

Palestine's Legal Scene

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

Page | 1

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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 Islamic-Christian Commission for the Support of Jerusalem and Holy Sites has [warned](#) of an unprecedented acceleration in the policy of forced demolitions of homes belonging to Jerusalemites. These demolitions, often carried out under the pretext of not obtaining building permits, have compelled residents to demolish their own homes since the beginning of this year. The commission has called on the international community to actively intervene to stop these crimes and protect the Palestinian people from ongoing genocide and ethnic cleansing. Additionally, the commission [condemned](#) the occupation authorities' decisions to impose taxes on Christian churches in Jerusalem and within Palestinian territories, considering it an infringement on the existing legal, historical, and religious status of the city of Jerusalem. (July 1, 2024)**
- **The head of the Colonization & Wall Resistance Commission, Minister Muayyad Shaaban, [reported](#) that Israeli occupation forces and settlers carried out 7,681 assaults during the first half of 2024. He**

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noted that these assaults were mainly concentrated in the Hebron Governorate, followed by the Jerusalem Governorate, and then the Nablus Governorate. He added that the assaults included land confiscation, settlement expansion, and legislative measures aimed at solidifying Israeli control and annexing Palestinian lands. (July 2, 2024)

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

- Israel's Ministerial Committee for Legislation **approved** a bill proposed by the Chairman of the Law and Constitution Committee in the Knesset, Simcha Rotman, that would effectively bar administrative detention, or detention without trial, for Jews, leaving it permissible only for non-Jews - Palestinians. (June 30, 2024).
- Israel has **announced** the appointment of Ron Shapira as its ad hoc judge in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) case brought by South Africa, which accuses Israel of genocide in Gaza. Shapira will replace Aharon Barak. Previously, Shapira had criticized the ICJ, describing it as intellectually dishonest and manipulative. At that time, he stated that sending a distinguished legal expert like Aharon Barak did not reflect respect for the court's decision-making process. (July 1, 2024)
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu **stated**, "We are advancing to the end of the stage of eliminating the Hamas terrorist army. We will achieve our objectives: Returning our hostages, eliminating Hamas's military and governing capabilities, ensuring that Gaza will not constitute a threat, and also returning our residents securely to their homes in both the south and the north." (July 1, 2024)
- Israeli Defense Minister Gallant **signed** off on a decision to address basic humanitarian needs of displaced Gaza civilians, including electricity and sewage plants. Meanwhile, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich **criticized** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, describing the move as "madness", and accusing him of contributing to the rehabilitation of Gaza. Smotrich also expressed his dissatisfaction with the release of al-Shifa Hospital director Muhammad Abu Salmiya (July 2, 2024).
- The Israeli "Supreme Planning Council" **announced** a plan to build 6,016 new housing units in dozens of settlements across the West Bank. This includes expanding the Givat settlement by more than 1,000 units and constructing a new neighborhood in the Yakir settlement, which will be built across

the road leading to the settlement, effectively creating a new settlement. Additionally, 3 outposts will be [legalized](#) in existing settlements. (July 4, 2024)

Page | 3

- The Israeli government [announced](#) the largest seizure of “state lands” in the West Bank since the Oslo Accords, designating 2,965 dunams in the Jordan Valley as “state lands.” Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich [praised](#) the move, along with the scheduled approval of thousands of new settlement housing units, stating that these moves were designed to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state. (July 3, 2024)
- The Jerusalem Municipal Court [ruled](#) to demolish the headquarters of Wadi Hilweh Information Center, south of Al-Aqsa Mosque, on the grounds of “unlicensed construction.” This building has existed long before the occupation of Jerusalem. Additionally, a fine of 20,000 shekels was imposed on the center's director. The center was given one year from the issuance of the decision to comply. (July 3, 2024)
- Likud Party MP Amit Halevi has [proposed](#) a law titled: “Bill for the protection of Israeli public figures against the activities of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague against the State of Israel, 2024.” The law includes provisions that prevent states, organizations, and entities from engaging with the ICC and imposes penalties on those who do so. (July 5, 2024)

