

Palestine's Legal Scene

Your weekly survey of the most important publications and activities related to Palestine, from local and international sources

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Issue.268 | 16-22 February 2025

Issued every Sunday

By Law for Palestine

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This weekly report reviews the legal dynamics of the Palestine question, and everything related to international law and Palestine. The report includes an account of the most important publications, activities, and conferences related to Palestine at the local, regional, international levels. The report further covers decisions, decrees, and judicial orders affecting the Palestinian cause, whether made at the official, academic or public levels. The report aims to be a reference for monitoring, documenting, and archiving the latest human rights developments related to Palestine, and to present them to individuals, researchers, study centers, and official, academic, and legal institutions concerned.

Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by official Palestinian bodies

- **The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates (MOFAE) has [expressed](#) deep concern over the Israeli occupation's issuance of tenders for 974 new settlement units in the 'Efrat' settlement. MOFAE characterised this development as part of Israel's broader strategy to forcibly impose unilateral illegitimate measures in the West Bank and reinforce the Israeli apartheid regime. It also [condemned](#) the escalation in violations and crimes committed by settler militias against Palestinian citizens, their lands and properties in the West Bank, including the ongoing escalation of violence and systematic destruction of infrastructure in the Jenin and Tulkarm governorates and their refugee camps. The Ministry called for urgent international intervention to halt the occupation's expansionist colonial projects and provide international protection for Palestinians. (February 18-19, 2025)**
- **The Palestinian MOFAE has strongly [condemned](#) Fiji's decision to relocate its embassy to occupied Jerusalem, calling it an aggression against the Palestinian people and their rights and a violation of**

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international law and UN resolutions. The Ministry called on the Government of Fiji to reverse its decision immediately. (February 18, 2025)

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- The Palestinian National Council (PNC) has [demanded](#) the Swiss Government reverse its decision to suspend funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), stating that the move unjustifiably supports Israel's occupation government committing ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Palestinian people. (February 20, 2025)
- The Palestinian presidency [announced](#) that, during the emergency Arab summit in Cairo on March 04, President Mahmoud Abbas will present a comprehensive “Palestinian vision” to address challenges facing the Palestinian cause. The plan includes preventing displacement, rebuilding what was destroyed by the occupation in the Palestinian territory, implementing international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative by ending the Israeli occupation, and establishing a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. (February 20, 2025)
- The Palestinian MOFAE has [called](#) on international legal entities to assume their responsibilities towards the crimes of the Israeli occupation in light of its attempts to hide them. It raised the alarm on the gravity behind the Knesset’s approval of the draft laws that criminalise individuals, institutions, human rights and humanitarian organisations that document the crimes of Israel and impose harsh penalties on them. The Ministry considers the draft laws to be an official attempt to conceal violations by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. (February 21, 2025)

Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by official Israeli bodies

- Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has [decided](#) to confiscate an additional \$90 million from the Palestinian Authority’s tax revenues and transfer the money to Israeli families allegedly killed in attacks by Palestinians, according to Israeli media reports. A report by TV7 Israel News, cited by the Anadolu news agency, said the move by the Israeli Finance Ministry was to prevent the PA from “continuing to reward terrorists and murderers” and to redirect the funds to “terror victims” and their families. Measures also included freezing fund transfers to Gaza and stopping payments allocated to Palestinian prisoners and ex-prisoners. Smotrich announced the formation of a team to annually review the PA’s expenditures to ensure that no funds are allocated to the families of martyrs or

