

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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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:

- **During the UNRWA Advisory Committee meeting in Geneva, Ahmad Abu Holy, head of the Refugee Affairs Department at the Palestine Liberation Organization, [emphasized](#) the irreplaceable importance of UNRWA and its mandate according to Resolution 302. He stressed that UNRWA serves as a vital lifeline, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, including Jerusalem. Abu Holy highlighted the critical role of education for Palestinians, referencing a report on the "deliberate educational war of annihilation," which noted the destruction of 80% of educational buildings. He called for concerted efforts to bridge the funding gaps at the upcoming UNRWA pledging conference on July 12. (June 25, 2024)**

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

- **Israel's Channel 7 [reported](#) that approximately twenty planned arrests in the West Bank by the Israel Defense Forces and the Shin Bet were canceled this week due to overcrowded detention**

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centers and prisons. Security authorities warned of a worsening issue, noting that the overcrowding has led to the cancellation of operations and the release of some low-risk detainees to make room for others. (June 23, 2024)

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- Israel's High Court of Justice has [ordered](#) the state to disclose details regarding the conditions in which Gazan prisoners are held at the Sde Teiman detention center in southern Israel, despite the state's plan to empty the facility. The court's decision came in response to a petition filed by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and other human rights organizations, demanding the closure of the Sde Teiman facility due to harsh humanitarian conditions, lack of medical treatment, punishment methods and cuffing conditions. (June 23, 2024)
 - In a statement, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu [stressed](#) that he is not willing to compromise until Hamas's military and governing capabilities are eliminated and the 120 hostages are returned. He also stressed the importance of ensuring that Gaza will no longer pose a threat to Israel. Netanyahu pointed out that missile attacks and Iranian incursions make the Hamas-Israeli war part of a broader multi-front campaign. (June 24, 2024)
 - [Finance Minister](#) Bezalel Smotrich said that he intends to “establish facts on the ground in order to make Judea and Samaria [West Bank] an integral part of the State of Israel.” He added, “We will establish sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, first on the ground and then through legislation. My life's mission is to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state.” (June 24, 2024)
 - Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [stressed](#) that settlement in the Negev and the Galilee is an “important national mission.” He added, “We continue to work vigorously to make these areas more attractive to young people and families. We will also soon increase reductions on land development, thereby encouraging new construction and job creation.” (June 25, 2024)
 - Israel's Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben-Gvir [explained](#) that he has ordered a reduction in food rations for Palestinian prisoners as a “deterrent” measure. Ben-Gvir made his comments in response to a request for clarification by the Israeli Supreme Court regarding the fact that the portion of food received by Palestinian prisoners is far less than what is stipulated by international law. “The Palestinian detainees will receive the minimum rights and the minimum food, and I will ensure that this policy is implemented,” said the minister. He added, “security prisoners [Palestinians] must receive a smaller ration than criminal prisoners.” (June 26, 2024)

- The Israeli security cabinet [approved](#) legalizing five West Bank outposts and a series of sanctions against the Palestinian Authority. In return, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich will sign off on moves unfreezing the last three months of tax funds withheld from the Palestinian Authority. (June 28, 2024)

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

- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [stated](#) that catastrophic levels of hunger across the Gaza Strip are the result of human actions, with children dying of malnutrition and dehydration while food and clean water wait in trucks. “In the last nine months, we have witnessed unprecedented failures of humanity in a territory marked by decades of violence”, he added. (June 24, 2024)
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [cautioned](#) that ongoing access limitations and security issues are still obstructing efforts to expand food and nutrition aid in Gaza, impacting hundreds of thousands of vulnerable individuals. The office noted that the persistent closure of the Rafah crossing and difficulties in safely transporting relief supplies from the Kerem Shalom crossing have exacerbated the difficulties faced by humanitarian operations. (June 24, 2024)
- World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom [said](#) that more than 10,000 people in Gaza require medical evacuations. He called for their sustained medical evacuation and timely passage via all possible routes. Dr. Adhanom added that the organization and its partners delivered medical supplies to cover the health needs of about 20,000 patients at Al-Ahli and As-Sahaba Hospitals, in addition to 19,000L of fuel. He emphasized that above all, the people of Gaza need a ceasefire. (June 24, 2024)
- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) [criticized](#) the recent Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City, particularly targeting Al-Shati refugee camp, which resulted in substantial civilian casualties, including children. The Office also denounced ongoing Israeli violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in its role as the occupying authority in the West Bank. The statement pointed to an incident in Jenin where Israeli forces strapped an injured Palestinian man to the hood of a military jeep, interrogated him, and later released him. (June 24, 2024)

