

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

NGO Action News

13 February 2020

Middle East

- On 13 February, [Al-Haq and Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies \(CIHRS\)](#) issued a joint statement to welcome the publication of the database of businesses operating in illegal Israeli settlements by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which lists 112 Israeli and international companies. Al-Haq and CIHRS highlighted the significance of the database in ensuring transparency and promoting accountability for business activities in the occupied Palestinian territory and other situations of occupation and conflict. The joint statement mentioned that it was critical to annually update the database to “bring an end to corporate complicity in Israel’s prolonged occupation and widespread and systematic human rights abuses.”
- On 12 February, [B’Tselem](#) published the report “The Arduous Journey: Visits by Palestinians from the West Bank to Family Members Held in Israeli Prisons”. B’Tselem reported that as of the end of December 2019, Israel was holding in its prisons in the Gaza Strip and West Bank at least 4,544 prisoners and detainees and imposed numerous restrictions on family visits to prisons, including who may visit and how often.
- On 9 February, [Gisha – Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement](#) sent an urgent letter to Israel’s Minister of Defense and the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) demanding that they immediately cancel the decision to revoke hundreds of travel permits held by traders from the Gaza Strip. In the letter, Gisha emphasized that drafting an arbitrary list of traders by Israel for the purpose of revoking their permits constituted illegal collective punishment of the civilian population of the Strip.
- On 9 February, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#) published the report “Israeli Restrictions on Travel of Gaza Patients Referred for Treatment Abroad”. The report explores the deterioration of health services in the Gaza Strip and addresses the Israel-imposed blockade.
- On 1 February, [Peace Now](#) published the paper “The Trump Plan – A Plan for Annexation, not for Peace”. It criticized how the proposed Palestinian “State” was not really one as it lacks territorial contiguity or potential for economic development. Peace Now also criticized how the plan lacked a solution for Jerusalem, leaving all of East Jerusalem and hundreds of thousands of Palestinian residents under Israeli sovereignty.

- On 1 February, [Yesh Din](#) published its December 2019 Data Sheet “Law Enforcement on Israeli Civilians in the West Bank”. The data collected by Yesh Din on investigation files opened by the Israel Police District for settlers’ crimes against Palestinians from 2005 to 2019 shows that 91 per cent of the files closed with no indictment filed. Yesh Din stated that the State of Israel “betrays its duty to protect Palestinians from those who would harm them and, in fact, leaves them to face assault and harassment defenseless.”

North America

- On 14 February, [Columbia University Centre for Palestine Studies](#) will host a discussion with Andrew Ross, Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at NYU, of his new book “Stone Men: The Palestinians Who Built Israel”. The book records the lives and labour of Palestinian workers in the West Bank and charts their contribution to the design and construction of the region’s built-up environment.
- On 13 February, [Human Rights Watch \(HRW\)](#) welcomed the release of the database of businesses contributing to illegal Israeli settlements as “a major breakthrough in holding businesses accountable for their role in rights abuses.” HRW’s deputy executive director for advocacy said that the database release marks critical progress in the global effort to ensure that businesses end their complicity in rights abuses and respect international law.
- On 6 February, [Americans for Peace Now \(APN\)](#) issued a press release expressing its alarm at the sharp increase in Palestinian-Israeli violence since the Trump administration released its plan last week. APN said that there were numerous clashes in the West Bank and a rise in cross-border violence between Israel and the Gaza Strip. APN called on “Palestinians and Israelis, as well as on the Trump administration, to do their utmost to prevent a further violent escalation of the already tense situation that followed the unveiling of President Trump’s ‘vision’.”

United Nations

- On 28 and 29 February, the [United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#), in cooperation with the Government of Malaysia and the Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF), will convene an international conference under the theme “[Southeast Asian Support for the Rights of the Palestinian People](#)” in Kuala Lumpur. The event, which will bring together Palestinian and international experts, will seek to foster relations between Southeast Asian civil society and Palestinian and international organizations that work towards the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people.
- On 12 February, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a [report](#) on business enterprises involved in certain activities relating to settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, in response to a specific request by the UN Human Rights Council, contained in March 2016 resolution 31/36. OHCHR stated that while the settlements as such are regarded as illegal under international law, the database does not provide a legal

characterization of the activities in question and that any further steps with respect to the continuation of this mandate will be a matter for the Member States of the Human Rights Council. The latter is set to consider the report during the Council's next session, beginning on 24 February.

- On 11 February, [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](#) Nickolay Mladenov delivered remarks at the Security Council open briefing on the Middle East. He encouraged the Council to join the UN Secretary-General's call for a negotiated solution to the conflict and constructive engagement between Israel and Palestine. In reference to the newly released US Plan, he underlined that there was "no other framework except the one that Israelis and Palestinians together agree on, a framework based on relevant UN resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements."

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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