

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

NGO Action News

28 January 2021

Middle East

- On 28 January, [B'Tselem](#) inaugurated its new database “Fatalities and House Demolitions”, which provides statistics on Palestinian-owned structures Israel demolished in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip on the grounds of “unlawful construction”, as punishment or for alleged military purposes, as well as on individuals killed in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians since the beginning of the second Intifada in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).
- On 28 January, [Physicians for Human Rights, Yesh Din – Volunteers for Human Rights and Breaking the Silence](#) are holding the webinar “A Life Exposed: Military Invasions of Palestinian Homes in the West Bank”, which documents the practice of home invasions by Israeli security forces and the severe harm it causes to Palestinian families impacted by it. The three Israeli NGOs and other allies in the field will show how they have succeeded in putting this issue on the public agenda in Israel through public events and campaigns.
- On 28 January, [7amleh – The Arab Centre for the Advancement of Social Media](#) informed that throughout 2020, it had trained 1,660 Palestinians on digital security and gender-sensitive digital security in 134 workshops. 7amleh said it increased their number of trainees from last year and trained on topics including reputation management, digital marketing.
- On 28 January, [Achvat Amim](#) announced its five-month programme for young adults providing a framework to engage in meaningful partnerships with Israelis and Palestinians in the movement for justice and peace. Programme participants in Jerusalem will build and take part in a critical and democratic learning process, and volunteer with prominent human rights organisations working to build a more suitable future.
- On 27 January, [Ir Amim](#) announced it had filed a petition against the tender to build on Givat Hamatos to the Jerusalem District Court on the basis of discrimination and violation of Palestinian housing rights. The petition argues that 40% of the apartments are intended for a subsidized housing scheme designated for Israeli citizens, meaning that the majority of East Jerusalem Palestinians would be ineligible to purchase the subsidized apartments due to their residency status.
- On 27 January, [the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#) issued a press release to welcome WHO Executive Board’s voting against Israel’s proposal to revise the World Health Assembly (WHA) agenda item relevant to the health conditions in the OPT and Occupied Syrian Golan. PCHR considered the voting as a reflection of “Israel’s failed

attempts to evade its responsibilities for the health conditions in the OPT and renounce its obligations as belligerent occupation responsible for applying the preventive measures to curb the outbreak of diseases in territories it occupies [...].”

- On 26 January, [Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights](#) issued a press release criticizing the Israeli authorities’ continuing use of Erez crossing as “a means to entrap Palestinians residing in Gaza,” particularly those in urgent need of medical care who are granted a permit only to face arbitrary arrest at the crossing. Al Mezan reiterated its calls on the international community to ensure the respect of international law and to exert pressure on Israel, the occupying power, to ensure freedom of movement of goods and people, and uphold Palestinian patients’ right to healthcare and guarantee the safety of their companions.
- On 25 January, the [Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Council \(PHROC\)](#) submitted a joint appeal to the UN Special Procedures on Israel’s continued demolitions amidst a global pandemic. In the appeal, PHROC focused on Israel’s continued use, during the current pandemic, of Military Order 1797 that allows the demolition of unlicensed structures in Area C deemed as “new” within 96 hours after the issuance of a removal notice, if the Palestinian owners of the structures do not appeal a demolition order with an approved master building plan and building permit.
- On 25 January, [Al-Haq](#) published the article “United States Policy on Palestine: 2021 and Beyond” focusing on actions on key issues including Jerusalem, Palestine refugees, Gaza, Israeli settlements, accountability, Palestinian prisoners and the Covid-19 pandemic response in the OPT.
- On 24 January, [Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights and Friends of Birzeit University](#) issued a joint urgent call to the international community to intervene in the ongoing systematic targeting of Palestinian university students for prolonged arbitrary military detention by Israeli military authorities. The groups also called upon Israeli military to cease arresting, detain and charging Palestinian students for peacefully exercising their rights to assembly, association and expression, and for an end to the inadmissible use of military courts to try civilians.

Europe

- On 22 January, [Medical Aid for Palestinians \(MAP UK\)](#) issued a press release to denounce how the lives and wellbeing of Palestinian patients and health workers have once again been put in danger as three Palestinian hospitals have come under attack by Israeli forces in the space of under two weeks. MAP denounced a chronic culture of impunity surrounding these attacks in the OPT despite of the protected status of health workers and facilities under international law. MAP stated, “[...] If governments wish to ensure that medics around the world can continue their vital, life-saving work free from fear, they must ensure accountability wherever they come under attack. The occupied Palestinian territory must not be an exception.”

North America

- On 3 February, [Americans for Peace Now \(APN\)](#) will host Palestinian human rights lawyer Zaha Hassan for an update on Palestinian politics, including efforts to advance political reform, unity talks between Fatah and Hamas, plans for elections and current Palestinian efforts to re-establish bilateral relations with the incoming Biden administration.
- On 29 January, the [Foundation for the Middle East Peace \(FMEP\)](#) will hold the webinar “Jerusalem – Where Things Stand and the Start of the Biden Presidency” featuring Middle East Institute fellow Zena Agha and Terrestrial Jerusalem Director Daniel Seidemann. Given the centrality of Jerusalem to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the speakers will aim to discuss what the latest settlements (e.g. Givat Hamatos) say about the state of play in Jerusalem and how they should be understood in Israel’s de facto annexation of Palestinian land.
- On 27 January, [Jewish Voice for Peace \(JVP\)](#) issued the press release “Thousands of Human Rights Activists, Scholars, and Cultural Figures Call on Facebook to Allow Users to Hold Israeli Government Accountable”. JVP informed about the launch of the global campaign “Facebook, We Need to Talk”, which is led by 31 organisations and began in response to an inquiry by Facebook to assess if critical conversations that use the term “Zionist” fall within the rubric of hate speech as per Facebook’s community standards.

United Nations

- On 26 January, [UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967 Michael Lynk](#) and [UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders Mary Lawlor](#) stated in a press release that Israel must immediately stop using its array of military security tools to obstruct the legitimate and indispensable work of human rights defenders, following the conviction of Palestinian human rights defender and founder of Youth Against Settlements Issa Amro. The two UN Rapporteurs informed they sent several letters to Israel seeking clarification on the latter’s case, fearing that the Israeli military court system in the West Bank was deeply flawed and has been repeatedly used to silence human rights defenders.
- On 26 January, [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Tor Wennesland](#) addressed the Security Council for a briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. He welcomed the Presidential decree issued by President Mahmoud Abbas to hold legislative, presidential and Palestinian National Council elections this year and said the UN stands ready to support efforts for the Palestinian people to exercise their democratic rights. The UN was also supporting the Government’s preparedness to receive and eventually administer COVID-19 vaccines and continues to encourage Israel to help address the priority needs of Palestinians in the OPT and to support vaccine availability more generally as this will be critical for the broader efforts of both Governments to control the pandemic and is also in line with Israel’s obligations under international law. He called on Israeli security forces to exercise maximum restraint and may use lethal force only when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life, in light of an escalation in violent incidents

involving them in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in addition to settler-related violence throughout the reporting period. On the peace process, he said he was looking forward to working with Palestinians, Israelis and Quartet partners, along with Egypt, Jordan and other regional and international stakeholders to ensure that they create and preserve the necessary conditions for progress.

- On 26 January, the Chair of the [UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) delivered a statement at the briefing of the UN Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. He touched, among other points, on the importance of continuing support to UNRWA and a planned Committee's virtual event to support Palestine refugees and the Agency in February.

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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