- **UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [expressed](#) concern about ongoing attacks affecting UNRWA's operations. Lazzarini emphasized the need to safeguard UNRWA's essential role both presently and during a transitional period. He dismissed the notion that dismantling the agency would not disrupt humanitarian efforts in Gaza. Lazzarini called for allowing UNRWA to maintain its services until a political resolution is achieved. (June 24, 2024)**
- **In a meeting in Paris, Jordanian King Abdullah II and French President Emmanuel Macron [renewed](#) their call on the international community to increase humanitarian aid to Gaza and deliver it by all possible means. They stressed the necessity of an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the protection of civilians, and the prompt delivery of humanitarian aid. (June 24, 2024)**
- **The Libyan National Unity Government [declared](#) that Palestinian citizens are now exempt from visa and residency fees. This decision aligns with Resolution No. 289 issued by the Libyan government, which specifies that citizens of the State of Palestine will not be required to pay any fees related to visas and residence as outlined in the executive regulations of Law No. 6 of 1987. (June 24, 2024)**
- **The UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People [expressed](#) shock at the violations committed by Israel against Palestinian detainees. The committee condemned the impunity enjoyed by Israeli soldiers involved in inhumane, brutal, and degrading treatment of Palestinians, including women and children. It also voiced deep concern about the long-term impact of the Gaza conflict on future generations on both sides. The committee urged countries and companies supporting the prolongation of the occupation to cease such activities, warning of potential complicity in severe violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and possibly genocide. (June 25, 2024)**
- **[According](#) to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report, jointly prepared by several UN humanitarian agencies, there remains a severe risk of famine throughout the Gaza Strip due to ongoing conflict and restrictions on humanitarian access. The report [indicated](#) that approximately 96% of Gaza's population (2.1 million individuals) are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, a situation expected to persist until September 2024. It noted that over 495,000 people (22% of the population) are in catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity,**

classified as Stage 5, where families endure severe food shortages, starvation, and depletion of coping mechanisms. (June 25, 2024)

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- **The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the Arab League for Humanitarian Relief Affairs, Hissa K A Althani, [stated](#) that over one million children in Gaza are in danger of malnutrition, with 3,500 experiencing severe malnutrition. Emphasizing the international community's obligation, she urged immediate action to establish humanitarian corridors. She criticized delays in addressing the plight of innocent victims facing what she described as “one of the most criminal armies in the world.” (June 26, 2024)**
- **In response to Britain's request to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the judges have [granted permission](#) for the UK to present legal arguments regarding the ICC's consideration of arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Galant. The court will also accept submissions from other concerned parties on this matter. (June 27, 2024)**
- **UN Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, [emphasized](#) that the efforts to address security or humanitarian challenges without addressing fundamental political questions are destined to fail. He underscored that Palestinians and Israelis can no longer wait to establish a viable political horizon. Wennesland further stressed the need for all stakeholders to take urgent steps that would lead to the reality of a two-state solution. (June 25, 2024)**
- **The General Commissioner of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, [reported](#) that on average, 10 children in Gaza lose one or both legs daily. Additionally, approximately 4,000 children are missing, and there are 17,000 other children living without their families. Reports also indicate that 14,000 children have tragically lost their lives since the beginning of the conflict nine months ago. Lazzarini strongly criticized a recent attack on an UNRWA-operated school in al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza City. He [highlighted](#) ongoing concerns about the risk of famine in Gaza and noted a significant deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the south following military operations in Rafah on May 6th. He stressed the critical necessity of a ceasefire. (June 25, 2024)**
- **The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Martin Griffiths, [stressed](#) that humanitarian workers in the Gaza Strip continue to face numerous serious obstacles. He [stated](#) that aid can make a significant difference, underscoring the need to open all crossings, ensure safety and security, and restart the pier to facilitate the delivery of aid from the beach if possible. (June 25, 2024)**

- **Germany [condemned](#) Israeli plans to legalize five settlements in the occupied West Bank, urging Tel Aviv to overturn its controversial decision. Foreign Ministry spokesman Sebastian Fischer stated that Israel's policy of building settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories constitutes a serious violation of international law and undermines efforts to achieve a two-state solution. (June 28, 2024)**
- **Spain [submitted](#) a declaration of intervention to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case brought by South Africa against Israel regarding the application of the Genocide Convention in the Gaza Strip. The Spanish Foreign Ministry said that "This intervention is motivated by our responsibility as a State party to the Genocide Convention and our firm commitment to international law". (June 29, 2024)**
- **The European Union [condemns](#) Israel's decision to legalize five outposts in the occupied Palestinian territory, viewing it as an attempt to undermine peace efforts. The EU urges Israel to reverse these decisions, reaffirming that it will not recognize changes to the 1967 borders without mutual agreement between the parties. The EU also calls on Israel to stop actions that weaken the Palestinian Authority, release withheld clearance revenues, and ensure correspondent banking services between Israeli and Palestinian banks continue. (June 29, 2024)**

