

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

## **NGO Action News**

**22 April 2020**

### **Middle East**

- On 22 April, [Adalah – The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel](#) shared the latest update on its legal work to defend the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such actions include an urgent petition to the Israeli Supreme Court demanding Coronavirus testing for Palestinians living in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Kufr Aqab and the Shuafat refugee camp, and an urgent letter calling on Israeli health authorities to provide medical care for Palestinians residents of East Jerusalem who have been infected with the virus.
- On 22 April, [Al-Shabaka – The Palestinian Policy Network](#) held the policy lab “Palestine at the ICC: Prospects and Limitations” where international legal experts Ardi Imseis and Halla Shoaibi discussed the current case and its prospects, and how actions taken at the ICC fit into a larger Palestinian strategy.
- On 21 April, [Defense for Children International Palestine](#) issued a press release calling for the immediate release of all Palestinian child prisoners by Israeli authorities and denouncing the continued detention of Palestinian children, with the overwhelmingly majority held in pretrial detention despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 21 April, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#) condemned the continued Israeli attacks against Palestinian fishermen off Gaza, including firing at them, and called on the international community to force Israeli authorities to cease these attacks, respect the Geneva Conventions and to compensate the fishermen for their losses.
- On 20 April, [Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Gisha – Centre for Freedom of Movement and Adalah – The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights](#) sent an urgent appeal to Israel’s Minister of Defense, the Attorney-General and the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), demanding that Israel remove any and all restrictions on travel of medical staff and access to medical equipment and spare parts, as well as allow travel of Gaza residents for COVID-19 related medical treatment, and ensure that adequate supplies of protective equipment, medicine and machinery are available for Gaza’s healthcare system.
- On 20 April, [Gisha – Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement](#) issued a press release to denounce Israeli authorities’ restrictions of movement to and from Gaza via the Erez Crossing almost exclusively to medical patients seeking treatment unrelated to COVID-19 and informed about an urgent appeal to COGAT demanding that Israel reveal information

about whether there is a plan for preventing the spread of COVID-19 in Gaza and meeting the medical needs of its residents.

- On 17 April, [Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Al Haq, Aldameer Association for Human Rights, Hurryyat – Centre for Defense for Liberties and Civil Rights and others](#) issued a joint press release demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons, particularly those who are more susceptible to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as those chronically ill, in order to uphold their rights and to ensure their safety from a COVID-19 outbreak in the prisons.

### **North America**

- On 22 April, the [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#) published the toolkit “Organizing for Palestinian Rights in the Time of COVID-19”. The toolkit provides, among others, guidance on resources to host digital events and digital political education on, for example, “Invest-Divest” and “Palestine and US Military Funding to Israel”.
- On 20 April, [Americans for Peace Now \(APN\)](#) issued a report on the situation in East Jerusalem amid the COVID-19 outbreak, describing the area as mostly neglected in terms of Palestinians’ access to test centres despite it having a large Palestinian population under the complete control of Israeli authorities. APN underlined that if Israeli authorities were to coordinate with the Palestinian Authority, not only would it aid the fight against the pandemic, but it could also open channels of communication to help strengthen future Israeli-Palestinian relations in other fields.
- On 20 April, [Jewish Voice for Peace \(JVP\)](#) organised a panel of international speakers, including Marc Lamont Hill, Ahed Tamimi and Mariame Kaba, to commemorate Palestinian Prisoners Day and call for a world without prisons at the JVP rally to “Free All Prisoners from Rikers Island to Palestine”.

### **United Nations**

- On 22 April, the Foreign Ministers of Jordan and Sweden hosted the second Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, via telecommunications, to discuss joint efforts to support [UNRWA](#). The Strategic Dialogue called for a renewed international commitment for 2020 and beyond, in order to ensure that UNRWA is able to maintain its educational, health, relief and vital development services to refugees and to advocate for their rights and protection in accordance with its mandate.
- On 21 April, the [United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) hosted the Committee’s second live virtual event, featuring a conversation between the Committee Chair (Permanent Representative of Senegal) and three civil society activists from East Jerusalem (Ali Ghaith), Gaza (Issam Younis) and Ramallah (Randa Siniora) who spoke about experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic under occupation. Other

Committee Bureau members were also participating. Mr. Ghaith described the unequal treatment Palestinians in East Jerusalem receive from the Israeli authorities, while Ms. Siniora spoke about how the pandemic disproportionately affects women and girls in the West Bank, and how their residency status affects their freedom of movement, access to medical services and family reunification under the lockdown. Mr. Younis highlighted how Israel's 10+ year blockade had severely weakened the institutions and services needed to fight the pandemic, mainly in the health sector.

*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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