

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 envoy to the International Court of Justice [stated](#) that Israel is deliberately targeting humanitarian organisations and carrying out a "campaign of genocide" against Palestinians in Gaza. He noted that Israeli forces have killed over 408 United Nations staff members—approximately 300 of them from UNRWA—as well as a significant number of paramedics. He stressed that these killings were intentional, not accidental. (April 28, 2025)
- The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has [called](#) for immediate and effective international intervention to halt the worsening famine in the Gaza Strip. It warned of the catastrophic collapse of living conditions for more than two million Palestinians, attributing the crisis to a systematic starvation policy being used as a weapon against civilians. The Ministry stressed that an immediate

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ceasefire and an end to acts of genocide are the only ways to ensure the continuous flow of humanitarian aid. It also [urged](#) the imposition of international sanctions on settler militias to stop their escalating violations in the West Bank, including attacks on Palestinian civilians carried out under Israeli political cover and with the protection of the occupation army. (April 28, 2025)

- The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has [condemned](#) the occupation's decision to shut down the offices of the Jerusalem Fund and Endowment in occupied Jerusalem, calling it a continuation of policies aimed at Judaizing the city, further restricting the lives of Jerusalemites, and pushing them toward forced displacement. The Ministry called for the international community to translate its broad consensus on the rights of the Palestinian people into concrete actions that would compel the occupying power to reverse its colonial policies and provide international protection, enabling Palestinians to exercise their right to self-determination. (28 April 2025)
- The Palestinian Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs [condemned](#) the Israeli occupation authorities for lighting up the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron with the colors of the Israeli flag. It stated that this act represents a new violation of the mosque's sanctity and is part of ongoing efforts to Judaize the site. The Ministry called on the international community and UNESCO to urgently intervene to stop the occupation's violations against Islamic holy sites. (April 30, 2025)

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

- Israel has [claimed](#) that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is "infiltrated by terrorism" and is misusing judicial institutions. This statement followed the opening of a week-long hearing at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Israel's humanitarian obligations toward the Palestinian people. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar [stated](#) that he accuse UNRWA, the United Nations, the Secretary-General, and "all those that weaponize international law and its institutions in order to deprive the most attacked country in the world – Israel – of its most basic right to defend itself". (April 28, 2025)

- The Times of Israel has [reported](#) that Israel is planning a significant shift in the way humanitarian aid is delivered in Gaza. Under the new plan, the current system of wholesale distribution and warehousing would be replaced by direct distribution, with international organizations and private security contractors handing out food boxes directly to individual Gazan families. The proposed mechanism would [operate](#) through an internationally governed foundation, supported by US-companies and philanthropic entities, and would exclude direct involvement of the Israeli military within aid distribution hubs. (May 2, 2025)

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

- In a statement before the International Court of Justice, UN Legal Counsel Eleanor Hammar-skjöld, speaking on behalf of Secretary-General António Guterres, [reported](#) that 295 UN personnel have been killed in Gaza since the war began on October 7, 2023. She emphasized that Israel is obligated to allow all UN bodies to carry out their essential activities for the benefit of the population living under occupation. (April 28, 2025)
- Jonathan Whittall, Head of Office for the UN's humanitarian coordination agency (OCHA), [stated](#) that "humanitarian agencies are unable to meet soaring needs following Israel's decision to cut all commercial and relief supplies." OCHA [added](#) that humanitarian operations remain severely restricted due to ongoing military operations and the continued ban on both aid and commercial goods, which has been in full effect for over eight weeks. (April 28, 2025)
- The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan, has been [barred](#) from publicly disclosing any new applications for arrest warrants in the court's Palestine case. Judges have ordered that such applications must remain confidential, prohibiting Khan from even acknowledging their existence or his intention to file them. The ruling comes as Khan prepares a new round of applications targeting Israeli suspects in connection with alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the occupied Palestinian territories. (April 28, 2025)