- prisoners. He affirmed his commitment to stopping what he described as funding incitement in mosques, schools, and the media by blocking financial support to these sectors. (February 17-18, 2025)
- The Israeli Knesset [approved](#) in a preliminary reading a draft bill aimed at protecting Israeli public figures from the activities of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The bill has been referred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee for deliberation. The proposed law prohibits public authorities and bodies, as well as Israeli citizens and residents, from cooperating with the ICC in the Hague, including a prohibition on delivering information or documents, with penalties of up to five years in prison. (February 19, 2025)
 - The Israeli Knesset has [approved](#) -in a preliminary reading- an amendment to the Association Bill, which imposes an 80% tax on donations received by non-profit associations that are primarily funded by foreign governments and do not receive funding from the State of Israel. The bill also proposed that the court will not accept requests submitted by a non-profit association that receives a majority of its funding from such a state entity, if the association is not budgeted by the state. The bill claimed that it aims to “reduce the indirect influence of foreign governments and state entities on the State of Israel.” (February 19, 2025)
 - Israeli military prosecutor has [filed](#) an indictment against five reservists suspected of sexual assault and physical torture of a Palestinian detainee in Sde Teiman prison. The Israeli military High Court refused to shutter Sde Teiman in September following the torture and death of 36 Palestinian detainees. The indictment was brought after the detainee was violently [assaulted](#) by soldiers on 05 July 2024, where he was beaten, kicked, dragged on the floor, and assaulted using a taser gun, resulting in a break in his ribs, and a lung puncture. According to the indictment, the victim was also stabbed in the posterior with a sharp object penetrating near the detainee's anus and causing an internal tear. (February 19, 2025)
 - The Israeli Knesset has [passed](#) a legislation prohibiting individuals who publish statements denying the Holocaust or the events of October 7 from entry into Israel. The law is an amendment to existing Israeli legislation that bans granting visas or entry permits to those calling for a boycott of Israel. The amendment also targets those advocating the prosecution of Israelis for actions they committed during their duties in the IOF or other security services. (February 20, 2025)

Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by Arab, European, and international bodies

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- Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), has [urged](#) Israel, the United States and parties who have enabled and armed the genocidal assault against the Palestinians to provide reparations to the Palestinian people to rebuild Gaza, as prescribed by international law. Albanese has asserted that the method through which Gaza, much of the West Bank and east Jerusalem will be rebuilt must be at the discretion of the Palestinian people. She rejected the so-called “Riviera plan” as a reparation, but rather a rapacious attempt to continue to commit crimes in Palestine. (February 16, 2025)
- UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, has [welcomed](#) the latest round of hostage releases in Gaza and the continued implementation of the ceasefire agreement. He reiterated his call for all parties to uphold international humanitarian law and international human rights law. (February 16, 2025)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini has [warned](#) that the Knesset legislation on UNRWA and suspending funding by key donors could collapse the agency. Speaking at the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution meeting, he explained that UNRWA’s services can only be replaced by a full-fledged Palestinian state. Lazzarini warned that its collapse would create a vacuum in the occupied Palestinian territory and stressed the need to allow UNRWA to progressively conclude its mandate within the framework of a political process. He added that the international community’s commitment to a political pathway “must be backed by funding to preserve the Agency’s operations until the transfer of its services to Palestinian institutions is complet.” (February 17, 2025)
- Jordan’s King Abdullah II has [reaffirmed](#) Jordan’s position on the Palestinian cause, emphasising rejection of displacement, resettlement, alternative homeland. He stressed the importance of Gaza’s reconstruction without displacing Palestinians, and called for efforts to de-escalate tensions in the West Bank. (February 17, 2025)
- The China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) has [reaffirmed](#) its support for Palestinian legitimate national rights and promoted reaching a prompt and just solution to the Palestinian cause through the two-state solution. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi urged his Israeli counterpart Gideon Sa’ar to end the humanitarian disaster in Gaza as soon as possible. (February 18, 2025)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [warned](#) that the IOF and personnel from the Jerusalem local authority have “forcefully entered” the Kalandia Training Centre and ordered its

immediate evacuation, affecting at least 350 students and 30 staff members. UNRWA schools in East Jerusalem were also affected, disrupting education for 250 children. Lazzarini condemned these actions as violations of the right to education and UN mandates. (February 19, 2025)

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- A group of UN experts [called](#) for the humane treatment and immediate release of Israeli hostages and arbitrarily detained Palestinians, condemning the mistreatment of Palestinian detainees and Israeli hostages. The experts also claimed, “we urge independent investigations and accountability for all violations, and a comprehensive political settlement based on full respect for international law.” (February 18, 2025)
 - The UN, European Union (EU) and World Bank have [released](#) the “Interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment Report” covering the period between October 2023 and October 2024. The report estimated the physical infrastructure damage at \$29.9 billion, the economic and social losses amounted to \$19.1 billion and identified additional recovery needs. The report indicated that Gaza’s economy contracted by 83% in 2024, while the West Bank’s economy declined by 16%. The Office of the European Union Representative (West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA) [highlighted](#) that \$53.2 billion will be required for recovery and reconstruction in Gaza over the next decade. (February 18, 2025)
 - The Swiss Senate’s Foreign Policy Committee has [called](#) for an immediate halt to current and future Swiss financial support to UNRWA. The Senate will decide on this issue during the spring parliamentary session from February 26 to March 15. (February 18, 2025)
 - In its final statement during the 38th Ordinary Summit, the African Union has [affirmed](#) that the two-state solution is the only way to end the conflict and achieve stability. The Summit condemned Israel’s displacement of Palestinians from their lands as contrary to international law, stating that “Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians and must be tried internationally.” The Union called on African leaders to stop any form of cooperation or normalisation with Israel until it ends its occupation and aggression against Palestine. (February 18, 2025)
 - The Republic of Fiji has [announced](#) its decision to relocate its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, following approval by the Council of Ministers. Fiji has explained that risk assessments will be undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, in consultation with relevant agencies throughout the process. (February 18, 2025)
 - Anneliese Dodds, Minister for International Development at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in the United Kingdom has [emphasised](#) UNRWA’s role in providing essential

