

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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Prepared by: Razwan Issa, Nour Kharouf, Arwa Abdel Moniam, Kamal Abdulkarim

Translation: Mai Shaheen and Ferdous Abdul Hamid

Editing: Nardeen Khalid

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 National Council [condemned](#) the bombing of Musa bin Nusair School, which sheltered displaced persons in Gaza, and the attack on Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia, under siege for over 80 days. It urged the international community, the UN, and WHO to intervene to protect civilians and health facilities and hold the occupation accountable for its crimes. The Council also condemned the killing of five journalists in Nuseirat camp, calling it a deliberate effort to silence truth, target journalists, and violate international law. (December 22, 2024)**
- **[The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates \(MOFAE\)](#), the [Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs](#), and the [Palestinian National Council](#) strongly condemned Israel's extremist National Security Minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, for his incursion into Al-Aqsa mosque under the protection of the occupying forces. They called on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities in protecting the holy sites. (December 26, 2024)**

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- The Palestinian Presidency [condemned](#) the grave crime committed by the Israeli occupation army in burning Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza, which serves more than 400,000 people. The Presidency described the arson attack as an unmistakable part of the ongoing genocide and forced displacement against the Palestinian people. Additionally, the Palestinian Ministry of Health [appealed](#) to the international community for urgent intervention to protect patients, medical staff, and treatment centers in Gaza, particularly Kamal Adwan Hospital, where 350 individuals are currently present, without communication channels amid escalating assaults. (December 27, 2024)

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

- The Israeli Foreign Ministry [denounced](#) Pope Francis' [recent statements](#). The Ministry said that these remarks are “particularly disappointing as they are disconnected from the true and factual context of Israel’s fight against jihadist terrorism – a multi-front war that was forced upon it starting on October 7.” It further added, “Enough with the double standards and the singling out of the Jewish state and its people”. (December 22, 2024)
- National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir [published](#) a photo of himself at Al-Aqsa Mosque, writing: “I went up this morning to the place of our holy temple, to pray for the safety of our soldiers, the speedy return of the hostages, and total victory, with the help of God.” In response to Ben-Gvir’s statement, the Israeli Prime Minister’s Office [issued](#) a statement confirming that, “The status quo on the Temple Mount has not changed.” (December 26, 2024)

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

- Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini, [stated](#) that the recent military escalation over the past 24 hours has resulted in more civilian casualties, with attacks on schools and hospitals becoming commonplace and constituting a blatant violation of international humanitarian laws. He emphasized that the international community must not become numb, asserting that it is time for decisive action after prolonged delays. Meanwhile, UNRWA [released](#) a report highlighting the damage sustained by many of its schools due to military attacks. According to preliminary analysis based on satellite imagery, approximately 70% of buildings across the Gaza Strip have been damaged or destroyed. (December 22, 2024)

- The spokesperson for UNRWA, Adnan Abu Hasna, [warned](#) that Sweden's decision to cut its funding for the agency will have a significant and detrimental impact on education across the five regions. He noted that the decision comes amid Norway seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding Israel's efforts to restrict the operations of UNRWA. (December 22, 2024)
- UNICEF has [stated](#) that the war in Gaza has had catastrophic effects on children and families, with children being killed at an alarming rate. According to the latest estimates from the Palestinian Ministry of Health, at least 14,000 children have been killed, and thousands more injured. UNICEF stressed that Gaza's children have endured unimaginable trauma and urgently called for an immediate ceasefire. Similarly, UNRWA [underscored](#) that the toll is not just numbers but lives tragically cut short, emphasizing that surviving children are enduring physical and emotional pain, are deprived of education, and “sift through the rubble”. (December 22, 2024)
- UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Tom Fletcher, [described](#) Gaza as the most dangerous place in the world for humanitarian workers, with the highest number of aid workers killed in a single year, making assistance delivery nearly impossible. He noted that Israeli authorities have consistently blocked humanitarian workers from accessing those in need in the northern Gaza Strip, with over 100 requests for access denied since October 6. Additionally, Mr. Fletcher highlighted the collapse of the rule of law in Gaza, citing armed looting of UN and humanitarian supplies. (December 23, 2024)
- Commenting on [reports](#) from Gaza detailing the horrors of Israel's detention facility at Ofer Camp -ranging from deadly beatings and electric shocks to constant handcuffing and skin diseases-, UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt), Francesca Albanese, [stated](#) that “today torture is part of the intended destruction of the Palestinian people,” confirming that “inflicting bodily or mental harm against members of the group... is a genocidal act.” Albanese further emphasized that “Israel has tortured Palestinians for decades, as widely documented by rights organizations such as Amnesty International, Al-Haq, Addameer, B'Tselem, and even UNICEF”. (December 23, 2024)
- An internal EU report by the EU's Special Representative for Human Rights, Olof Skoog, obtained by *The Intercept*, [showed](#) evidence of possible war crimes in Gaza, including accusations of genocide, which could put European ministers at risk of accountability in international courts. The report noted that Israeli attacks on civilians in Gaza could constitute war crimes and crimes