- During a hearing at the International Court of Justice, South Africa [asserted](#) that international law prohibits the use of starvation as a method of warfare, even under conditions of siege or blockade. It emphasized that Israel may not impose collective punishment on the protected Palestinian population, which it holds under unlawful occupation. Meanwhile, Malaysia [urged](#) the Court to clarify Israel's legal obligations as an occupying power and as a member of the United Nations with respect to the occupied Palestinian territories. (April 29, 2025)
- Representatives of the United Nations and Palestine [told](#) the International Court of Justice that Israel is violating international law by refusing to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza. Saudi Arabia also [renewed](#) its strong condemnation of the Israeli atrocities, stating that Israel has ignored the previous rulings issued by the Court. (April 29, 2025)
- The UN Human Rights chief Volker Türk [urged](#) the world to act swiftly to prevent the total collapse of life-saving support in Gaza, as the complete blockade of essential aid such as food and fuel enters its ninth week. Türk warned that “Any use of starvation of the civilian population as a method of war constitutes a war crime, and so do all forms of collective punishment.” He also criticized Israel's reported plan to designate Rafah governorate as a new “humanitarian zone,” warning that such a move could forcibly displace hundreds of thousands of civilians—among them children, women, and people with disabilities—into areas with no access to food or aid. (April 29, 2025)
- The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs [described](#) the Israeli authorities' decision to revoke travel permits for two French delegations as regrettable, counterproductive, and damaging to French-Israeli relations. France urged Israel to reverse the decision, emphasizing that it penalizes individuals working toward a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. (April 29, 2025)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [expressed](#) deep shock over the treatment of a UNRWA staff member in Gaza during detention, revealing that the individual had wished for death and was subjected to torture before being released. Lazzarini stated that UNRWA humanitarian workers are being met with brutality simply for fulfilling their duties. Since the war began in October 2023, more

than 50 staff members—including teachers, doctors, and social workers—have been detained and subjected to the most shocking and inhumane treatment. This includes beatings, being used as human shields, sleep deprivation, humiliation, threats to themselves and their families, and attacks by dogs. Coerced confessions were also extracted. Lazzarini underscored the urgent need for accountability for these crimes. (April 29, 2025)

- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) [said](#) that aid is ready to be brought into Gaza, just waiting for the crossings to reopen. The agency warned that essential supplies intended for people in desperate need are expiring while starvation intensifies. It noted that over 3,000 trucks carrying life-saving aid are waiting to enter the Strip. (April 29, 2025)
- The European Union [expressed](#) grave concern over the worsening situation in Gaza, calling for an immediate return to the ceasefire. It called for the immediate resumption of unimpeded humanitarian aid access and distribution, as well as the immediate restoration of electricity supply to Gaza. The EU stressed that , in exercising its right to self-defense, Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international and humanitarian law. The EU welcomes the launch of “the Global alliance for the implementation of the two-State solution.” The EU also strongly condemns the further escalation in the West Bank. (April 29, 2025)
- In a joint statement issued following the second Strategic Dialogue between their governments, Qatar and the United Kingdom [called](#) for an immediate return to a ceasefire in Gaza and emphasized the urgent need to establish a credible political path toward the creation of a Palestinian state. (April 29, 2025)
- United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres [warned](#) during a Security Council session that the two-State solution is nearing the point of no return. He urged international leaders to take bold and irreversible steps to preserve the prospects for lasting peace. Guterres stressed that “humanitarian aid is not negotiable,” and called for an immediate and sustained ceasefire, the unconditional release of all hostages, full humanitarian access, protection of UN personnel and

premises, and accountability for those responsible for attacks on humanitarian workers. He also condemned the deteriorating situation in the West Bank, citing forced displacement and home demolitions. (April 29, 2025)

