

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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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 Jerusalem Governorate [warned](#) of the occupation municipality's announcement in Jerusalem of allocating a large budget to establish and develop colonial roads around the city. It affirmed that these projects fall within an integrated colonial strategy aimed at strengthening the settlement network and imposing control over Jerusalem and its surroundings, describing it as a "rapid colonial advance from planning to implementation". (January 25, 2026)**
- **The National Campaign to Recover the Bodies of Martyrs and Determine the Fate of the Missing [announced](#) that the Israeli occupation continues to hold the bodies of [776 martyrs](#) from Gaza as hostages in numbered graves and morgues, including 96 prisoners, 77 children, and 10 female martyrs. The campaign condemned the army's exhumation of more than 250 bodies, as a war crime, and called for the return of the martyrs' bodies to their families, for international institutions to be allowed access to verify the situation, and for an independent international investigation into the violations to be opened. (January 26, 2026)**

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- The Palestinian Presidency [warned](#) against the dangerous Israeli escalation in the Occupied West Bank, following the announcement of the start of construction on a bypass road around the city of Al-Eizariya as part of the E1 project, which is expected to separate Palestinian residents, divide land, and restrict their movement. (January 28, 2026)
- The Palestinian Ministry of Health [condemned](#) the arbitrary measures requiring the submission of data on medical personnel working for international health institutions in the Gaza Strip, considering them a violation of international humanitarian law and on rules protecting personal data privacy, and a risk to the individual safety of the workers. The ministry affirmed that it does not participate in or share data on health services personnel. (January 30, 2026)

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

- Israel [prevented](#) UN correspondent and field photographer Olga Cherevko from returning to the Gaza Strip. UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini [stated](#) that the failure to renew Olga's visa follows a pattern of suppressing humanitarian and journalistic personnel documenting violations. UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese also [affirmed](#) that Israel has no legal authority to prevent humanitarian workers from accessing the Gaza Strip, and called on countries to suspend any relations with Israel until it complies with international law. (January 23/28/29, 2026)
- The Israeli Supreme Court [avoided](#) issuing a ruling on the petition submitted by the Foreign Press Association to allow independent and unrestricted access to Gaza, limiting itself to requesting an update from the state by 31 March. This comes amid the continuation of the comprehensive ban imposed since October 2023. (January 27, 2026)
- The Israeli Supreme Court postponed consideration of the [petition filed by Adalah](#) against the anti-UNRWA laws, which permit the seizure of the Agency's property and the cutting of essential services to its facilities. The court also refused to issue a temporary injunction, ruling that the petitioners had not submitted an amended version reflecting recent legislative changes, effectively allowing demolition activities and the suspension of vital services to UNRWA facilities in East Jerusalem to continue. (January 27/29, 2026)
- Israel [announced](#) the reopening of the Rafah Crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt for pedestrian traffic in both directions, in accordance with the ceasefire deal. The reopening was permitted in coordination with Egypt and under the supervision of the European Union mission,

following prior security clearance of individuals by Israel. Authorities clarified that return to Gaza would be limited to residents who had left the Strip during the war. (January 30, 2026)

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

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- Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, [stated](#) that the Gaza Strip is the deadliest place in the world for journalists and humanitarian workers, highlighting the pivotal role of Palestinian journalists in documenting the atrocities of the war. He explained that the ban on the independent entry of international journalists into Gaza constitutes a fundamental violation of media freedom and contributes to fueling disinformation campaigns and polarised narratives aiming at questioning firsthand data and eyewitness accounts, including the testimony of international humanitarian organisations. (January 25, 2026)
- UNRWA [reported](#) that after its headquarters in occupied East Jerusalem was stormed and demolished by the Israeli authorities, the building was set on fire. UNRWA stated that “there are no limits to the defiance of the UN and international law in the oPt” and stressed that refugee status must be resolved through a genuine political solution, not criminal acts. (January 25, 2026)
- The Advisory Commission of UNRWA [expressed](#) its deep concern and strong condemnation of the measures taken by the Government of Israel to demolish the Agency’s headquarters in occupied East Jerusalem, considering it a dangerous precedent that threatens the multilateral system. The Commission stressed that Israel must adhere to its international obligations to protect United Nations premises and called on it to immediately cease these actions and respect UNRWA’s mandate. The Commission also reaffirmed its steadfast support for UNRWA until a just and lasting peace is achieved in the region. (January 26, 2026)
- French MP Thomas Portes [condemned](#) Israel’s prevention of the entry of technological equipment necessary to recover and identify Palestinians killed by Israeli forces, stating that the ban exacerbates the scale of the violations. Portes stated that these actions go beyond killing, amounting to an attempt to uproot the bodies and erase their identity. (January 27, 2026)
- Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory, [stated](#) that Israel has wiped out 2,700 families in Gaza, leaving more than 6,000 sole survivors of entire bloodlines, affirming that this is the result of a deliberate policy carried out with full knowledge of its consequences and stressing that what is happening is not a war, but genocide. (January 27, 2026)