against humanity, accusing Israeli officials of using dehumanizing language that may contribute to evidence of intent to commit genocide. Despite the report's recommendation, the European Union foreign ministers rejected a call to end arms sales to Israel. (December 23, 2024)

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- **The Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector in the League of Arab States, Ambassador Dr. Haifa Abu-Ghazaleh, [stated](#) that a shipment of necessary medicines has been prepared for Gaza, stressing the need to immediately allow the entry and access of humanitarian and health aid into the Gaza Strip. (December 23, 2024)**
- **The International Court of Justice has [received](#) a request from the UNGA, through the United Nations Secretary-General to issue an advisory opinion, based on Resolution A/RES/79/232, dated December 19, 2024. The resolution requests the Court to provide an advisory opinion on "Israel's obligations as an occupying power and a member of the United Nations concerning the presence and activities of the United Nations, including its agencies and bodies, other international organizations, and third states, in the occupied Palestinian territories and in relation to them." The ICJ [issued](#) an order regarding the advisory request, setting February 28, 2025, as the deadline for the submission of written statements by the concerned states. (December 23, 2024)**
- **The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the oPt [issued](#) an update on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, where the northern Gaza area remains under near-total siege. Since December 1, 48 out of 52 attempts by the United Nations to coordinate humanitarian access have been denied, while the four approved attempts faced obstacles. Central and southern Gaza are suffering from critical shortages in flour and other essential supplies, alongside exorbitant costs and limited opportunities to resume small-scale agriculture. UNICEF has also uncovered that in the City of Gaza, there are only three ventilators available for children. Premature babies and patients are facing shortages of medical supplies, while Israeli aerial, ground, and naval attacks tear across the Strip. (December 24, 2024)**
- **OCHA has [warned](#) that attacks on hospitals in northern Gaza are having a devastating impact on civilians still trapped in the besieged areas. OCHA expressed deep concerns over reports that the Israeli army had forced entry into the Indonesian Hospital in northern Gaza and led to its evacuation. Reports have also emerged of attacks on Al-Awda and Kamal Adwan Hospitals, which are still operating on a limited scale. This comes as the Israeli siege on Beit Hanoun, Beit**

Lahia, and parts of Jabalia in northern Gaza continues for the 79th consecutive day. (December 24, 2024)

- **The Government of Japan has [distributed](#) an additional aid package to Palestine worth approximately \$100 million in order to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza.** (December 24, 2024)
- **OCHA [reported](#) that Israeli authorities continue to block and restrict most humanitarian aid missions in the Gaza Strip. Out of 12 UN requests to coordinate humanitarian operations, six were outright denied, three were canceled due to security or logistical challenges, one was approved but faced obstacles, and two missions were facilitated and successfully carried out.** (December 26, 2024)
- **OCHA oPt [stated](#) that Israeli forces killed 20 Palestinians in the West Bank in the last 10 days (17-26 December), including at least 12 in airstrikes, and caused extensive infrastructural damage in Tulkarm's refugee camps. Additionally, Israeli forces killed three Palestinians attempting to cross through "informal openings in the West Bank Barrier."** (December 26, 2024)
- **The Foreign Ministries of [Egypt](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), [Jordan](#), [Kuwait](#), [League of Arab States](#), [Arab Parliament](#), [the Organization of Islamic Cooperation](#), and [the Gulf Cooperation Council](#) have strongly condemned the armed raid of Al-Aqsa Mosque compound by Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the Arab Parliament and the Arab League stressed that these systematic violations represent a blatant assault and provocation of the feelings of Muslims around the world. Egypt, Jordan, and Kuwait have called the raid a transgression of the historical and legal status quo of Al-Aqsa Mosque, while Jordan argued these practices aim to impose temporal and spatial divisions on the mosque, stressing that Israel has no sovereignty over the occupied city of Jerusalem and its Islamic and Christian sanctities.** (December 26-27, 2024)
- **The World Health Organization (WHO) has [reported](#) that the attack on Kamal Adwan Hospital resulted in its complete shutdown, with key departments damaged due to the fire and destruction caused by the airstrike. The organization confirmed that 60 healthcare workers and 25 critically ill patients, including those on ventilators, remain inside the hospital. It called for an end to the horrific crimes and the protection of healthcare services, emphasizing the urgent need for a ceasefire.** (December 27, 2024)