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- Both the [Jordanian](#) and [Qatari](#) Ministries of Foreign Affairs condemned the Israeli occupation authorities' decision to shut down the Jerusalem Fund and Endowment. Qatar warned that such actions are part of a broader campaign of genocide against the Palestinian people. (April 29, 2025)
- Roland Friedrich, Director of UNRWA Affairs in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, [warned](#) that Israeli authorities have issued closure orders for six UNRWA-run schools in East Jerusalem, set to take effect within ten days. He warned that the closures threaten the right to education for around 800 students and constitute a violation of Israel's obligations under international law. (April 29, 2025)
- Speaking before the International Court of Justice, a U.S. official [stated](#) that it is lawful for Israel to restrict the operations of UN agencies it considers "non-neutral." The U.S. maintained that international law "does not impose unconditional obligations on an occupying power" concerning humanitarian aid delivered by the United Nations, international organizations, or third-party states. In contrast, Russia stated that UNRWA deserves a Nobel Peace Prize for its humanitarian work in Gaza and [asserted](#) that Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian territories are creating a "legal and humanitarian crisis." (April 30, 2025)
- Turkey [told](#) the International Court of Justice that Israel is using starvation as a weapon against civilians in Gaza and criticized the international community for its failure to halt the destruction and loss of life. It emphasized that the failure to enforce the law against Israel has led to chaos, disorder, and mass killings amounting to genocide. Indonesia [reaffirmed](#) its unwavering support for the Palestinian people's right to independence and expressed confidence that the Court's ruling will guide the General Assembly and member states in delivering justice to the Palestinian people. (April 30, 2025)

- **UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [warned](#) that the war of narratives continues, circulating unsubstantiated claims to undermine UNRWA, which serves as a lifeline for 2 million people. He added that Such claims are threatening the lives and wellbeing of UNRWA staff across the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank. Dehumanising and polarising statements further deepen people’s suffering. He cautioned that this propaganda aims at intimidating and fostering a hostile atmosphere to silence voices showing the ugliness of this brutal war. (April 30, 2025)**
- **A U.S. Senate panel [approved](#) an amendment to the “Antisemitism Awareness Act” introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, affirming that criticism of the Israeli government is not antisemitic. The panel also passed other amendments protecting free speech on college campuses, as well as one opposing student visa restrictions imposed during the Trump administration. (May 1, 2025)**
- **UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, [Tom Fletcher](#), [stated](#) that Israel’s two-month blockade on humanitarian aid to Gaza amounts to a deliberate policy that starves civilians, deprives them of medical care, and imposes harsh collective punishment. He stressed that “blocking aid kills” and underscored that, under international law, Israel—as the occupying power—is obligated to allow humanitarian assistance without conditions. (1 May 2025)**
- **The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office [warned](#) that Gaza’s healthcare system is on the brink of collapse, highlighting the urgent need to allow the entry of medical supplies, protect healthcare workers, and ensure that the sick and injured can leave Gaza for treatment. In the same context, Irish Foreign Minister Simon Harris [stated](#) that no aid has entered Gaza for over eight weeks. This is the longest ban on aid entering Gaza since the war began and is completely unacceptable. (1 May 2025)**
- **UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell [warned](#) that children in Gaza are facing daily risks of starvation, illness, and death due to the ongoing two-month blockade and the denial of humanitarian**

aid. She reported that over 75% of households lack access to adequate water for drinking or hygiene.

(2 May 2025)

- **UNRWA [confirmed](#) that its stocks of flour and food parcels have been completely depleted, along with approximately one-third of its remaining essential medical supplies. The agency emphasized that the available aid is severely insufficient due to ongoing restrictions on the entry of critical supplies.**

(May 2, 2025).

- **UN Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order, George Katrougalos, [stated](#) that The attack against the aid Freedom flotilla in international waters is a blatant violation of the International and Humanitarian Law, as well as the Law of the Sea. He called on all states to condemn this new assault on peace, multilateralism, and the democratic international order. UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, Francesca Albanese, [echoed](#) his concerns, expressing shock at the silence of political leaders in response to the attack on a civilian vessel delivering aid to a starving population.** (2 May 2025)

- **Norway [reiterated](#) that the use of starvation as a method of warfare is strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law. It emphasized that Israel is legally obligated to allow humanitarian aid to reach the Palestinian population. Norway's Minister of International Development stated that the country firmly opposes any plans that could lead to the forced displacement of Gaza's population and stressed that humanitarian assistance must not be manipulated to serve political or military goals.** (2 May 2025)

