



2024 Conference of CSOs working on the Question on Palestine  
***“Building Bridges with International Civil Society to Address the Ongoing  
Nakba”***

**Convened by the**

**Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP)**

United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), Switzerland

3-4 April 2024

**CONCEPT NOTE**

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## **Background**

The Division for Palestinian Rights is mandated by the General Assembly to organize international meetings and conferences, in consultation with the and under its guidance. A key component of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People’s mandate is to work with civil society organizations engaged on the Question of Palestine to mobilize international support for the Palestinian people.

In light of the Israeli military aggression launched against the Gaza Strip following the attacks of 7 October 2023, the Conference will focus, among others, on the role of civil society worldwide in advocating for a durable and sustainable ceasefire and in achieving accountability for Israel’s war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including crimes perpetrated in the context of this aggression, which has, to date, resulted in the killing by the Israeli occupying forces of over 27,000 Palestinians, the overwhelming majority being children and women, in addition to men, elderly persons and youth.

The ongoing military onslaught and the fear of further escalation of the tensions and violence in the West Bank as a result of both Israeli military raids and settler attacks have prompted the Committee to strengthen partnerships with civil society organizations, identifying common priorities and messaging on core and emerging topics, including on ending the occupation, apartheid and genocide, as well as the responsibility of Member States to prevent and to protect the Palestinian people, and ensuring accountability as a fundamental requirement for the justice that is vital for peace.

## **Objectives**

The Conference aims to leverage CSO networks to promote objectives common with the Committee mandate.

Having noted the increasingly organized nature and effective lobbying and campaign initiatives of international civil society during the ongoing war on Gaza, the Conference will be dedicated to acquainting the Committee with current CSO initiatives, building partnership where possible with CSOs to advance these initiatives, and discussing how CSO voices and initiatives could also further support the Committee mandate.

The Committee could learn from the experience of civil society and legal experts during the mobilization in support for the recent submission of South Africa to the ICJ on the request to the Court to indicate provisional measures to Israel under the Genocide Convention, as well as in the context of the ICJ advisory opinion proceedings underway, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 77/247 and the question put to the Court on the legal consequences of Israel's prolonged denial of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, prolonged occupation and settlement and annexation policies, and discriminatory measures against the Palestinian people.

The Committee could further benefit from partnering with individual CSOs and regional platforms, such as the Arab Group and Non-Aligned Movement for the effective follow up of the ICJ proceedings, including brainstorming on proposals for engagement with States, parliaments and with world public opinion, and for the efforts to convene an international peace conference aimed at justly resolving the question of Palestine in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions.

### **Date and Venue**

The event will be held on 3 and 4 April 2024 at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG). United Nations partners – among them DGACM, DGC – would also be involved in the planning process for logistical advice and support.

### **Format**

The Conference would be held over two days. The first day would consist of an opening session where statements will be made by the Committee, a representative of the Secretary-General and a keynote speaker, and two plenary sessions. The second day would consist of two plenary sessions and a closing.

### **Participation**

- Around 20 representatives of civil society and legal experts from the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Israel, the United States, Europe, Africa and Latin America as speakers in successive panels.
- CSOs based in Geneva and those attending the Human Rights Council (Item 7) will be invited to participate and contribute to the discussions as audience.

- CSOs within the Committee’s network will also be invited to participate in the event, at their expense.

## **Languages**

The working languages for the conference would be Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Interpretation services would be arranged through the United Nations Secretariat.

## **Media Coverage**

The Division for Palestinian Rights would work with the Department for Global Communications and the UN Information Service (UNIS) in Geneva to ensure maximum possible coverage of the conference in local and international media.

Information about the conference would be disseminated by DPR through its social media channels.

## **Expected Outcomes**

The event is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Strengthened partnership between the Committee and CSOs from different continents, legal experts, faith leaders and grassroots movements working on question of Palestine and the war on Gaza.
- Strengthened information flow about ongoing initiatives, legal projects, and other initiatives offering possibilities for enhanced international advocacy.
- Stock-taking about initiatives by social justice movements promoting Palestinian rights, join calls for a sustainable humanitarian ceasefire and life-saving assistance into the Gaza Strip.
- Increased focus on the responsibility of Member States to work toward an end to the war and occupation; and for an end to the US military funding and corporate association in establishing illegal settlements.
- Recommendations on suggestions for Member States’ action including to implement the ICJ ruling on the request of provisional measures by South Africa, as delivered on 26 January by the Court, and the UNGA revival of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid or brainstorming on incremental steps to the latter.
- Identifying mechanisms for more regular and possibly regional consultations between the Committee and CSOs.

## **Outputs**

The conference outputs would include:

- A Chair Summary of the discussions within a week of the end of the Conference (to be circulated to Committee Members, translated in different languages, and published on the Committee website).
- A formal report within one month after the Conference (to be circulated to all Member States and participants in the conference and published on the Committee website).

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