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

- Francesca Albanese, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Palestine, [expressed](#) her disappointment in a tweet on X, questioning why the ICC Prosecutor, despite significant political pressure on the ICC, has not yet requested an arrest warrant against Bezalel Smotrich, the Finance Minister of Israel, who she identifies as a key mastermind of Israel's genocidal policies against the Palestinians. (June 30, 2024)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [stated](#) that the war in Gaza has produced a blatant disregard for the mission of the UN, including outrageous attacks on (UNRWA) employees, facilities, and operations. He added that these attacks must stop and the world must act to hold the perpetrators accountable. He emphasized that UNRWA is not the only UN agency facing danger and that the world should act decisively against unlawful attacks on the United Nations, not just for Gaza and the Palestinians, but for all nations. (June 30, 2024)

- UN humanitarians [said](#) that ongoing heavy fighting in northern Gaza has now forced an estimated 84,000 people to flee eastern Gaza City in a matter of days, while also cutting off access to a key aid distribution hub. The UN reported that local residents said they survive by eating tree leaves or only having flour to sustain themselves. (July 1, 2024)
- Spokesman for the Secretary-General, Stéphane Dujarric, [stated](#) that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is witnessing a sharp deterioration, as tens of thousands of Palestinians are being displaced due to the recent military escalation. He added that it continues to be nearly impossible to distribute the humanitarian aid due to the lack of public order and safety, as well as ongoing hostilities, damaged roads, fuel shortages and access restrictions. Reports indicated that the Israeli authorities facilitated less than half of the 115 planned humanitarian assistance missions to northern Gaza (July 1, 2024).
- The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Ghebreyesus, [indicated](#) that the European Gaza Hospital is now completely empty - all 320 patients and all the medical personnel have evacuated. He confirmed that the hospital is out of service at a time when access to health care is urgently needed. Ghebreyesus stressed the urgent need to protect the Gaza European Hospital and make it operational immediately, and called for a ceasefire. Meanwhile, the Regional Director of the WHO for the Eastern Mediterranean, Hanan Balkhi, [called](#) for the establishment of medical evacuation corridors for sustained, organized, safe, and timely passage of critically ill patients from Gaza via all possible routes (July 2, 2024).
- The war in Gaza has unleashed a maelstrom of human misery, [Sigrid Kaag](#), the UN Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza, said to the Security Council. This led to the collapse of public health systems, the destruction of schools, and the threat to the education of future generations. She stressed the vital role of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in Gaza's recovery and reconstruction, calling for generous funding for these efforts to avoid disappointment for the people of Gaza. (July 2, 2024)
- UN top humanitarian official in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Andrea Di Domenico, [said](#) that the latest estimates indicate that 1.9 million people have been displaced in Gaza multiple times and that almost the entire population is in need of assistance. He estimated that between 300,000 and 350,000 people who are still in northern Gaza could not move to the south. (July 3, 2024)

- The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Margaret Satterthwaite, and the Special Rapporteur on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, Francesca Albanese, [issued](#) a statement condemning “decades of unfair trials” of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, whose rights to due process guarantees have been violated for 57 years. “The dual court system set up in the occupied West Bank, in violation of international law, has furthered legitimisation of the occupation and illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, through a militarily enforced, draconian penal system that is only applied to Palestinians,” they said. (July 3, 2024).
- UN humanitarians [warned](#) that following displacement orders affecting 250,000 people around Khan Younis, the European Gaza Hospital, including children in neonatal intensive care units, was evacuated. (July 3, 2024).
- The Government of Japan [is deeply concerned](#) about the reported authorization by the Government of Israel to legalize five outposts in the West Bank. Settlement activities are in violation of international law and undermine the viability of a two-state solution. It also strongly urges the Government of Israel to withdraw the decision and fully freeze its settlement activities. The Government of Japan is also seriously concerned about the rise in extremist settler violence committed against Palestinians, and calls on Israel to take appropriate measures to prevent violence by extremist settlers. The Foreign Ministries of [Norway](#), [Turkey](#), and [some other states](#) also condemned the decisions mentioned. Additionally, [the European Union \(EU\)](#) condemns the continued policies of dispossession and “de-facto annexation” implemented in the occupied West Bank, and stresses that actions weakening the Palestinian Authority must stop. (July 4, 2024)
- During a visit to Israel and affiliate Histadrut this week, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) General Secretary Luc Triangle [pressed](#) for a ceasefire, the increase of humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza, the return of all hostages and support of the rights of all workers in Israel and Palestine. (July 4, 2024)
- The Nordic countries, comprising Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, have [expressed](#) deep concern over the Israeli occupation government’s withholding of Palestinian clearance revenues. This action has exacerbated the already difficult financial situation of the Palestinian National Authority. The Nordic countries have called on Israel to release these funds. (July 4, 2024)
- The EU [is deeply concerned](#) about the Israeli army orders to evacuate civilians from the area of Khan Younis. Some 250,000 people are impacted by the evacuation orders. These orders also threaten the