- education for Palestinian children in East Jerusalem. She expressed concerns over Israel's order to close UNRWA schools and immediately evacuate the Kalandia Training Centre. (February 19, 2025)
- **Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has [rebuked](#) US President Donald Trump's plan to forcibly and permanently expel Palestinians from Gaza to other countries, calling it "immoral" and a violation of international law. He affirmed that, "Gaza belongs to the Palestinians and is part of the future Palestinian state," stressing the necessity of an Arabic leadership to achieve a political resolution. (February 19, 2025)**
 - **The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has [denounced](#) Fiji's decision to relocate its embassy to occupied Jerusalem, calling it a provocative and illegal act that violates international law and all relevant UN resolutions. The OIC urged the government of Fiji to reverse its decision. (February 19, 2025)**
 - **The Administration of US President Donald Trump has [frozen](#) funds allocated to Palestinian security forces, as part of the global freeze on foreign assistance. (February 19, 2025)**
 - **Following the Israeli forces' forceful entry and immediate evacuation of UNRWA's Kalandia Training Centre, Director of UNRWA Affairs in the West Bank Roland Friedrich heavily [rebuked](#) Israel's actions as being "extremely problematic" due to Israel's unprecedented large-scale forcible displacement of the northern West Bank, and considered it in contravention of its obligations under UN privileges and immunities. (February 19, 2025)**
 - **Due to the continued emergency polio outbreak in the Gaza Strip, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organisation (WHO) have [announced](#) that they plan to continue to administer a mass vaccination campaign to be conducted between 22 and 26 February 2025. The campaign comes after the recent discovery of the poliovirus in wastewater samples in Gaza, indicating its continued spread in the environment. The two organisations urged a permanent ceasefire that would lead to long-term peace. (February 19, 2025)**
 - **UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has [affirmed](#) to the U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio his country's opposition to the displacement of Palestinians from their land. The president's statement came ahead of a key summit concerning Trump's plan to displace Gaza's inhabitants. (February 20, 2025)**
 - **During a discussion on regional developments between Jordan's King Abdullah II and a US House delegation, the Jordanian monarch [stressed](#) the need to step up international efforts to achieve just**

and comprehensive peace on the basis of the two-state solution. He reiterated Jordan's rejection of any attempts to displace Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, calling for maintaining the ceasefire in the Strip and boosting the humanitarian response. (February 20, 2025)

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- A recent [report](#) provides evidence of supplying 60,000 pieces of weaponry transported via Spanish airports and at least twenty-five ships with US military material for Israel transited in the Spanish port of Algeciras. In this regard, UN Special Rapporteur on oPt, Francesca Albanese, [called](#) on the Spanish government to stop any military flights to Israel. Albanese urged that Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people must not be enabled by Spanish land and labour. (February 20-21, 2025)
 - UNRWA has [reported](#) that Palestinians Refugees are facing daily struggles to access food, water and basic necessities. It reiterated its critical role in providing life-saving aid, including food, cash assistance, healthcare and education. (February 21, 2025)
 - Following rejections from Egypt and Jordan, U.S. President Donald Trump has [conceded](#) his statements on his relocation plans for the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip. Trump appeared surprised at Jordan and Egypt's opposition to his proposal for Gaza stating, "We pay Jordan and Egypt billions of dollars a year." When asked about his current stance he added, "We'll see what happens...I thought it was great...it's a great location. I don't know why Israel ever gave that up. Why did they give it up?" (February 21, 2025)

