

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

- **The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [has called](#) for urgent international intervention to halt the crimes and violations being committed by extremist settler groups against Palestinian citizens in the West Bank and Jerusalem. The Ministry highlighted that these attacks—such as burning agricultural lands, damaging vehicles, and taking control of main roads—are being carried out with the protection of the Israeli occupation army and the support of Ministers Smotrich and Ben Gvir. It also [deemed](#) the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque by extremist settlers, under the protection of occupying forces, as illegal. This act is part of the ongoing Israeli efforts to target Jerusalem and its holy sites, aiming to exert complete control over the city and Judaize it. The Ministry urged the UN Security Council to enforce its resolutions, and called on states to designate these settler organizations as terrorist groups and to prosecute those responsible for war crimes. (August 11, 2024)**
- **The Palestinian National Council [condemned](#) the Israeli occupation's aggression in the city of Tubas and the town of Tammun, calling for an international investigation into these crimes. This includes the**

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reported use of civilians, especially women and children, as human shields, as [highlighted](#) by the Israeli newspaper Haaretz. (August 14, 2024)

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- During a Security Council session on the situation in the Middle East, Ambassador Riyad Mansour, the Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, [stated](#) that Israel is responding to international efforts for a ceasefire with new massacres, such as the recent one at Al-Taba'een School. Mansour also announced that Palestine will soon address the UNGA to ensure the implementation of the International Court of Justice's rulings and to take concrete steps to end the illegal actions. (August 14, 2024)
- The Palestinian National Council [condemned](#) the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to transfer lands in the Bethlehem Governorate for the benefit of the "Nahal Heltz" outpost, which is being developed into a settlement. It said that this, along with other actions by the Netanyahu government, amounts to ethnic cleansing aimed at expelling Palestinian citizens and Judaizing their land. The Council also [denounced](#) the recent attack by settlers on the village of Jit, east of Qalqilya. It called on the international community and the Security Council to hold the leaders of these settler groups accountable and to stop the attacks, while affirming the Palestinians' right to resist displacement and ethnic cleansing. (August 15-16, 2024)

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

- Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir [stressed](#) the need to continue pressuring Hamas until it surrenders completely, while halting the transfer of humanitarian aid and fuel to Gaza until all the hostages are returned. He also called for encouraging immigration and occupying the territory of the Strip to keep it under permanent Israeli control. (August 11, 2024)
- The Israeli military prosecution and defense have [agreed](#) to release the five defendants involved in the sexual abuse of a Palestinian detainee at the Sde Teiman detention center, placing them under house arrest. The defense [claimed](#) that the suspects are reserve soldiers with families and do not pose a threat to the public. A medical report was presented, suggesting that no rape occurred and that the harm was allegedly caused by a foreign object the detainee inserted himself. (August 13, 2024)

- An investigation based on testimonies from soldiers and officers who served in the Israeli military during operations in Gaza since October 7, 2023, has [revealed](#) that the Israeli military used Palestinian civilians, including minors and the elderly, as human shields during its operations in the Gaza Strip. According to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, these civilians were detained and forced to inspect tunnels and homes suspected of containing explosives before Israeli soldiers entered. (August 13, 2024)
- The Israeli Civil Administration has [allocated](#) a plot of land for the establishment of the first new settlement in the West Bank since 2017. Approximately 148 acres of land have been designated for the "Nahal Heletz" settlement, located southwest of Jerusalem and west of Bethlehem. This follows the Israeli government's approval last June to establish the settlement and retroactively legalize four other outposts. (August 15, 2024)
- The Israeli military has [issued](#) a new evacuation order for Palestinians in northern Khan Younis and eastern Deir al-Balah, further reducing the boundaries of the Israeli-designated humanitarian zone. According to the military claim, this decision is due to numerous acts of terrorism, the exploitation of the humanitarian zone for terror activities, and the firing of rockets at Israel from neighborhoods in northern Khan Younis, making it increasingly dangerous to remain in these areas. (August 16, 2024)

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

- The prime minister of the Republic of Ireland, Taoiseach Simon Harris, [expressed](#) his deep concern regarding the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and the receding access to aid. He strongly condemned the heavy casualties among civilians, in particular, the bombing of 490 schools, the last of which was Al-Taba'een school in Gaza, and he called for an immediate ceasefire. He called for a review of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Israel. For his part, Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob [welcomed](#) Harris' statement, stressing the need for an urgent review of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Israel. (August 11, 2024)
- The German Federal Foreign Office [called](#) for an end to the repeated Israeli army attacks on schools in Gaza, describing reports from the region as "terrible", stressing that the killing of civilians seeking

protection is unacceptable and must be investigated quickly. The office stressed the need to respond urgently to calls for a humanitarian ceasefire and the release of hostages in accordance with the proposal of the United States, Egypt and Qatar. Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong [condemned](#) the killing of civilians as a result of the Israeli attack on the Al-Taba'een School, and said, "Innocent Palestinians cannot continue to pay the price for the defeat of Hamas". She called for Israel to comply with international humanitarian law, renewing her call for an immediate ceasefire. (August 11, 2024)

- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Mélanie Joly, [stated](#) that "Canada condemns the Israeli strike that killed Palestinian civilians sheltering at a school in Gaza, including children.". She stressed that Israel should respect international humanitarian law, and that there is an immense need for an immediate ceasefire, alongside the release of hostages. (August 11, 2024)
- Germany [condemned](#) Israel's decision to deprive Norwegian diplomats of the basis for their work in the Palestinian territories, which applies both to consular activities and to political cooperation with the Palestinian Authority. It added that this is not only a bilateral issue between Norway and Israel, but also a further setback on the way to a two-state solution. (August 11, 2024)
- High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, strongly [condemned](#) the statements made by Israeli Minister [Itamar Ben-Gvir](#) calling for cutting fuel and aid to civilians in Gaza. Borrell pointed out that these statements, along with those made by Minister Bezalel Smotrich, amount to incitement to war crimes. He called for sanctions to be placed on the EU agenda. Borrell also urged "the Israeli government to unequivocally distance itself from these incitements" and "to engage in good faith in negotiations facilitated by the United States, Qatar, and Egypt for an immediate ceasefire." (August 11, 2024)
- UN Secretary-General António Guterres [condemned](#) the continued loss of life in Gaza and reiterated his urgent call for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages. (August 12, 2024)
- UNRWA [stated](#) that the Geneva Conventions have been blatantly violated on a daily basis over the past 10 months in Gaza by both Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups. UNRWA also noted the failure of Member States to fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring adherence to these conventions. The agency called for a reaffirmation of shared values, adherence to international humanitarian law,

and emphasized the importance of protecting civilians and critical infrastructure in conflicts. (August 12, 2024)

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- The leaders of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom [welcomed](#) the ongoing efforts of their partners in Qatar, Egypt, and the United States to secure a ceasefire agreement and the release of hostages. They expressed support for [the joint statement](#) issued by their partners, which called for an end to the suffering of Gaza's populations, the hostages, and their families, and urged for the achievement of a ceasefire and the release of all hostages and detainees. (August 12, 2024)
 - The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [condemned](#) the intrusion of Israeli extremist ministers Ben Gvir and Vassarlov, along with members of the Knesset, into the Al-Aqsa Mosque under the protection of the occupation police. The Ministry described this as a blatant violation of international law and Jerusalem's historical and legal status quo. It stressed the need for a firm international stance to condemn these violations and ensure protection for the Palestinian people, emphasizing that the entire Al-Aqsa Mosque belongs to Muslims and that the Jordanian Jerusalem Waqf Administration is the sole legal authority responsible for it. [Egypt](#) has also reiterated this position. (August 13, 2024)
 - During a UN Security Council session, two UN officials [emphasized](#) that the devastating Israeli attack on the Al-Tabeen School in Gaza City highlighted the urgent need for a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and an increase in humanitarian aid to Gaza. (August 13, 2024)
 - Deputy UN spokesman Farhan Haq, responding to reporters' questions about Israeli Minister Ben Gvir entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and praying there, [stated](#) that the UN opposes any attempts to alter the status quo of Jerusalem's religious sites. He added that such actions are unhelpful and provocative. (August 13, 2024)
 - [The United States](#) and [Spain](#) strongly condemned the "visit" of Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir to the al-Aqsa Mosque, which showed blatant disregard for the historical status quo regarding the holy sites in Jerusalem. In the same context, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, [expressed](#) that the EU strongly condemns these provocations. (August 13, 2024)
 - UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [said](#) that 625,000 children in Gaza have lost a school year, including 300,000 UNRWA students. Lazzarini added: "Nearly 70% of UNRWA schools have been hit, highlighting the blatant disregard for international humanitarian law. 95% of these schools were being used as shelters for displaced people when they were hit". He further stressed that "The impact

of this war on children, particularly their mental and psychosocial wellbeing, is tremendous and will have lasting consequences.” (August 14, 2024)