- **UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [stated](#) that Israeli forces have issued two additional demolition orders in the northern West Bank, threatening to destroy 106 homes across Tulkarm and Nur Shams refugee camps. He warned that this would result in the displacement of even more families and said the move reflects a growing pattern of mass demolitions targeting entire communities. Lazzarini stressed that such actions amount to collective punishment, which is strictly prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention.** (May 3, 2025)

- WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [described](#) the situation in Gaza as catastrophic. He emphasized that after two months of an aid blockade, there is no need to see images of emaciated children to understand that people are starving. He noted that children are already suffering from weakness and malnutrition with long-term health consequences, and reiterated his call for an immediate ceasefire. (May 3, 2025)
- UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders Mary Lawlor [condemned](#) Israel's refusal to [renew](#) the travel documents of Palestinian activist Omar Barghouti, a leading figure in the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. She stated that The crimes Israel is committing against the Palestinian people are only possible with international complicity. Omar has been a leading voice speaking against that for years. All States who say they support HRDs should be calling for his freedom of movement to be respected. (May 2, 2025)

Publications of human rights NGOs

- Amnesty International [released](#) its annual report, The State of the World's Human Rights 2023/2024, documenting Israeli practices in Gaza and the West Bank. The report accuses Israel of committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza and maintaining an apartheid regime and illegal occupation in the West Bank. (April 29, 2025)
- ActionAid International [reported](#) that the population of the Gaza Strip is suffering from acute shortages of food and medicine due to Israel's ongoing blockade, now in effect for more than 50 days. The organization noted a dramatic rise in malnutrition, with over 3,700 new cases of children suffering from acute malnutrition. It warned that the blockade is deepening the humanitarian crisis and pushing the population toward mass famine, stressing that by the time famine is officially declared, it will be far too late. ActionAid urged world leaders to move beyond words and take concrete action to pressure Israel to resume the flow of aid and secure a permanent end to the war. (April 29, 2025)

- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) [reported](#) that Palestinians in the occupied West Bank have been enduring severe hardships for the past 18 months. The organization emphasized that under international humanitarian law, the occupying power must ensure the protection of medical facilities and the provision of essential supplies. (April 29, 2025)
- On the occasion of May 1st, Palestinian trade and professional unions [issued](#) a statement urging intensified international efforts to end complicity in Israel's colonialism, apartheid regime, and ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people. The unions called on trade unions and workers' organizations worldwide to pressure governments and institutions to impose targeted sanctions—including a comprehensive military embargo—and to sever ties with companies complicit in violations of Palestinian rights. They also urged the declaration of workplaces as apartheid-free zones. (April 29, 2025)
- The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS" [condemned](#) the Israeli occupation forces' arrest of Palestinian journalist Ali Samoudi, a correspondent for Al-Quds newspaper. On the occasion of International Workers' Day, the center also [published](#) a [position paper](#) titled Destroying Livelihoods: Palestinian Workers as Victims of War and Blockade. (May 1, 2025)
- Amnesty International [affirmed](#) its position that Israel is committing genocide in the Gaza Strip through a two-month blockade that has prevented the entry of aid and essential goods. The organization condemned the policy as an act of collective punishment and a war crime involving the use of starvation as a weapon. Amnesty stated that Israel's actions aim at the physical destruction of the Palestinian people, turning Gaza into an inferno of death and devastation. (May 2, 2025)
- Save the Children [stated](#) that all that has entered Gaza is bombs and bullets. Instead of much needed food, clothing or tents to help children survive, airstrikes continue, killing, maiming and destroying the lives of children and their families. (May 2, 2025)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross(ICRC) [warned](#) that humanitarian aid in Gaza is on the verge of complete collapse. After two months of a complete blockade and six weeks of intense

fighting, civilians have been deprived of food, water, medicine, and basic services. Pascal Hundt, Deputy Director of ICRC operations, confirmed that Gaza's population is enduring relentless displacement and a sharp decline in health and living conditions. He cautioned that programs like ICRC's communal kitchens could only operate for a few more weeks and that medical supplies are dangerously limited. (May 2, 2025)

- The Freedom Flotilla Coalition [reported](#) that its [vessel](#), carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza, came under drone attack by Israeli forces outside Maltese waters. The assault caused a fire in the ship's bow and a breach in its hull. While all passengers were confirmed safe, several sustained minor injuries. (May 2, 2025)

