

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

## **NGO Action News**

**23 March 2023**

### **Middle East**

- On 22 March, [Peace Now](#) informed about the adoption by the Israeli Knesset of a bill to amend the Law of the Implementation of the Disengagement Plan. This bill allows settlers to enter the areas of the West Bank that Israel evacuated as part of the Disengagement Plan in 2005. According to Peace Now, the law marks a significant landmark in the ambition of changing the northern part of the West Bank from a contiguous Palestinian area to an area with settlers, outposts, and settlements.
- On 21 March, [Al Mezan](#) published an article to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Al Mezan stated that Palestinians observed this day at a time of great escalation of Israeli oppression in the wake of the swearing-in of Israel's new far-right government. The organization also recognized the growing, instrumental work of human rights defenders, organizations, and States to combat what it considers to be Israel's apartheid. The organization also called on the UN General Assembly to re-establish the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid.
- On 21 March, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights](#) (PCHR) issued a statement condemning the decision of the Israeli Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben-Gvir, on 14 March 2023, to close the Voice of Palestine Radio Station offices, an official Palestinian Authority (PA) channel, and ban their representatives from operating and broadcasting in East Jerusalem and Israel for six months. PCHR stated that this decision is the latest in the long series of Israeli authorities' systematic and illegal measures targeting the Palestinian Civil Society Organizations operating in occupied East Jerusalem since 1967, aiming to change the characteristics of the City.
- On 20 March, [Al Haq](#) published a new animated film titled "Israel's Settler Colonial Apartheid Regime: Segregating the Palestinian People." This film describes how Israel has maintained a regime of institutionalized racial discrimination and domination over the Palestinian people as a whole for more than seven decades. The film accompanies a Palestinian coalition report '[Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism](#)' which was launched by Al Haq in November 2022.
- On 15 March 2023, the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights](#) (PCHR) organized a workshop titled as "Medical Equipment and Medicines in the Gaza Strip: Perpetual Shortage and Serious Repercussions." The workshop was attended by representatives from the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MOH), World Health Organization (WHO), non-governmental health

sector, Civil Society Organizations, and a number of patients. Participants discussed Israel's ban on the entry of medicines and medical equipment to Gaza, and restriction on patients. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, demanded necessary protection for the Gaza patients' right to health as they have been suffering for years. He emphasized that banning the entry of medical equipment under the pretext of "dual use" is unacceptable and called on the international community to immediately intervene and end the unjust Israeli-imposed closure on the Gaza Strip.

- On 12 March, [Hamoked](#) informed that in 2022 Israel revoked the residency of 81 East Jerusalem Palestinians, including 42 women and one minor. Of the total, 63 people were outside of Israel/East Jerusalem on the date of the revocation. Hamoked stated that this was a significant rise compared to the previous year, in which 26 people were deprived of their status. According to the Israeli Ministry of Interior's figures supplied over the years, between 1967 and 2022, Israel revoked the status of 14,808 Palestinians from East Jerusalem on the grounds that their status "expired of itself."

### **Asia and Europe**

- On 21 March, the [Palestinian Return Centre](#) (PRC) delivered an oral statement before members of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) as part of Agenda Item 3 on torture. The statement read that Israel's parliament passed recently the first stage of a bill that stops funding what it deems to be 'non-essential' medical treatment for political Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. According to PRC, this is the latest law passed of many that is seeking to further deteriorate the living conditions of Palestinian prisoners as this law is essentially legislating medical negligence as a means of torture and punishment.
- On 21 March, [Amnesty International](#) informed that its offices around the world delivered petitions signed by more than 200,000 people to Israeli authorities, calling on them to put an end to the demolition of Palestinian homes. Amnesty International's petition, "Demolish Apartheid, Not Palestinian Homes," is addressed to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and has been signed by people in at least 174 countries. [Amnesty International](#) also called on the European Union to acknowledge the reality of Israeli apartheid, after a delegation of European diplomats visited Huwara and Za'tara, two Palestinian towns in the Nablus Governorate, where Israeli settlers launched brutal attacks. Amnesty International further stated that wherever Palestinians live under Israel's effective control Israeli authorities subject them to systematic oppression and domination.

### **North America**

- On 29 March, [Americans for Peace Now](#) (APN) will organize the webinar "Netanyahu's Government and the Occupation". According to APN, one of the chief objectives behind the Israeli government's drive to weaken the judiciary is to solidify Israel's grip on the West Bank by advancing the settlement enterprise and advance the annexation campaign. In this webinar, Lior Amihai, the new executive director of Israel's Peace Now, will discuss the

relationship between the Israeli government's "legal reform" and the occupation. He will discuss the government's West Bank policies and practices, their repercussions, and possible ways of confronting them, including the role of the anti-occupation movement in the current pro-democracy protest.

- On 21 March, [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#) (FMEP) published the podcast 'If the thief is the judge, who will hear the complaint?' On Escalating Settler Violence in Masafer Yatta". FMEP's Sarah Anne Minkin spoke with Ali Awad, writer and activist from Tuba in Masafer Yatta, and Cassandra Dixon, a victim of a settler attack on 7 March. Panellists discussed the attack and its aftermath, including appeals to the Israeli authorities to hold the perpetrators accountable, and put this attack into the context of an overall escalation of state-backed settler violence in Masafer Yatta, in the southern West Bank.
- On 15 March the [Jerusalem Fund](#) organized a virtual discussion with Asmaa AbuMezied, an expert in gender and economic justice, on the current realities facing Palestinian women. Participants discussed on how Palestinian women and civil society are dealing with Israel's ever-escalating occupation, how Israel's attacks on Palestinian civil society organizations affect the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda, and the role of the international community.

### **United Nations**

- On 22 March, the [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](#), Tor Wennesland, briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. Tor Wennesland called on all leaders to refrain from unilateral steps, provocative actions and messages that escalate tensions at this sensitive time. He further stated that settlement activities have continued during the reporting period, in violation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). He added that 82 Palestinians, including one woman and 17 children, were killed by Israeli security forces during demonstrations, clashes, security operations, attacks against Israelis, and other incidents. 2,683 Palestinians, including 123 women and 320 children, were injured. 13 Israeli civilians, including one woman and three children, and one foreign national were also killed during this period.
- On 15 March, the [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East](#) (UNRWA) informed of its participation in the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Manama, Bahrain. The UNRWA delegation, called on parliamentarians from countries around the globe to support Palestine refugees in the face of multiple crises in the Middle East. The 146th Assembly of the IPU gathered 137 member Parliaments and a number of associate members and observers globally. During his address to the IPU General Assembly, UNRWA Senior Manager Outreach Europe, Marc Lassouaoui, stated that the Agency's financial crisis puts at serious risks its essential services, including education, primary health care and social services for one of the most vulnerable refugee communities in the world.

*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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