patients of the European Hospital. Forced evacuations exacerbate an already catastrophic humanitarian situation. The EU reiterates that for evacuations not to amount to prohibited forcible transfers, they must conform with International Humanitarian Law, guaranteeing safety in transit and proper accommodation in areas of refuge for Palestinians called on to evacuate. Israel is likewise responsible for guaranteeing that displaced persons are able to return to their homes, or areas of habitual residence, once hostilities end. (July 5, 2024)

- The UN has [stated](#) that forced displacement has once again driven people in Gaza to seek safety where none exists. Thousands have left Khan Younis, setting up temporary shelters among the rubble and on the beach. Meanwhile, [UNRWA](#) continues to face severe obstacles in its efforts to deliver aid. According to UNRWA, some individuals in the Gaza Strip have been displaced nine or ten times. (July 5, 2024)
- WHO Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus has [warned](#) of a catastrophic risk to Gaza's healthcare system due to fuel shortages. Ghebreyesus stated that “only 90,000 liters of fuel entered Gaza” on Wednesday, while the healthcare sector alone “needs 80,000 liters daily.” This situation forces the UN, including the WHO and its partners, to make impossible choices. (July 5, 2024)

Publications of human rights NGOs

- Human Rights Watch (HRW) [stated](#) that all victims of gross human rights violations in Palestine and Israel are owed reparation. It emphasized that governments responsible for abuses are obliged to provide effective remedies for human rights violations, including through truth, justice, compensation, memorialization, and guarantees of non-recurrence. HRW also called on all other states to pressure the parties involved in the conflict to commit to providing these reparations. (July 1, 2024)
- The Palestinian Return Centre ([PRC](#)) [has sent a briefing to](#) the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food entitled, “Israeli genocide causing environmental disaster, aggravating drought and protracted famine.” PRC said that half of Gaza water sites have been damaged or destroyed by the Israeli occupation forces since Israel began a genocidal military campaign in Gaza. PRC has warned that the lack of clean water and flows of untreated sewage pose a serious threat to health. (July 1, 2024)

- The Palestinian Prisoner's Society [said](#) that the Israeli occupation authorities systematically and continuously use Palestinian civilians and detainees as human shields, and that the crimes and violations that were [documented recently](#) constitute an extension of old and systematic policies. It stressed that crimes against detainees, prisoners and their families have reached unprecedented levels in terms of intensity and brutality, including torture and sexual assaults (July 1, 2024)
- The Palestinian Football Association has [submitted](#) its legal arguments to FIFA's independent legal committee, demanding the suspension of the Israeli Football Association's membership in FIFA and its prohibition from any football activities. The association highlighted the extensive destruction of Palestinian sports and football infrastructure in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem due to Israeli military operations. It also addressed the destruction of sports facilities and stadiums, as well as the involvement of Israeli football elements in incitement to violence and support for the repressive practices of the Israeli government. (July 1, 2024) (links in English [here](#))
- The organization "Peace Now" has [criticized](#) the Israeli decision to promote the construction of 6,016 new housing units in settlements throughout the West Bank, viewing it as a move by the current government to dismantle any possibility of a political solution between Israelis and Palestinians. The organization also [criticized](#) the Israeli government's recent decision to designate 12,700 dunams in the Jordan Valley as state land. Additionally, it [condemned](#) the decision by the Jerusalem Municipality Court to demolish the Wadi Hilweh Information Center in Silwan and impose a fine of 20,000 shekels, stating that the municipality prioritizes the interests of settlers over the interests of all Jerusalem residents, whether Jewish or Arab. (July 3, 2024)
- Defense for Children International/Palestine [issued](#) a report titled, "Israeli authorities deny chronically ill Palestinian children from Gaza access to health care." Israeli authorities are systematically denying Palestinian children from the Gaza Strip access to medical treatment, separating them from their families as part of Israel's campaign of genocide against the Palestinian people. (July 3, 2024)
- In a letter addressed to UK Foreign Secretary, HRW [expressed](#) deep concern about the United Kingdom's continued issuance of arms export licenses to Israel despite its repeated violations of international humanitarian law. The letter urged the UK government to recognize the authority of the ICC in the Palestine case, protect the court's independence, and publicly condemn efforts to