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- The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [condemned](#) the Israeli government's resolutions and actions that continue the occupation of Palestinian land through the expansion and legitimization of settlements. The latest of these actions was the approval of a scheme to expand a new settlement outpost, which represents a blatant defiance and serious violation of international law and international legitimacy resolutions. The Ministry's spokesman, Sufian Al-Aquda, emphasized the need for Israel, as the occupying power, to fulfill its responsibilities under international law and cease its settlement plans. (August 14, 2024)
- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) [welcomed](#) Japan's contribution of JPY 400 million (US \$2.5 million), which will help provide emergency food assistance to Palestinians affected by Gaza conflict and violence in the West Bank. (August 14, 2024)
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF have [issued](#) a warning about the high risk of polio spreading in Gaza unless there is an urgent response. They stressed the need for at least two rounds of oral polio vaccination to halt the virus's transmission. This warning follows the detection of vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 in sewage samples from Khan Younis and Deir Al-Balah last July. The UN health agency noted that while Gaza had strong polio vaccine coverage before the conflict, months of fighting have created an environment where the weakened virus from the vaccine could mutate into a more virulent form capable of causing paralysis in those who are not fully immunized. (August 14, 2024)
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, [condemned](#) the ongoing killing in Gaza, calling the loss of 40,000 Palestinian lives a grim milestone for the world. Turk highlighted that this tragedy stems from the repeated failure of Israeli forces to adhere to the rules of war. He emphasized that the Israeli military's destruction of Gaza's civilian infrastructure -such as homes, hospitals, and schools- was shocking. Türk urged “all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire,” stressing the need to end the illegal occupation and that “the internationally agreed two-State solution must become a reality.” (August 15, 2024)
- British Foreign Secretary David Lammy [underscored](#) the importance of the ongoing ceasefire negotiations and the hostage deal in Gaza. He emphasized the catastrophic situation in Gaza and the urgent need for a ceasefire to protect civilians and facilitate the release of hostages. Lammy also reaffirmed the United Kingdom's commitment to using diplomatic channels to achieve a ceasefire and

commended the efforts of international partners, including Qatar, Egypt, the United States, and others, in coordinating these negotiations. He urged all parties to negotiate flexibly and in good faith to reach a prompt agreement.

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- The U.S. government [announced](#) that Secretary of State Antony Blinken will travel to Israel to continue intensive diplomatic efforts to conclude the agreement for a ceasefire and release of hostages and detainees through the bridging proposal presented by the United States, with support from Egypt and Qatar. It stated that this proposal would achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, secure the release of all hostages, ensure humanitarian assistance is distributed throughout Gaza, and create the conditions for broader regional stability. (August 16, 2024)
- High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, [condemned](#) settlers' attacks on the village of Jit east of Qalqilya, saying "Day after day, in an almost total impunity, Israeli settlers fuel violence in the occupied West Bank, contributing to endanger any chance of peace." He added that "the Israeli government must stop these unacceptable actions immediately," confirming his "intention to table a proposal for EU sanctions against violent settlers' enablers, including some Israeli government's members." (August 16, 2024)
- Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide [said](#) that his government considers the Netanyahu government's decision to no longer facilitate Norway's representation to the Palestinian Authority "to be extreme and unreasonable." He added that "this decision seeks to target the Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority and all those who defend international law, the two-state solution and the Palestinians' legitimate right to self-determination." Eide confirmed "We will do our utmost to ensure that this does not affect our work for Palestine and for a viable Palestinian state." (August 16, 2024)
- The UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, [condemned](#) the settlers' attack on the village of Jit east of Qalqilya. He emphasized the urgent need for concrete steps to ensure full accountability for all those involved. Wennesland also urged the Israeli government to stop settler violence. (August 16, 2024)
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF have [urged](#) all parties involved in the Gaza Strip conflict to implement seven-day humanitarian pauses to facilitate two rounds of vaccination campaigns. These pauses would enable children and families to safely access health facilities and allow community outreach workers to reach children who cannot get to health facilities for polio vaccination. The organizations emphasized that without these humanitarian pauses, the vaccination

campaign cannot proceed. [UNRWA](#) has also supported the call for a humanitarian pause, highlighting the urgent need for a ceasefire. (August 16, 2024)

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- In light of the new evacuation orders issued by Israeli authorities within the so-called "humanitarian zone" in Gaza, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) [stated](#) that fear spreads as families have nowhere to go. The agency noted that Palestinians in Gaza are "trapped in an endless nightmare of death and destruction on a staggering scale." UNRWA stressed that what is urgently needed in Gaza is an immediate ceasefire. (August 16, 2024)
- Germany [condemned](#) the violence carried out by extremist settlers who attacked and set fire to a Palestinian village in the West Bank, resulting in the death of a Palestinian. The German government declared that this violence is unacceptable and that the attacks must cease immediately. Germany emphasized that Palestinians have the right to live in safety and that Israel has a duty to protect Palestinians in the West Bank, halt these attacks, and prosecute the perpetrators. There must be no impunity for such acts of violence. (August 16, 2024)
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) [reported](#) that the recent evacuation order issued by the Israeli military has reduced the Israeli-designated humanitarian area in the Gaza Strip to just 11 percent. The new evacuation order affects six blocks in Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis, including two within the designated humanitarian area. Over 120 displacement sites, which host approximately 170,000 people, are impacted by this order. Additionally, the new evacuation order affects humanitarian facilities, including a World Food Programme warehouse. The situation is exacerbated by an existing major shortage of storage capacity in Gaza, which impedes the ability to receive and distribute aid. (August 16, 2024)
- UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Alice Jill Edwards [condemned](#) the latest allegations of sexual torture by Israeli soldiers on a Palestinian man detained by Israel. The independent UN expert called for all alleged crimes committed within the context of this terrible war to be investigated transparently and impartially and for those responsible to be held accountable by civilian courts of law. She added, "This alleged sexual torture involving multiple offenders is particularly gruesome. In an official meeting with Israeli authorities, I have been informed that several soldiers suspected of involvement have been identified and are currently under investigation." (August 16, 2024)
- The spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ravina Shamdasani, [stated](#) that the killing that occurred in the Palestinian village of Jit is not an isolated attack, but rather

