

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

## NGO Action News

25 March 2021

### Middle East

- On 25 March, [Gisha – Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement](#) reported that six Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations had petitioned the Israeli High Court of Justice demanding that Israel take immediate steps to ensure regular supply of vaccines to the Palestinian population under its ongoing control in the West Bank and Gaza. The petitioners also demanded that Israel transfer its surplus vaccines to the Palestinians immediately. The petition was submitted by Physicians for Human Rights Israel, HaMoked – Center for the Defense of the Individual, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel and Rabbis for Human Rights.
- On 24 March, [Al-Haq](#) condemned Israel’s denial of freedom of movement to Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki as “an egregious interference with the judicial process at the International Criminal Court”, following the interrogation of Mr. Malki and his aides at the Israeli military post at the Allenby Bridge crossing point between Palestine and Jordan and the confiscation of their VIP cards which permit them to avoid the oppressive Israeli movement restrictions that Palestinians are subjected to.
- On 24 March, the [Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies \(CIHRS\)](#) informed that over 550 Organisations had signed the public petition to the UN Human Rights Council “Condemnation is Not Enough – Root Causes Must be Addressed, Israel’s Impunity Must be Brought to an End, Justice Must be Achieved”. The petition calls on the HRC *inter alia* to “recognise and denounce Israel’s policies against the entire Palestinian people, including the demolition of Humsa al-Fawqa, as war crimes of an occupying Power, violation of the Palestinian right to self-determination and constituting the crime of apartheid” and to “establish an independent Human Rights Council fact-finding mission into Israel’s apartheid regime and associated obligations of states, international organizations and business enterprises”.
- On 22 March, [HaMoked – Centre for the Defense of the Individual](#) appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court to address the procedure for East Jerusalemites who were stripped of their permanent residency status – as part of Israel’s longstanding policy branded as “quiet deportation”, which are detrimental to the rights of children and family life of those affected by the policy.

- On 19 March, [Addameer Prisoner Support](#) and Human Rights Association, Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, and Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies sent a joint submission to United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Ms. Mary Lawlor, in response to a call for input issued ahead of her upcoming report on long-term detention of human rights defenders, which will be presented to the 76th session of the General Assembly in October 2021. Highlighting the root causes of Israel’s systematic and widespread attacks on Palestinian human rights defenders, the joint submission addressed Israel’s practice of arbitrary arrests targeting those who seek justice for the Palestinian people and an end to Israel’s human rights violations.

### **North America**

- On 7 April, [Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\)](#) will hold the webinar “And Still We Rise – Women Peacemakers” featuring Tamar Samash (Women Wage Peace) and Huda Abuarquob (ALLMEP – Alliance for Middle East Peace). Facilitating this discussion will be Rebecca Blachly, Director of the Office of Government Relations for the Episcopal Church in the United States.
- On 19 March, [Human Rights Watch \(HRW\)](#) issued the statement “Israel’s Discrimination Vaccine Push Underscores Need for Action” under Item 7 of the HRC General Debate. HRW stated that Israel’s “discriminatory vaccination policy underscores the repressive nature of its rule and the need for international action to address its serious abuses [...],” quoting the Fourth Geneva Convention obliging Israel to ensure access to vaccines to Palestinians in the Occupied Territory. Furthermore, the NGO called on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to publicly provide the annual update of the database of business facilitating Israeli settlements and the International Criminal Court Member States to speak out in support of the Court and its staff to protect its independence from any political pressure.

### **United Nations**

- On 7 April, the [UN Palestinian Rights Committee](#) will hold a virtual event on “Delivering Critical Assistance for Palestine Refugees: Challenges and Opportunities in a Complex Context”, a panel briefing with Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and Ms. Gwyn Lewis, Director of UNRWA Operations West Bank, on the current situation of Agency and the Palestine refugees it supports. The event aims to strengthen international support for the rights of Palestinian refugees and mobilize political and financial support to UNRWA, ahead and in support of an international UNRWA conference hosted by Jordan and Sweden in the coming months. Intergovernmental and civil society organizations as well as the public and media are be invited to follow the event on UNTV and pose questions via the Committee [Facebook page](#), [Twitter account](#), the email [dpr-meeting@un.org](mailto:dpr-meeting@un.org) and WhatsApp (+1 646 421 0579).

- On 25 March, [Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Mr. Tor Wennesland](#) delivered a briefing at the monthly meeting of the UN Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East. In his briefing Mr. Wennesland presented the 17th report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), highlighting ongoing Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory and a spike in demolitions of Palestinian buildings, the upcoming Palestinian elections, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and measures to overcome it, and developments in the international arena to relaunch the Peace Process. The Special Envoy also called for Member States to provide continued funding to UNRWA.
- On 24 March, the [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East \(UNRWA\)](#) hosted a virtual side event on the occasion of the 65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) titled “Women as Agents of Change in the Gaza Strip”. The event put the spotlight on three remarkable women in leadership positions in Gaza: Rihab Quqa, Gaza Area Health Officer for the UNRWA Health Programme; Rawya Hillis, Principal of the UNRWA Gaza Training Centre; and Eman Ashour, an expert in renewable energy.
- On 23 March, [The Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process \(UNSCO\)](#) published a statement by the Middle East Quartet: “The Envoys of the Middle East Quartet from the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States, and the United Nations met virtually to discuss returning to meaningful negotiations that will lead to a two-State solution, including tangible steps to advance freedom, security and prosperity for Palestinians and Israelis, which is important in its own right. The Envoys also discussed the situation on the ground, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic, the unsustainable disparity in economic development between Israelis and Palestinians, and the need for the parties to refrain from unilateral actions that make a two-state solution more difficult to achieve.”

*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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