

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

NGO Action News

25 August 2022

Middle East

- A large number of organizations in the Middle East condemned the raid by Israeli forces on 18 August targeting the six Palestinian civil society organizations designated as “terrorist organizations” by Israel, the confiscation of their properties and the closure of their offices. Several of the targeted organizations, including [al-Haq](#) issued statements calling for the international community to protect the staff threatened by Israeli authorities. This raid was condemned by Palestinian, Israeli and international civil society groups, including through several press releases. Among those initiatives, [B'Tselem](#) released a statement endorsed by a growing number of civil society organizations who declared standing in solidarity with their fellow human rights defenders in Palestinian society, repudiated what they consider to be baseless declarations, and called on the international community to pressure Israel to revoke its decision. The [Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies](#) also published a similar statement signed by more than 190 Palestinian, regional, and international organizations, while [ACRI](#) issued another statement ratified by several organizations.
- On 17 August, [al-Haq](#) informed that the organization participated in the 50th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) held between 13 June and 8 July 2022. Al-Haq delivered written and oral statements focusing on Israel’s “annexationist, apartheid and settler-colonial policies and practices” against the Palestinian people. Al-Haq further informed that the organization and partners articulated their support for the work of the HRC Commission of Inquiry (CoI) on Palestine and its first report to the Council, tackling the root causes impeding Palestinian development.

Europe

- On 18 August, [Amnesty International](#) published an article calling on the Israeli authorities to end their campaign of repression against Palestinian civil society and let organizations carry out their work free from harassment. Amnesty International made this statement after Israeli forces closed the offices of seven Palestinian civil society organizations in the West Bank on 18 August. Other Europe-based organizations published statements supporting the targeted Palestinian organizations, including [European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine](#), [Association Belgo-Palestinienne](#) and [Association France Palestine Solidarité](#), among others.

North America

- On 25 August, [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#) will organize the panel discussion “Israeli Raids on Palestinian Civil Society Organizations”. Legal and policy experts will discuss how Israel’s measures to terminate the work of six prominent civil society organizations engaged in documenting violations of international law and supporting the International Criminal Court investigation of Israeli officials is harming defense of Palestinian rights. The discussion will also address what international inaction will mean for both Palestinians and Israelis and international human rights advocacy efforts more broadly. Representatives of the six affected organizations will also participate in this event as panellists.
- On 19 August, [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW) published the article “Raising the Alarm: Israel’s All-Out Assault on Rights Defenders”, recalling that Omar Shakir, HRW’s Israel and Palestine Director, was deported by Israel three years ago without sanction from the international community. HRW stated that this lack of reaction from the international community then encouraged Israeli authorities to carry out an unprecedented all-out assault on human rights advocates. Furthermore, Israeli authorities detained a field researcher for the Israeli rights group B’Tselem on 6 August 2022 and raided the offices of seven prominent Palestinian civil society organizations on 18 August. According to HRW, these actions are aimed at thwarting human rights monitoring and punishing those who criticize Israel’s persecution of millions of Palestinians. Other US-based organizations including [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#), [Americans for Peace Now](#), [Friends of Sabeel North America](#) and [J Street](#), among others, also released statements in support of the Palestinian human rights organizations. In addition, [Americans for Peace Now](#) and seven other American Jewish organizations sent a letter on 23 August to Secretary of State Antony Blinken, urging the Department of State to take a clear, proactive position regarding Israel’s designation of six Palestinian human rights groups as “terrorist organizations.”
- On 19 August, [Americans for Peace Now](#) (APN) asked the United States to ensure that a full independent, credible, and transparent investigation into the killing, more than 100 days ago, of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. APN stated that both US President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken have called for a ‘full and transparent accounting’ and an ‘independent, credible investigation’ and yet the United States has failed to ensure this occurs. [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#) also called for the public to pressure US officials to ensure a US investigation into this killing.
- On 18 August, [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#) (FMEP) released the podcast “This is Not a Drill: Israel Brings the Hammer Down on the Palestinian NGO Sector”. In this episode of FMEP’s Occupied Thoughts podcast, FMEP’s Lara Friedman spoke with Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch, about Israel’s further targeting of Palestinian human rights/civil society, with the decision to designate 6 Palestinian NGOs as terror organizations, and to raid and shut down the groups.
- On 17 August, [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW) published an article titled “Cage, Smother, Subdue, Repeat: Israel’s Gaza Policy”. HRW stressed that at least 49 Palestinians in Gaza were killed, including 17 children, during Israeli strikes and Palestinian rocket attacks

between 5 and 7 August, according to the Palestinian health ministry in Gaza. Israeli access restrictions to and from the Gaza Strip during this period aggravated the already crushing impact of the Gaza closure, which Israel has imposed for more than 15 years. HRW stated that so long as there is impunity for serious abuses by all parties, Gaza remains an open-air prison, and Israeli authorities continue to commit the crimes of apartheid and persecution. HRW added that this situation will cause future rounds of hostilities, calling on the international community to bring sufficient pressure to push Israeli authorities to abandon their longstanding policy of subjugation of the Palestinians of Gaza.

- On 17 August, [al-Shabaka](#) published a series of articles on Palestinian digital rights, analyzing how the arrival of new digital technologies over the past decade has had critical implications for Palestinian activism, while posing significant threats to Palestinians and their allies. In this “Focus On”, Al-Shabaka examined these trends and addressed the state of ICT infrastructure in Palestine, State surveillance, and how Palestinians and their allies can resist violations of their digital rights. Al-Shabaka also published its [Annual Report](#) covering the period Spring 2021 – Spring 2022.

United Nations

- On 30 August at 10 a.m., the [UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) will convene for its 408th Committee Meeting at UNHQ in New York. At this meeting the Director of UNWRA Office New York, Greta Gunnarsdottir, will provide a briefing and the Committee will adopt its Annual Report for 2022. The meeting will be broadcasted live on [UN Web TV](#).
- On 18 August, the Chair of the [Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) condemned the raid of the offices of Palestinian organizations by Israeli forces. [UN Agencies](#) and the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) also urged Israel to allow Human Rights and Humanitarian organizations to continue their work. This statement further reads that the attempted closures of these organization offices represent the latest in a series of actions by Israel that are further limiting the ability of human rights, humanitarian and development work in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, affecting all institutions working to promote human rights, development and delivering assistance. Several state officials, including the [US State department](#), the [High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy](#), EU member states, members of national Parliaments, including the [US House of Representatives](#), and other organizations such as the [British Palestinian Council](#) expressed their concerns over Israel’s closing of the Palestinian organizations.
- On 17 August, [UNRWA](#) reported that the Agency organized the fourth Agency-wide Student Parliament workshop in Amman between 15 and 18 July. The workshop brought together 22 elected student parliamentarians representing the voices of over half a million UNRWA students from the Agency’s five fields of operation. Former student parliamentarians also joined the meeting to share their experiences with the current workshop attendees and help them develop an action plan.

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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