- [The Organization of Islamic Cooperation](#), [the Gulf Cooperation Council](#), [the Arab Parliament](#), [the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), and [the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) strongly condemned the crime of burning Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern Gaza Strip by the Israeli occupation forces, stressing that it is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and horrific war crimes against the Palestinian people. The entities called for holding the perpetrators of the violations accountable and ensuring the protection of health facilities and medical personnel in Gaza. (December 27-28, 2024)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [said](#), “babies are freezing to death due to cold weather and lack of shelter. Meanwhile, blankets, mattresses & other winter supplies have been stuck in the region for months waiting for approval to get into Gaza.” He further called for an immediate ceasefire and the immediate flow of much-needed basic supplies, including winter supplies. (December 27, 2024)

Publications of human rights NGOs:

- The Peace Now Organization [reported](#) that, for the first time, Israeli settlers have established seven new settlement outposts over the past six months in Area B of the occupied West Bank. Although Area B is under Palestinian control under the Oslo Accords, the Organization emphasized that this settlement expansion is part of a broader annexation plan, as the outposts were set up without the Israeli Civil Administration taking any meaningful action to halt these activities. The report noted that these actions have led to the displacement of some Palestinian citizens due to settler attacks, with settlers later seizing their homes. It added that, after consolidating their control over Area C through systematic policies, including home demolitions and violence, settlers are now targeting Area B in an escalation aimed at expanding Israeli control. (December 22, 2024)
- Oxfam International [announced](#) that out of 34 aid trucks -granted access to northern Gaza to distribute food and water over two and a half months- only 12 trucks successfully completed this mission. The organization clarified that the Israeli occupation deliberately delays and systematically obstructs the arrival of the aid, and the IOF bombed schools -where residents sought refuge- hours after the distribution of assistance, while Gaza’s population suffers from a severe shortage of basic supplies. As described by Oxfam’s Director for Middle East and North Africa, Sally Abi-Khalil, “[despite] starvation being used relentlessly as a weapon of war, world leaders continue to do nothing”. (December 22, 2024)

- **Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights [appeals to](#) the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Tlaleng Mofokeng, to urgently intervene to protect hospitals and healthcare workers in Northern Gaza, from being systematically targeted by the IOF, particularly the Indonesian Hospital, Al-Awda Hospital, and Kamal Adwan Hospital. The organization characterizes the attacks as pursuance of the policy of ethnic cleansing and forced displacement carried out openly in front of the world's eyes. It emphasized that targeting hospitals constitutes a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The organization urged the international community to fulfill its responsibilities to protect the right to health, lift the siege on hospitals, and ensure the provision of medical supplies. (December 22, 2024)**
- **Haaretz [stated](#) that 70% of homes in Jabalia refugee camp -one of the most densely populated places in the world- were destroyed by Israeli forces, leaving it a 'ghost town'. According to Haaretz, the military operations, which began on October 5, 2024, are the third of their kind, with previous raids occurring in December 2023 and May 2024. It added that the few remaining buildings were heavily damaged under the "Generals Plan," a military strategy aimed at forcibly displacing Palestinians from the northern and southern regions of Gaza. (December 22, 2024)**
- **The Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) strongly [condemned](#) the repeated targeting of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza by the IOF. It emphasized that the continued attacks on homes and shelters housing civilians constitute a perpetuation of the crime of genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. PCHR stressed that Israel's disregard for calls to halt the genocide in Gaza is fuelled by the ongoing impunity granted by the United States and some Western allies, as well as the complicity of these states through provision of weapons, ammunition, and political support to Israel. (December 23, 2024)**
- **The Palestinian Prisoners' Club [condemned](#) the third extension of administrative detention for former Palestinian Legislative Council member Khalida Jarrar and her continued isolation for 134 days under harsh conditions in Neve Tirza prison. The organization described this as direct transgression on her life and a compound crime aimed at undermining her role as a human rights advocate. It called on the international community to take immediate action to end the occupation's brutal policies against male and female prisoners, which have escalated since the war of genocide, and to provide protection for them. (December 24, 2024)**
- **Deaths from starvation are likely to surpass famine levels in northern Gaza as soon as next month due to Israel's "near-total blockade" of food and other aid, the U.S. Famine Early Warning**

