

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

## **NGO Action News**

**1 September 2022**

### **Middle East**

- On 30 August, [World Vision](#) issued a statement supporting Mohammad El Halabi, the manager of operations for World Vision in Gaza, after he was sentenced to twelve years for providing support to Hamas. World Vision stated the organization condemned any diversion of aid funding and strongly condemns any act of terrorism or support for those activities but stated that an investigation, completed in July of 2017, found no evidence of diversion of funds and no material evidence that El Halabi was part of or working for Hamas. World Vision called for a fair and transparent appeal process based on the facts of the case. In addition, [OHCHR](#) issued a statement to reiterate its concerns over the trial, including the lack of evidence and use of secret evidence, and the [European Union](#) stated that the outcome of this judicial process had been incompatible with international fair trial standards
- On 29 August, [Al-Haq](#) and Al-Quds Community Action Centre submitted a Joint Parallel Report for the 72nd Session of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). The report, which provides supplemental information to the Committee on Israel's state report to the CESCR, exposes Israel's violations of Palestinians' human rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which it is obligated to uphold as an occupying Power under international humanitarian law. According to Al-Haq, the report examines in particular how Israel's "settler-colonial and apartheid regime" represents a threat to the realisation of the rights enshrined in the ICESCR.
- On 26 August, [BADIL](#) published a new issue of al-Majdal, its biannual English magazine produced with inputs from Palestinian and international civil society. This issue is titled "Shrinking Spaces in Palestine: An Israeli Colonial Strategy to De-Politicize Palestinian Civil Society" and discusses the environment of shrinking spaces in which Palestinian civil society has to operate. BADIL informed that the articles in this issue further analyze the tools and strategies used by both Israel and the international donor community to delegitimize civil society and to depoliticize the Palestinian narrative. The issue also addresses the impact of these strategies on the independence and political sovereignty of Palestinian civil society.
- On 24 August, [7amleh](#) informed that institutions working in the field of human and digital rights in the Arab region and globally, as well as human rights activists and defenders, joined a petition calling on Meta to urgently disclose the results of the investigation into the content moderation policies for the Arabic language in Palestine. Meta has contracted an external evaluation to conduct a comprehensive examination and determine whether the moderation of the company's content in Arabic and Hebrew, including the use of automation, has been

applied without bias. According to 7amleh, the company had promised to release the report “in the first quarter of 2022” but has still not done so.

- On 24 August 2022, the Palestine’s National Children Council - Gaza Strip, a section of the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights](#), organized an initiative themed as: “Hear Our Voice: We Love Life If We Find a Way to it”, to advocate for children rights in the Gaza Strip. This initiative follows the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip and aims to brief the international organizations and institutions operating in the Gaza Strip on the suffering of children due to the ongoing Israeli closure, recurrent attacks, and practices against Palestinian civilians in general and children in particular. As part of the initiative, the Palestine’s National Children Council met with the Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) sub-delegation in the Gaza Strip.

### **Europe**

- On 29 August, [Association Belgo-Palestinienne](#) published a letter sent to the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, asking for the suspension of the planned resumption of meetings of the EU/Israel Association Council. This letter, signed by 40 organizations in 20 countries, is a response to the recent Israeli airstrikes on Gaza and the closure of the offices of 7 prominent Palestinian civil society organizations.

### **North America**

- On 1 September, [Americans for Peace Now](#) (APN) will organize the webinar “Between Bombs and Blockade: Mental Health in Gaza” with Dr. Yasser Abu Jamei and Dr. Suad Lubbad. APN stated that fifteen years of violence, blockade, poverty, and shortage in water and electricity have created a pernicious state of distress and hopelessness among Gaza’s 2 million residents. A recent report by Save the Children found that four out of five children in the Gaza Strip say they live with depression, grief and fear. The panellists are two Gaza-based experts who will discuss the impact of the harsh conditions in Gaza on its residents, and particularly on children following the latest round of violence in the Gaza Strip.
- On 30 August, the [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#) (FMEP) organized a webinar titled “Israel, Palestine, & Take-Aways from the 2022 Democratic Party Primaries”, with Rania Batrice (Communications and Legislative strategist), Lara Friedman (FMEP) and Dr. Yousef Munayyer (Arab Center DC) in conversation with Dr. Maha Nassar (Professor, University of Arizona and 2022 FMEP Non-resident Fellow). Panelists discussed how Israel/Palestine shows up in Democratic Party politics today; how deep is the embrace of Palestinian rights among progressive candidates and in the grassroots; what pushback from Israel-aligned funders looked like and how it may manifest in the future, and what it means for progressive organizing and candidates in the future.