- UNRWA [stated](#) that education for four generations of Palestinian refugees has continued for more than 75 years, helping more than 2.5 million refugees complete their studies. UNRWA affirmed that every child has the right to education and that it must be allowed to continue its support for Palestinian children. (January 27, 2026)
- The World Health Organization [reported](#) the deaths of 10 children in Gaza due to hypothermia since the onset of winter, amid harsh conditions in temporary shelters, severe overcrowding, and shortages of water and sanitation. The organization called for ensuring the entry of essential medical supplies and equipment, as well as winterization and shelter materials. (January 27, 2026)
- The Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom [condemned](#) the demolition of UNRWA's headquarters in East Jerusalem by the Israeli occupation authorities, considering it a dangerous precedent and an unacceptable violation of the inviolability of United Nations premises, as well as an undermining of the Agency's ability to operate. The ministers reaffirmed their full support for the essential humanitarian role carried out by UNRWA. (January 28, 2026)
- During a briefing to the Security Council, the United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, [Ramiz Alakbarov](#), [warned](#) that continued Israeli restrictions on the entry of aid, ongoing military operations, and the widespread obstruction of humanitarian organizations' work are worsening the humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip and constitute a violation of international humanitarian law. He added that policies of settlement expansion, demolition, forced displacement, and the targeting of UNRWA are escalating in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. For his part, UNRWA Commissioner-General [Philippe Lazzarini](#) called on the Security Council to ensure that humanitarian workers are able to carry out their work. (January 28/29, 2026)
- United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres [stated](#) that the situation in Palestine requires an immediate ceasefire and the full implementation of Security Council resolutions, stressing that what is taking place in Gaza remains a fragile ceasefire amid continuing operations. He emphasized the need to move to the second phase of the agreement, including the full withdrawal of Israeli forces, ensuring the flow of humanitarian aid, and the gradual linking of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority. Guterres also affirmed his commitment to addressing settlement activity, demolitions, forced evictions, and settler violence in the West Bank, noting

that these undermine the Two-State solution. He stressed that international pressure, especially from the United States, is essential to ensure the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. (January 29, 2026)

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- Reuters [revealed](#) that U.S. diplomats at the United States Embassy in Israel blocked, in early 2024, an internal cable issued by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) warning northern Gaza was becoming an “Apocalyptic Wasteland” and confirmed the existence of “catastrophic” humanitarian needs, including shortages of food, water, and medical care, based on [United Nations fact-finding missions](#). According to the report, U.S. Ambassador Jack Lew and his deputy, Stephanie Hallett, withheld the cable from senior officials on the grounds that it lacked “balance”. (January 30, 2026)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General [Philippe Lazzarini stated](#) that what is happening in Gaza is “a ceasefire in name only”, and confirmed that nearly 500 people have been killed since the ceasefire came into effect, including more than 100 children. He also called for a genuine ceasefire - a much overdue ceasefire that would guarantee the protection of civilians in the Gaza Strip. (January 31, 2026)
- The Arab Parliament [condemned](#) what it described as Israel's serious and deliberate violations of the ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip, stressing that they constitute a deliberate undermining of the truce and an ongoing war crime against the Palestinian people. (January 31, 2026)

Publications of human rights NGOs:

- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) [announced](#) that, as an exceptional measure, it would share a limited list of its Palestinian and international staff with [Israeli authorities](#) to ensure the continued provision of medical care in the occupied Palestinian territories, subject to staff consent and guarantees for their safety. later, the organization [announced](#) that it had decided not to share the list with Israel under the current circumstances, after failing over the past months to secure clear guarantees from Israel regarding the safety of its staff. MSF warned that any expulsion of its staff from Gaza and the West Bank would have a devastating impact on the humanitarian situation. (January 30, 2026)
- The American University of Beirut (AUB) [defended](#) its decision not to invite UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese to participate in campus events as a legal, rather than a political, one. The decision was taken in compliance with U.S. laws that impose sanctions on her under a

list of prohibited individuals and entities, which would have exposed the university to significant legal risks if not adhered to. (January 25, 2026)

- Drop Site [revealed](#) a draft resolution from the so-called “Board of Peace”, launched by US President Trump, proposing to grant an executive council headed by Trump comprehensive legislative, executive, and judicial powers over the Gaza Strip, including emergency powers. The draft also proposes the establishment of “humanitarian zones” and controlled civilian-protection corridors patrolled by a temporary International Stabilization Force led by the United States. (January 26, 2026)
- The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) [called](#) on Israel to lift the ban on foreign journalists entering Gaza and to end restrictions on the work of foreign media inside Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. CPJ urged the international community to ensure Israel’s compliance with international law and the protection of freedom of expression. (January 26, 2026)
- B’Tselem [reported](#) that months of relentless violence by Israeli state-backed settler militias, soldiers, and police forces led to the displacement of the last remaining Palestinian families in the Ras ‘Ein al-‘Auja community this week. The organization stated that since October 2023, Israel has forcibly displaced 45 Palestinian communities in the West Bank, comprising at least 3,501 people, in addition to 12 communities that were partially displaced, with at least 455 people driven from their homes. B’Tselem described this as a policy of ethnic cleansing being implemented by Israel in the West Bank. (January 26, 2026)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) [warned](#) that extreme weather conditions in Gaza are threatening the lives of displaced Palestinians, most of whom are living in unsafe tents or collapsed buildings. The ICRC called on Israel to facilitate the rapid passage of humanitarian aid, emphasizing that any delays endanger lives. (January 27, 2026)
- The International Commission for Justice and Peace [clarified](#) that with the release of all Israeli hostages, no Israeli family now has a relative detained in Palestine. In contrast, Palestinian hostages remain in Israeli prisons, where they are systematically tortured and sexually abused by Israeli prison staff. (January 27, 2026)
- On the occasion of the second anniversary of the martyrdom of the child Hind Rajab, the Hind Rajab Foundation [announced](#) that it continues to pursue accountability for those responsible for killing her, her companions, and the paramedics targeted by Israeli occupation forces. The