Systems Network (FEWS NET) [uncovers](#) in a [new report](#) . FEWS Net stated that unless Israel changes its policy, it expects the number of people dying of starvation and related ailments in northern Gaza to reach between two and 15 per day sometime between next month and March. (December 24, 2024)

- The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate [condemned](#) the massacre committed by the IOF, targeting the broadcast vehicle of Al-Quds Today channel. The massacre unravelled in front of Al-Awda Hospital in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, resulting in the martyrdom of five journalists. The Syndicate called on the international community to urgently provide protection for Palestinian journalists. It also [denounced](#) the arrest of journalist Osayd Amarna by the IOF at a military checkpoint around the City of Ramallah. (December 26, 2024)
- The International Commission to Support Palestinian Rights (ICSPR) strongly [decried](#) the IOF's continued deliberate targeting of journalists; aimed at preventing coverage, documentation and exposure of the ongoing genocide and ethnic cleansing. The Commission also documented Israeli warplanes bombing a vehicle belonging to Al-Quds TV journalists in front of Al-Awda Hospital in Nuseirat Refugee Camp, central Gaza Strip, resulting in the martyrdom of five journalists. (December 26, 2024)
- The Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugees Rights, 'BADIL,' [published](#) a short [film](#) titled: "Cessation of UNRWA: Elimination of Refugees' Rights," reflecting the voices of Palestinian refugees on the vital role of UNRWA in ensuring their protection, especially their right to humanitarian aid. The film contextualizes the latest legislations passed by the Israeli Knesset against UNRWA and highlights the impact that dismantling UNRWA will have on their respective communities and the Palestine refugee question at large. (December 26, 2024)

[Opinion Pieces and features:](#)

- The Irish Times [published](#) an article by Mark O'Connell titled: "The mystery is not why we Irish have responded to Israel's barbarism. It's why others have not". (December 21, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an editorial titled: "Israel Is Losing Its Humanity in Gaza." (December 22, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an op-ed by Yoel Elizur titled: 'When You Leave Israel and Enter Gaza, You Are God': Inside the Minds of IDF Soldiers Who Commit War Crimes". (December 23, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an analysis by Ben Samuels titled: "How Trump and the GOP Plan to Dismantle the U.S. pro-Palestinian Movement". (December 23, 2024)

- The Guardian [published](#) an op-ed by Nesrine Malik titled: “A consensus is emerging: Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. Where is the action?”. (December 23, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an article by Gideon Levy O’Connell titled: “From Auschwitz to Gaza, With a Stopover in The Hague”. (December 23, 2024)
- The Washington Post [published](#) an article by Yasmeen Abu Taleb Levy O’Connell titled: “Under Biden, a generational shift in U.S. views of Israel”. (December 23, 2024)
- Haaretz [published](#) an opening article titled: “Israel’s Violent Land-thieves Have Set Their Sights on Even More of the West Bank”. (December 25, 2024)
- PassBlue [published](#) an opinion article by Anton Ferreira and Damilola Banjo titled: “Suspend Israel From the General Assembly? Only as a Last Resort, Pakistan Says”. (December 26, 2024)

Legal Achievements/Impacts for Palestine:

- The Hind Rajab Foundation has [initiated](#) legal actions against Israeli war criminal Saar Hirshoren in Argentina and Chile, as well as targeting the entire 749th Combat Engineering Battalion at the ICC. The foundation demanded the immediate arrest of Saar Hirshoren by authorities in Argentina and Chile and called on the ICC to expedite its investigation into the 749 Combat Engineering Battalion and issue arrest warrants for its members. (December 26, 2024)

Human rights conferences and events:

- The “Psychoanalysts Talk Back” group [addressed](#) an open letter to psychoanalytic institutes and organizations, opposing the 444-day-long Palestinian genocide and criticized the silence of psychoanalytic institutions regarding the various crimes against humanity committed by Israel and its occupying forces. The letter called on institutions to make statements condemning genocide and to adopt the principles of boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS). It also stressed the importance of confronting racism and hostility against Palestinians within the psychoanalytic field and of providing an apology to those affected by institutional silence. (December 23, 2024)