

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

NGO Action News

16 July 2020

Middle East

- On 16 July, [Al-Haq](#) issued the report “De Facto Annexation Continues with House Demolitions Using Hyundai Bulldozers, Destruction of Palestinians, Infrastructure and Pillage” where the NGO documented and monitored “a number of incidents pertaining to land and natural resource appropriation” in the week of Israel’s planned *de jure* annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank. According to the report, incidents included the raiding of a village, northwest of East Jerusalem by Israeli forces accompanied by the Israel Antiquities Authority, the firing of bullets by settlers at Palestinian farmers to displace them from their lands, and house demolitions in Al-Issawiya, a neighbourhood in East Jerusalem.
- On 16 July, [BADIL – Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights](#) reported that 22 Members of the European Parliament sent a letter in support of Israel to the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement to request that “Palestinian organizations and individuals belonging to or sympathetic with alleged terrorist groups” be included on the EU sanctions list. BADIL rejected the letter and called on European organizations, among others, to reject the imposition and application of the counter-terrorism clause and measure to Palestine and the Palestinian people, including their civil society.
- On 15 July, [Al-Haq and SOMO \(Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen\)](#) submitted a joint report to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the involvement of the German company HeidelbergCement in human rights violations in the OPT and suggested the inclusion of the company in the UN Database on business activities related to illegal settlements during its annual update, because one of its subsidiaries, Hanson Israel, operates in the Nahal Raba stone quarry in the occupied West Bank.
- On 15 July, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#) published the report “Silencing the Press: Israeli Occupation Forces Attacks on Journalists”, which documents “a significant escalation of Israeli attacks and violations against media personnel in the OPT” for the period from May 2019 to April 2020. PCHR details the violations committed by Israeli forces against the Palestinian media “demonstrating a well-planned scheme to isolate the OPT from the rest of the world and to provide cover-up from crimes against civilians, and impose a narrative opposite to the reality on the ground.”
- On 13 July, [HaMoked – Centre for the Defence of the Individual and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel](#) informed about their letter to the Internal Affairs and Environment Committee of the Israeli parliament to voice objection to the proposed law “Prevention of Entry of Visitors and Lawyers to Incarceration Places, Police Stations and Prisons, Guard Rooms and Military Prisons (Temporary Order), 5780-2020”, drafted as part of the fight against the Coronavirus pandemic. The NGOs warned that this legislation could result in a

continued inability of Palestinian inmates to see their families from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

- On 13 July, [83 Palestinian, regional and international civil society organizations](#) from across 16 countries submitted a joint urgent appeal to the UN Special Procedures on the extrajudicial execution and wilful killing of Ahmad Erekat, a resident of Abu Dis, East Jerusalem, by the Israeli forces on 23 June. The organizations urged international justice and accountability for Israel's shoot-to-kill policy targeting Palestinians and to recognize it as "contributing to the maintenance of Israel's apartheid regime of systematic racial oppression and domination the Palestinian people as a whole, which, embedded in a system of impunity, prevents Palestinians from effectively challenging Israel's apartheid policies and practices."
- On 9 July, [Yesh Din](#) published the report "The Occupation of the West Bank and the Crime of Apartheid: Legal Opinion". The opinion, drafted by human rights lawyer Michael Sfard, concluded that the crime against humanity of apartheid is being committed in the West Bank, the perpetrators are Israelis and the victims are Palestinians. He argues that a crime is committed because the Israeli occupation "comes with a gargantuan colonization project that has created a community of citizens of the occupying power in the occupied territory [...]" and because the Israeli authorities implement policies and practices that constitute "inhumane acts" in international law, including *inter alia* the denial of rights to a national group, denial of resources to one group and their transfer to another.

Europe

- On 9 July, the [Palestinian Return Centre \(PRC\)](#) informed that it had submitted two documents to the UN Human Rights Council to draw the international community's attention to the crises endured by Palestine refugees as a result of the pandemic related lockdown. The written statements, which were passed on to the Council as part of agenda items 2.4 and 4 of the 44th Regular Session, tackled the impact of the decline in humanitarian services by UNRWA on the Palestinian refugee community at a time when quarantine measures have led to a deterioration of humanitarian conditions, and called on the UN and donors to take their share in this struggle undergone by over 5 million Palestine refugees registered with the Agency.

North America

- On 4 August, [The Jerusalem Fund for Education & Community Development](#) will hold the virtual event "Hisham Sharabi Memorial Lecture – 'From Oslo Accords to BDS: Topography of Palestine's Activism in the US'" to discuss the shift in American public opinion around Palestine, as the result of an accumulative process that took shape during the 1980s and early 1990s, and finding contexts in several national and transnational movements by the Palestinian diaspora.
- On 23 July, [The People's Forum](#) will host the virtual discussion "The Deal of the Century and Ongoing Imperialist Attacks on Palestine" with Ali Abunimah, journalist, author and co-founder of the Electronic Intifada.

- On 9 July, [Americans for Peace Now \(APN\)](#) urged members of the US Senate to co-sponsor Senator Chris Van Hollen’s amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, which would block the Israeli government from using any US aid to fund the annexation of parts of the West Bank. In the letters APN’s President Hadar Susskind stated that “the United States should not be supporting annexation and certainly should not be paying for it” and that “West Bank annexation is antithetical to APN’s mission of Israeli-Palestinian peace [...]”

United Nations

- On 14 July, the [UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) held its 401st meeting, which called for sustained international pressure to stop Israel’s annexation of parts of the OPT. Noting that Israeli settlements in the OPT are a violation of international law and UN resolutions including UNSC 2334 (2016), the Chair (Senegal) said that annexation would undermine the credibility of the United Nations and increase the suffering of the Palestinian people already hard-hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Afghanistan, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Namibia, Sierra Leone, and South Africa called the threat of annexation a threat to international peace and stability and endorsed the SG’s statement at the 24 June Security Council open debate on the Middle East. Sierra Leone highlighted the African Union’s rejection of the US peace plan and the Israeli annexation. The State of Palestine spoke of stepped-up advocacy within the General Assembly and of the upcoming Security Council meeting on 21 July on the issue. Member States also highlighted their recent pledges to UNRWA.
- On 13 July, the [Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process \(UNSCO\)](#) organized a workshop with Israeli and Palestinian civil society on their peacebuilding work and the need for dialogue, keeping the prospect of peace alive amid the grave risks of potential annexation.

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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