

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

## NGO Action News

1 February 2024

### Middle East

- On 6 February, the Institute for Palestine Studies will hold a [webinar](#) (in Arabic) titled “On the Edge: War and Public Health in Gaza,” which will feature a discussion with Abdul Latif al-Husseini, professor of public health at Birzeit University. The webinar will focus on the current public health situation in the Gaza Strip considering the limited capabilities and systematic destruction of the health sector.
- On 29 January, BADIL – Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights issued a [press release](#) noting that the decision taken by a number of countries to suspend UNRWA funding in response recent accusations against 12 out of 13,000 Gaza-based staff, was in contradiction to the provisional measures order issued by the International Court of Justice.
- On 26 January, Al-Haq, Al Mezan, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights issued a [statement](#) welcoming the provisional measures order issued by the International Court of Justice in the case of South Africa v. Israel. The statement noted that the ruling was a *de facto* ceasefire as Israel was ordered to end acts of genocide, including killing, with immediate effect.
- On 18 January, B’Tselem published an [updated list](#) of isolated Palestinian communities (including numbers of families and persons) in Area C of the West Bank that have been forcibly transferred under the cover of fighting in Gaza since 7 October 2023.

### Asia and Europe

- On 31 January, Association France Palestine Solidarité published an [article](#) (in French) detailing two new mass graves in the Gaza Strip—in Rafah and Beit Lahia. The article claims that more than 120 mass graves have been dug since the beginning of the war, and that the Israeli army has desecrated or destroyed more than 2,000 Gazan graves.
- On 29 January, the Norwegian Refugee Council and other NGOs issued a [joint statement](#) expressing deep concern and outrage that some large donor states had suspended funding for UNRWA following allegations that individual staff members had participated in the 7 October attacks in Israel. The statement noted the decision would threaten Palestinian lives in Gaza, where over two million civilians—half of them children—face starvation. The same

day, Amnesty International issued a similar [press release](#) calling on states to reverse their “cruel decision” to withdraw UNRWA funding.

- On 28 January, the Palestinian Return Centre [announced](#) that it had sent an advocacy paper to parliamentarians in the United Kingdom and diplomats in Geneva, detailing Israel’s deliberate use of starvation as a weapon of war against Palestinians in Gaza, citing UN data.
- On 26 January, Amnesty International issued a [press release](#) calling on Israel to comply with the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice, doing all in its power to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.
- On 24 January, Agence Média Palestine shared a [playlist](#) of “10 Songs for Gaza.” The non-exhaustive list (in French) features international and Palestinian artists who—since the beginning of the Israeli bombing—have expressed support for Gaza and the Palestinian people through their music.

### **North America**

- On 5 February, Columbia University’s Center for Palestine Studies will hold an [event](#) in New York City with Dr. Ardi Imseis to discuss his new book titled “The United Nations and the Question of Palestine: Rule by Law and the Structure of International Legal Subalternity.”
- On 3 February, The Peoples’ Forum will hold a [literary reading](#) featuring several writers in New York City who will share their literary reflections on Palestine. The event will raise funds for Palestine Legal, an organization that offers legal support for those whose rights have been infringed after speaking out for Palestine.
- On 31 January, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a [press release](#) calling on governments to continue funding UNRWA as the agency investigates the allegations that some of its staff were involved in the 7 October attacks in Israel. HRW said that suspending UNRWA aid would risk hastening famine in Gaza.
- On 31 January, Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) issued a [press release](#) calling the decision of several donor countries to defund UNRWA a “heinous act of genocide.” JVP noted that the accusations against 13 UNRWA employees (0.0004% of their total workforce) did not indict the entire organization. On 30 January, Americans for Peace Now issued a similar [statement](#) urging the Biden administration to resume funding for UNRWA as swiftly as possible.
- On 30 January, Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights (CLAHR) issued a [press release](#) informing that on 28 January, it had written—as part of a coalition of Canadians and Palestinians—to Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly demanding that the federal government immediately halt all exports and transfers of Canadian military goods and technology to Israel.
- On 26 January, J Street issued a [statement](#) calling on the Israeli government to fully comply with the International Court of Justice ruling on provisional measures in the case of South

Africa v. Israel. The statement also called on the United States not to block efforts in the UN Security Council to ensure the ruling's enforcement, and to press the Israeli government to shift its military strategy and tactics in Gaza to ensure the safety of hostages and civilians. The same day, Americans for Peace Now issued a similar [press release](#), urging Israel to comply with the provisional measures and calling on the U.S. government to commit to working with Israel to ensure compliance.

### **Latin America**

- In Mexico, the Plataforma Común Por Palestina announced (in Spanish) marches in solidarity with Palestine on 3 February in [Veracruz](#) and [Guadalajara](#) to call for a ceasefire in Gaza and sanctions against Israel.
- Juventud Árabe de Bolivia [announced](#) (in Spanish) the screening of a series of Palestinian documentary films from 23 January to 1 February in Cochabamba.
- In Chile, the Fundación Belén 2000 launched a [cookbook](#) (in Spanish) of Palestinian cuisine to raise funds for humanitarian assistance to Gaza.

### **United Nations**

- On 31 January, Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordination, gave a [briefing](#) to the [Security Council](#) on the situation in Gaza, expressing concern over the possibility of a spread in hostilities southwards. He reiterated his call for a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and compliance with international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and the infrastructure they depend on.
- On 31 January, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held its first [meeting](#) of the year to elect the Chair of the Committee and adopt the Programme of Work for 2024. The Permanent Representative of South Africa briefed the Committee on their application instituting proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice and the Director of UNWRA Representative Office New York also briefed the Committee on the situation in the Gaza Strip.
- On 31 January, UN Human Rights experts issued a [press release](#) welcoming the ruling by the International Court of Justice on provisional measures, noting that it offered the first concrete hope for the protection of civilians in Gaza enduring “apocalyptic conditions.”
- On 31 January, UNCTAD issued a [rapid assessment](#) of the economic impact of the destruction in Gaza and prospects for economic recovery, noting that the economic impact of the ongoing Israeli military operation will last for decades.
- On 28 January, Secretary-General António Guterres issued a [statement](#) informing that an investigation by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services had been activated in

response to the allegations against several UNRWA staff members. He also appealed to governments that had suspended contributions to the agency not to penalize the civilians in Gaza who depend on critical aid from UNRWA for their survival.

- On 26 January, Philippe Lazzarini, UNRWA Commissioner-General, issued a [statement](#) noting that in response to information provided by Israel on the alleged involvement of several UNRWA employees in the attacks on Israel on 7 October, the contracts of those staff members had been terminated and an investigation was launched.
- On 26 January, the International Court of Justice delivered its [order](#) on the request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by South Africa in the case concerning the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel).
- On 26 January, the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People issued a [statement](#) welcoming the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza.
- On 25 January, UNRWA issued a [press release](#) noting that its Khan Younis training centre, which was housing 800 displaced people, was hit by direct fire during military operations. At least 13 people were killed and 56 injured.

*This newsletter informs about recent and upcoming activities of Civil Society Organizations working on the question of Palestine. 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. Translations of the NGO Action News in other languages will be available soon.*



<http://www.facebook.com/UN.palestinianrights>



<http://www.twitter.com/UNISPAL>