- On 29 August, [Al Shabaka](#) published the podcast “From Jenin to Gaza to Nablus: Palestinian Resistance Under Attack with Mariam Barghouti and Ibrahim Fraihat” as part of the series Rethinking Palestine. Panellists discussed how the latest Israeli attacks and assassinations in Jenin, Gaza and Nablus are part of a wider Israeli strategy to crush Palestinian armed resistance.
- On 25 August, [Friends of Sabeel North America](#) (FOSNA) published a press release denouncing the use of administrative detention by Israel to maintain dominance and control over the Palestinian Arab population, besides military rule and the military court system. FOSNA added that the threat of administrative detention hangs over all Palestinians and is an instant and arbitrary detention without charge or trial. FOSNA further informed that a Palestinian prisoner, Khalil Awawdeh, has been on a hunger strike for over 175 days, adding that choosing nonviolence resistance is most suitable for the Palestinian struggle as it undermines the security justifications Israel typically uses to justify its oppression of Palestinians. The European Union and civil society organizations, including [Adalah](#) also issued statements on Khalil Awawdeh’s situation.
- On 25 August, the [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#), the Middle East Institute, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, DAWN, the International Crisis Group, Century International and US/Middle East Project (USMEP) co-convened a webinar to examine how Israel’s measures to terminate the work of six prominent Palestinian civil society organizations — including groups engaged in documenting violations of international law and supporting the International Criminal Court investigation of Israeli officials — is harming defense of Palestinian rights. The event also examined what international inaction will mean for both Palestinians and Israelis, and international human rights advocacy efforts more broadly.

### **United Nations**

- On 30 August, the [UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](#) convened a meeting at UNHQ in New York and adopted its Annual Report for 2022. The Director of UNWRA Office New York briefed the Committee and encouraged Member States to support the incoming renewal of UNRWA’s mandate and to ensure funding for the Agency’s programme budget. and the Committee adopted its Annual Report for 2022. The meeting also included an update by the State of Palestine Mission to the United Nations on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem.
- On 30 August, the [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), Michelle Bachelet issued a statement deploring Israel’s failure to grant visas for UN Human Rights staff in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). The UN High Commissioner stated that Israel’s refusal to issue or renew visas will not prevent the Office from continuing to monitor and report on the human rights situation on the ground. Michelle Bachelet added that barring the UN Human Rights Office’s international staff occurred in a context where Israeli authorities are increasingly limiting human rights “eyes and ears on the ground”. There is a growing roll call

of UN staff and mechanisms, non-governmental organisations and others being expelled or refused entry.

- On 28 August, the [UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator](#), Lynn Hastings, issued a statement alerting of challenges as over 1.3 million Palestinian children from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip will go back to school this week. Since the beginning of the year, 20 children were killed in the West Bank, compared to 12 during the same period last year. Currently, there are 56 outstanding demolition orders against schools attended by at least 6,400 children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In the first half of 2022, the United Nations recorded 115 education-related violations in the West Bank including direct or indirect firing of tear gas, stun grenades, and/or rubber-coated bullets, intimidating military and settler presences at schools, detentions, and movement restrictions preventing students from reaching their classes. Nearly 8,000 students have been impacted, increasing the risk they will drop out of school.
- On 25 August, the [Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](#), Tor Wennesland, briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East. The Special Coordinator expressed satisfaction that the ceasefire declared by Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad remained in effect allowing for the resumption of needed economic relief to the people in Gaza. Tor Wennesland warned that unless fundamental issues are addressed, the cycle of acute crisis followed by short-term fixes would persist. Concerted efforts are needed to restore a political horizon and resume meaningful negotiations. The Special Coordinator also informed that daily violence and settler-related violence have also continued at high levels across the occupied West Bank during the reporting period. He also called on Israeli authorities to end demolitions of Palestinian-owned property and the displacement and eviction of Palestinians, and to approve additional plans that would enable Palestinians to build legally and address their development needs. In addition, Daniel Levy, President of the U.S./Middle East Project, stressed that the illegal blockade of Gaza and the unlawful occupation represent forms of structural violence and collective punishment that cannot be ignored. He stated that any attempt to resume negotiations between the parties without addressing power asymmetries is a hollow and redundant exercise, urging a focus on power relations. “Economic palliatives under occupation deepen dependence and enmity,” he pointed out, noting that profound shifts are occurring because of the unwillingness to hold Israel to account. Talk of the eclipse of a two-State option is neither alarmist nor far-fetched, and he urged those present not to underestimate the longer-term significance and traction of what is happening.
- On 25 August, [UNRWA](#) Commissioner-General Lazzarini delivered a statement to the Security Council highlighting that the situation of Palestine refugees has further deteriorated since his last briefing in May last year. The UNRWA Commissioner-General informed that the escalation of violence earlier this month in Gaza was a stark reminder that war and violence can erupt anytime in the absence of a genuine and comprehensive effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, adding that in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, political, economic and security conditions are deteriorating as Palestine refugees experience high levels of dispossession, violence and insecurity. The Commissioner-General further stated that the chronic underfunding of UNRWA’s program budget for the past decade has

made it increasingly challenging for the Agency to fulfil the mandate given by the General Assembly.

*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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