Foundation affirmed that all legal cases against 24 perpetrators of the crime are currently active in various courts. (January 29, 2026)

- [Hind Rajab Foundation](#), [the Australian National Imams Council](#), and the Jewish Council of Australia have lodged a formal legal complaint with the Attorney-General, the Minister for Home Affairs, and the Australian Federal Police, calling for the refusal of entry to Israeli President Isaac Herzog and the commencement of a criminal investigation under Australian law. (January 29, 2026)
- A Guardian report, based on Israeli human rights organizations and UN reports, [revealed](#) that Israeli reserve units integrated into the Israeli army and composed of settlers in the West Bank, operate as “vigilante militias.” These units possess extensive weaponry and broad powers and participate in violent attacks against Palestinians, while senior military commanders turn a blind eye to these violations. The report asserts that the deployment of these units after October 2023 led to an escalation of violence and the displacement of 29 Palestinian communities. (January 30, 2026)
- Al-Baydar Human Rights Organization [reported](#) that Shallal al-Auja community, north of Jericho, was subjected to complete forced displacement, culminating in the expulsion of the last three remaining families. This marks the displacement of about 120 Palestinian families after years of continuous violations.

Research and academic studies (in Arabic and English):

- *The Lancet* [published](#) a research paper by Eric Reinhart and Joelle M Abi-Rached titled: “*Health, Human Rights, and the Palestinian Exception*”. (2026)
- Journal of Al-Quds Open University for Humanities and Social Studies [published](#) a research paper by the researcher Mohamed Saad Ali Zakarneh and others, titled: “*Torture of the Palestinian Prisoners and Detainees in Light of Israeli Practices and International Protection*”. (2026)
- *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning* [published](#) a research paper by Sophia Zisakou titled: “*Decolonization Truth lessons from Palestine*”. (2025)
- DergiPark [published](#) a research paper by the researcher Mohammad Yousef, titled: “*The Palestinian Refugees’ Right Of Return As A Conditio Sine Qua Non For Israel’s United Nations Membership: A Legal Analysis*”. (2026)

Opinion Pieces and features:

- **PassBlue** [published](#) an op-ed by Mona Ali Khalil titled: "*President Trump Is Sending the UN to Hell*". (January 25, 2026)
- The Palestinian Policy Network [published](#) an article by Yara Hawari entitled: "*The NCAG: Gaza's Technocratic Turn to Genocide Management*". (January 26, 2026)
- **Mondoweiss** [published](#) an op-ed by Rifat Kassis titled: "*Mike Huckabee Is Interfering with the Work and Witness of Churches in the Holy Land with a Goal of Silencing Palestinian Christians*". (January 27, 2026)
- Al-Jazeera [published](#) an opinion piece by Louis Charbonneau, titled: "*Trump's 'Board of Peace' puts rights abusers in charge of global order*". (January 27, 2026)
- +972 Magazine [published](#) an article by Muhammad Shehada, titled: "*How Netanyahu is sabotaging phase two of the Gaza ceasefire*". (January 29, 2026)
- Al-Jazeera [published](#) an opinion piece by Sam Rose, titled: "*Why attacking UNRWA is attacking Gaza's survival*". (January 31, 2026)
- **The Palestine Chronicle** [published](#) an article by Dan Steinbock titled: "*Does the End of UNRWA Herald the End of the International Order?*". (January 31, 2026)

Legal Achievements/Impacts for Palestine:

- The Spanish Ministry of Social Rights and Consumer Affairs has [launched](#) an official probe into Israeli tourism companies over allegations that they promoted tourism activities linked to Israeli settlements built on occupied Palestinian land, following Israel's participation in the FITUR International Tourism Fair held in Madrid between January 21 and 25, 2026. (January 26, 2026)

Upcoming human rights opportunities and events:

- Ghent University in Belgium has [announced](#) an opening for a fully funded PhD research position within the Human Rights Center at the Faculty of Law and Criminology. The position is part of a European project funded by the European Research Council (ERC), titled: "*Innovation and Documentation. Reconstructing the Paradigm of Transitional Justice from the ground up*". The project focuses on initiatives to document violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the Palestinian context.