- impede, intimidate, retaliate against, or interfere with the court's work, and correct its arms sales policy to Israel based on these humanitarian law violations. (July 3, 2024)
- **ACAP [issued](#) a report providing an analysis of the humanitarian situation in the West Bank since 7 October 2023, with a particular focus on developments and expected impacts of the crisis in it (July 4, 2024).**
 - **Oxfam has [stated](#) that Israel is breaching international humanitarian law by forcing 250,000 Palestinians in Gaza into a "death trap" without food, water, or shelter. This statement refers to the recent evacuation order issued by Israel, which calls for a quarter of a million people east of Khan Younis to leave, in violation of the Geneva Convention. (July 4, 2024)**
 - **Aid agencies, including Oxfam, [issued](#) an urgent call for international action due to the dramatic increase in Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank where the number of settler attacks on Palestinian exceeded to a thousand. They indicated that the attacks were coordinated and supported by the Israeli government. The agencies called on the international community to take concrete measures to protect Palestinian communities, hold Israel accountable, support the removal of settlements, and endorse a rights-based approach. (July 5, 2024)**
 - **In a statement titled, "Who will stop Israel's illegal annexations of Palestinian land?" the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) [condemned](#) Israel's plans to annex and expand illegal settlements in the West Bank. These actions constitute war crimes under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The FIDH declared that third-party states must exert all necessary efforts to end Israeli settler colonialism and apartheid, and to realize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. (July 5, 2024)**
 - **Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) has [published](#) a fact sheet on the issue of recognizing the State of Palestine under international law. The document covers Palestine's rights at the UN, the recent wave of recognition by European countries, Canada's position, and how recognition affects the Palestinian right to self-determination. (July 5, 2024)**

Opinion Pieces and features

- **EJIL:TALK! [published](#) an article by Dr. Aldo Zammit Borda, entitled: "Applications for Arrest Warrants in the Situation in Palestine: In Defence of the Legal Process" (July 3, 2024).**

- The Australian Institute of International Affairs [published](#) an article by Dr. Peter Bartu, entitled: “Bitter Harvest: Israel-Palestine’s Inevitable Outcome?” (July 3, 2024).
- EJIL:TALK! [published](#) an article by researchers Lea Köhne and Vincent Widdig, entitled: “A quest for transparency in arms exports: The Berlin administrative court’s stance on exports of arms to Israel” (July 3, 2024).
- The Walrus [published](#) an article by Raja G. KHouri and Jeffery J. Wilkinson, entitled: “What Would a Two-State Solution Mean?” (July 5, 2024).
- Green Peace [published](#) an article by Farah al Hattab, entitled: “Scorched-earth: making Gaza uninhabitable for generations to come” (July 5, 2024).

Human rights conferences and events

- The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) [convened](#) the 2024 Symposium on the Question of Jerusalem “Jerusalem and the Gaza War: Palestinian Identity and Existence Under Threat of Erasure” at OIC Headquarters, Jeddah. The joint event highlighted Israel’s policies of forced displacement and dispossession of the Palestinian people in the City through accelerated “Judaization”, in the context of similar efforts elsewhere in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), and particularly in light of Israel’s ongoing war in Gaza. (July 1, 2024)

Upcoming human rights opportunities and events

- Maynooth University in Ireland, along with several partners, has [announced](#) its intention to host a seminar titled: “The Situation in Palestine: Emerging Domestic and International Jurisprudence,” on July 9, 2024. The event will be held in person, with online streaming available. The seminar will cover unprecedented legal developments related to Palestine, including South Africa's case against Israel in the ICJ concerning genocide, various other international and domestic lawsuits, and the latest proceedings by the ICC against war crimes. Key speakers will include Raji Sourani and Professor William Schabas, along with other prominent practitioners and scholars. For registration, [here](#). (July 5, 2024)