Research and academic studies (in Arabic and English)

- The Journal of Human Rights, Culture, and Legal System [published](#) a research paper by Yordan Gunawan and others titled "The Effectiveness of International Law in Limiting Humanitarian Disasters in the Palestine-Israel Conflict." (2025)

Opinion Pieces and features

- Haaretz [published](#) an opinion piece by Gideon Levy titled: "Israeli Incitement to Genocide in Gaza Goes Mainstream ." (April 27, 2025)
- Middle East Eye published an [opinion](#) piece by Aseel al-Bajeh titled: "Gaza genocide: Remember the moment that shook you into caring." (April 29, 2025)
- The Los Angeles Times [published](#) a report by Nour Khalil AbuShammala titled: "Out of food and under constant attack, we Gazans are dying every day." (April 29, 2025)
- The Global Observatory [published](#) an article by Damian Lily titled: "The World Is Changing Rapidly: Can the United Nations Restructure to Stay Relevant?" (April 29, 2025)

- Drop Site [published](#) an opinion piece by Rasha Abu Jalal and Sharif Abdel Kouddous titled: "Deprivation by Design": Israel Intensifies Mass Killing Campaign in Gaza With Starvation and Daily Strikes." (April 30, 2025)

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- Arab News [published](#) an opinion piece by Osama Al-Sharif titled: "For Palestinians, the wheels of justice barely turn at all." (April 30, 2025)
- Middle East Eye [published](#) an opinion piece by Ghassan Abu Sitta, Mads Gilbert, and James Smith titled: "Israel is starving Gaza to death, and still the world does Nothing." (1 May 2025)
- TWAILR [published](#) an article by Maryam Jamshidi titled: "On UNRWA's immunity." (May 1, 2025)
- The Washington Post [published](#) an article by Miriam Berger and Julia Ledur titled: "Israel redraws Gaza map, limiting Palestinians to a third of the enclave." (1 May 2025)
- Mondoweiss [published](#) an op-ed by Mitchell Plitnick titled: "Biden staffers admit what we all knew: White House lied about ceasefire efforts." (May 2, 2025)
- The Intercept [published](#) an article by Arthur Neslen titled: "EU President Should Be Tried for Complicity in Israel's War Crimes, Says Top UN's Expert on Palestine." (May 3, 2025)

Legal Achievements/Impacts for Palestine

- Stella Maris, the president of St Andrews University, successfully [appealed](#) her dismissal following comments she made about the war in Gaza, in which she accused Israel of committing "genocide" and "apartheid" against the Palestinians. Although the university launched an investigation and acknowledged that she had shown "poor judgement," the report concluded that dismissal would not be an appropriate sanction. Following her successful appeal, she will now resume her full role as rector, including serving as head of the university's court. (May 1, 2025)

Human rights conferences and events

- In a joint statement, 121 academics and intellectuals [called](#) on the European Union to support a political shift toward a just and equal future for Palestinians and Israelis through a confederation of

two sovereign states—under the principle of "two states in one homeland." This vision is based on full political equality, mutual recognition, freedom of movement, a shared Jerusalem, and a return mechanism for refugees through cooperation rather than separation. The signatories urged the European Union to publicly adopt and promote this principle. (April 29, 2025)

Upcoming human rights opportunities and events

- The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) [invited](#) the public to attend the launch of its virtual report titled "Genocide and Torture: The Shattered Futures of Former Palestinian Detainees in Gaza," scheduled for Tuesday, 13 May 2025, at 16:00 (Jerusalem time). The report documents Israel's systematic and widespread torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian civilians arrested from Gaza following 7 October 2023, arguing that these acts constitute part of the crime of genocide.
- The Faculty of Law and Public Administration at Birzeit University extended an [invitation](#) to attend a conference titled "Palestinians and the War of Genocide on Gaza," taking place from May 5 to 6, 2025. The first day will be held in person at Birzeit University, while the second day will be conducted online. You can view the conference booklet [here](#) and the Zoom [link](#) to attend the conference over the two days.