a direct consequence of Israel's policy of occupation. She noted that the Commission has been publishing reports over the past years about settlers attacking Palestinian communities in their territories in the West Bank with impunity. She added, "This really is the crux of the matter, the impunity that the perpetrators of such actions have been enjoying." (August 16, 2024)

- **United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres [warned](#) of the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza due to the spread of the polio virus, which threatens hundreds of thousands of children. He announced that the United Nations is preparing to launch a crucial vaccination campaign targeting over 640,000 children under the age of ten. Guterres urged all parties to provide immediate humanitarian assurances to halt the fighting and ensure the success of the campaign. (August 16, 2024)**

[Publications of human rights NGOs](#)

- **The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor [called](#) for the dismissal of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Ms. Alice Gill Edwards, due to her bias and deliberate failure to carry out her assigned responsibilities and not addressing, in an unbiased and efficient manner, the serious crimes committed against Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli jails and detention facilities (August 11, 2024)**
- **Fitch Ratings [downgraded](#) Israel's credit rating to "A" with a negative outlook, citing the impact of the ongoing war in Gaza and increasing geopolitical risks, which raise the likelihood of future downgrades. The agency predicted that the budget deficit would rise to 7.8% of GDP in 2024 due to military spending and the costs of mitigating economic damage, while regional tensions and escalating conflicts between Israel and Iran and its allies continue to put pressure on credit indicators. Fitch also forecasted that the debt-to-GDP ratio would increase to 72% by 2025. (August 12, 2024)**
- **The Palestinian Centre for Israeli Studies, "Madar," [published](#) a report on the "Order 9 Movement," a settler group led by Yusuf and Rayut Ben-Haim from the settlement of Netivot. The group's objective is to block humanitarian assistance from entering the Gaza Strip, operating under the slogan "No aid until the last hostages return." (August 12, 2024)**
- **The Palestinian Football Association (PFA) strongly [condemned](#) the detention, search, and investigation of Jibril Rajoub, the head of the PFA, upon his return from the Paris Olympics. The PFA**

described this Israeli action as a stark reminder of the documented crimes against Palestinian sports, which include killings, injuries, destruction of infrastructure, and the banning of sports activities. The Asian Football Confederation also [condemned](#) the incident. (August 14, 2024)

Opinion Pieces and features

- Declassified UK [published](#) an opinion piece by John Lubbock titled: "How Pro-Israel Groups Shape Global Media Coverage of Palestine." (August 13, 2024)
- Le Monde [published](#) an article by Jean-Pierre Filiu titled "When Napoleon seized Gaza hoping to conquer Palestine." (August 13, 2024)
- The Arab Center Washington DC [released](#) a report by Yara M Asi titled: "A Cycle of Deprivation": The Challenges of Getting Humanitarian Aid into Gaza." (August 14, 2024)
- The New Arab [published](#) an analytical article by Shahla Omar titled: "Germany's new citizenship law: A crackdown on pro-Palestine support?" (August 14, 2024)
- +972 Magazine [published](#) an article by Yousef Al-Jamal titled: "The daily battles to survive the Gaza genocide." (August 14, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an article by Gideon Levy titled: "In Gaza, Israel's Dehumanization of the Palestinians Has Reached a New Height." (August 14, 2024)
- The Washington Post [published](#) an analytical article by Louisa Lovelock, Claire Parker, Sufian Taha, and Lorenzo Tognoli titled: "Israel is Redrawing the West Bank, Cutting Into a Prospective Palestinian State." (August 15, 2024)
- The Guardian [published](#) an opinion piece by Peter Kuras titled: "'From the river to the sea': six words that are testing freedom of speech in Germany." (August 16, 2024)

Human rights conferences and events

- Seven NGOs have [launched](#) a petition urging the German government to take decisive action to end the conflict in Gaza. They are calling for a ban on arms exports, increased pressure on Israel to lift the blockade and facilitate humanitarian access, and an end to illegal settlement construction. The petition also demands support for international justice, pressure to release detainees, and protection of the rights to freedom of expression and assembly. (August 14, 2024)