Publications of human rights NGOs

- Peace Now [reported](#) that the Israeli Civil Administration has issued a new tender for the construction of 974 new housing units in the Efrat settlement south of Bethlehem. The tender is part of a plan to establish a new neighborhood on an area of 644 Dunams (159 Acres), which will increase the number of Israeli residents by approximately 40%. This will further obstruct development of Bethlehem, and disconnect the entire southern part of the West Bank from its northern counterpart. (February 16, 2025)
- In a letter signed by over 230 global civil society organisations around the world, they have [called](#) on governments producing F-35 fighter jets to immediately halt all arms transfers to Israel, including F-35 fighter jets. The letter stressed that Israel's continued supply of such weapons implicated exporting states in possible war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza and is a serious violation of

international law. Such states include Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK, and the US as a leading partner. (February 18, 2025)

- Amnesty International has [called](#) on the European Union to stop supporting Israel's genocide, occupation and apartheid in Palestine. It strongly rebuked EU foreign ministers after the EU announced it will be hosting Gideon Sa'ar, Israel's Foreign Minister, in Brussels for the EU-Israel Association Council. It remarked, "It is unconscionable that the EU is rolling out the red carpet for foreign minister Sa'ar whose boss, Prime Minister Netanyahu, is wanted by the ICC for war crimes and crimes against humanity and whose military is actively engaged in committing crimes under international law, including genocide." (February 20, 2025)

Research and academic studies (in Arabic and English):

- A Radical Journal of Geography [published](#) an article by Mohamed El-Shewy, Mark Griffiths and Craig Jones titled, "Israel's War on Gaza in a Global Frame." The article highlighted the complicity of many States in their military collaboration with Israel, particularly in supplying military resources, including F-16 fighter jets and GPU bombs, to support Israel's military capabilities in its war against Palestinian civilians. (January 16, 2025)

Opinion Pieces and features

- Haaretz [published](#) an op-ed by Gideon Levy titled, "If Anyone Should 'Not Forget nor Forgive,' It's the Palestinians." (February 16, 2025)
- Haaretz [published](#) an op-ed by Michael Sfard titled, "Thanks to Its Regime, Israel Is Losing the Justification For its existence." (February 18, 2025)
- Just Security [published](#) an article by Eliav Lieblich titled, "Trump's Gaza Plan is Absurd and an Affront to International Law" (February 18, 2025)
- CounterPunch [published](#) an article by Ramzy Baroud titled, "Trump's Gaza Plan: A Green Light for Ethnic Cleansing?" (February 19, 2025)
- Oakland Institute [published](#) an article by Anna Blackshaw titled, "What We Can Learn from the Palestinian Resistance in the West Bank" (February 21, 2025)

Legal Achievements/Impacts for Palestine

- University of Galway has [confirmed](#) that it is reviewing a research project, following student protests launched on 19 February on campus. The outrage came as students discovered that the University is coordinating the project which is worth €1.5 million funded by the EU, and involves Israeli education institute “Technion” as participant. Students reaffirmed that “Technion” is involved in the study and development of AI and weapons used in Gaza and the West Bank. The University’s Palestine Solidarity Society has deplored what it described as “a complete breach of trust”, noting that they had been talking with the University for multiple months at that point. (February 19, 2025)

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Human rights conferences and events

- The EU, France, and the Palestinian Authority have inaugurated Haris Boys Secondary School in Salfit Governorate- [constructed](#) as part of the EU’s development plan in Area C and funded by France in the amount of €850,000. During the ceremonial inauguration, EU Representative Alexandre Stutzmann asserted that the EU and its Member States remain committed to protecting the rights of Palestinians, rejecting forced transfers, evictions, demolitions of homes. In addition, the Consul General of France, Nicolas Kassianides, remarked that “projects such as the Haris secondary boys school...are concrete ways to help preserving [sic] the Palestinian presence on this land and the perspective of the two States solution.” (February 19, 2025)

Upcoming human rights opportunities and events

- BADIL Resource Centre For Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights has announced a webinar on States’ Obligations to Protect UNRWA: What is Required and by Whom? The Centre aims to discuss the Israeli-led campaign to dismantle UNRWA and erase the Palestinian refugee issue. Discussions will include the impact of the Israeli regime’s recent legislations banning UNRWA, the ongoing suppression of Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons under the Israeli suppression campaign “Operation Iron Wall,” as well as the international community’s failure to uphold Palestinian rights. The webinar has been scheduled for March 02, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Palestine Time via Zoom. (February, 2025)