Palestinian women" on the margins of the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Panelists and participants from Civil Society and International Organizations discussed the impact of displacement through evictions and demolitions on Palestinian families as a whole and on women in particular.
- On 22 March, the [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](#), Tor Wennesland, briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, and reported on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334, covering the period from 10 December 2021 to 18 March 2022. The Special Coordinator reported that settlement activity and settler-related violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including East Jerusalem have continued during the reporting period, as well as demolitions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures. Tensions have been high in East Jerusalem, especially in the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah until several Israeli Courts ruled against the eviction of Palestinian families. In addition, several Palestinian civilians died or were injured during Israeli Security Forces operations, confrontations or reportedly in the context of attempted attacks. Tor Wennesland further updated on the diplomatic, political and economic developments in the OPT, reporting that there has been little progress in the implementation of UNSCR 2334 since its adoption in December 2016.

- On 22 March, the [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](#), Tor Wennesland, issued a statement condemning the killing of four Israeli civilians, including two women, and several others wounded, in a ramming and stabbing attack that took place during the evening by an Israeli Arab in Be'er Sheva. Tor Wennesland stated being alarmed by the continued violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel that is taking place on a daily basis, adding that these tragic incidents highlight the volatility of the situation and the urgent need for all leaders to work together against the spiral of violence.

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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