Publications of human rights NGOs:

- **Save the Children [stated](#) that up to 21,000 children are estimated to be missing amid the chaos of the war in Gaza, many of them trapped beneath rubble, detained, buried in unmarked graves, or separated from their families. The agency's child protection teams report that the latest displacements caused by the offensive in Rafah have separated more children and further increased the strain on families and communities caring for them. It pointed out that at least 17,000 children are believed to be unaccompanied and separated, approximately 4,000 children are likely missing under the rubble, and an unknown number are in mass graves or detained. (June 24, 2024)**
- **J Street [released](#) a statement urging President Biden to publicly clarify that the Israeli government's recently announced intentions to annex the West Bank is unacceptable. The organization emphasized that such actions directly violate international law and pose risks of heightened instability and violence in the West Bank and beyond. Americans for Peace Now also**

issued a statement, warning that annexation of the West Bank is no longer a mere settlement dream but rather a tangible threat. It suggested that imposing sanctions on Minister Smotrich could be a crucial initial step in delegitimizing a government pursuing unlawful methods to secure permanent control over the West Bank. (June 25, 2024)

- **+972 Magazine published** the results of an investigation titled "How Israeli Drone Strikes Are Killing Journalists in Gaza." The investigation includes survivor testimonies and audiovisual analysis, revealing a pattern of strikes by Israeli UAVs on Palestinian journalists in recent months, even when they are clearly identifiable as press. (June 25, 2024)
- **On the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, Addameer released** a report detailing the severe and challenging conditions faced by Palestinian detainees from Gaza. The report highlighted that these conditions, and the increase in instances of torture, are exacerbated by Israel's historical lack of accountability. It noted that since the beginning of the genocidal war against Palestinians, approximately 54 individuals from all Palestinian regions have died in Israeli occupation prisons due to torture, inhumane detention conditions, systematic abuse, and deliberate attacks. Diakonia also **published** a report addressing similar issues within this context. (June 26, 2024)
- **In November 2023, Defend International Law and ICJ-Norway filed** a criminal complaint against three key Israeli leaders for crimes against humanity. However, in May 2024, the National Authority for Prosecution of Organized and other Serious Crime (NAST) dismissed the complaint. **On June 26, Defend International Law and ICJ-Norway appealed** the dismissal to the Director of Public Prosecutions and expanded the complaint to include charges of genocide. The Director of Public Prosecutions will now decide whether to initiate an investigation into the reported crimes. (June 26, 2024)
- **In light of the arrival of components for the F-35 fighter jet produced by the Netherlands in Israel via third countries, despite a Dutch court's ban on exporting these parts to Israel, three rights groups have decided** to take the Dutch government back to court. They argue that the ban is not being effectively enforced and has failed to prevent the parts from ending up in Israeli planes. (June 28, 2024)

Opinion Pieces and features:

- Institute for Palestine Studies [published](#) an article by Muhammad Ali Khalidi and Terry Regier, entitled: "Palestine and The Western Street" (June 23, 2024)
- InDepthNews [published](#) an article by Atul Mishra titled "Gaza War: A New Age of Relevance for International Law". (June 23, 2024)
- The Lawfare Institute [published](#) an article by Akshaya Kumar titled "Continued Arms Exports to Israel in the Face of Constructive Notice". (June 25, 2024)
- The Nation [published](#) an article by KAVITHA CHEKURU and LAILA AL-ARIAN titled "They Didn't Spare Anyone": The Story of an Israeli Massacre in Gaza". (June 26, 2024)
- DAWN [published](#) an article for Heidi Matthews, entitled: "How Israel's War in Gaza Is Testing the ICJ and the ICC." (June 26, 2024)
- Northeastern Global News [published](#) an article by Tanner Stening, entitled: "Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Hamas: Can international law stand up to global conflict?" (June 26, 2024)
- +972 Magazine [published](#) an article by Baker Zoubi, entitled: 'More horrific than Abu Ghraib': Lawyer recounts visit to Israeli detention center." (June 27, 2024)
- Common Dreams [published](#) an article by Brett Wilkins, entitled: "Genocide Denial': Tlaib, Lee Slam Bipartisan Effort to Suppress Gaza Death Toll." (June 27, 2024)
- Institute for Palestine Studies [published](#) a study by Jehan Helou, entitled: "Israel's Genocide against Palestine: Neo-Colonialists Are Complicit." (June 28, 2024)

Human rights conferences and events:

- The Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP) [organized](#) a webinar titled: "Israel is Annexing the West Bank." FMEP Fellow Peter Beinart and Professor Yael Berda discussed media reports about Israel's de facto annexation of large parts of the West Bank, the ways in which Israeli settlers want to control the IDF, and the possibility that international opposition will halt the process (June 25, 2024)