

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 Palestinian Presidency, [the Palestinian National Council](#), and [the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) warned of the dangers of the Israeli occupation government's decision to designate West Bank lands as "state property" under the control of the occupation authorities, describing it as a violation of international law. They considered the decision a threat to security and stability and called on the international community to intervene immediately to halt these dangerous Israeli measures. (February 15, 2026)**
- **The Embassy of the State of Palestine [expressed](#) deep concern over reports that the [British Museum](#) is facing pressure to remove or question the use of the term "Palestine" in its exhibitions. It warned that treating the name as controversial could contribute to an environment that denies the existence of the Palestinian people. (February 16, 2026)**
- **The Jerusalem Governorate [affirmed](#) that the agreement announced by the so-called Ministry of Construction and Housing of the Israeli occupation government in early February 2026 to build**

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approximately 2,780 settlement units to expand the “Adam” settlement on citizens’ lands north of occupied Jerusalem constitutes a de facto, disguised annexation of Palestinian land and aims to extend the influence of the occupation municipality in Jerusalem beyond the Green Line. (February 16,

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- The Jerusalem Governorate [affirmed](#) that the Israeli occupation's closure of the Burj al-Luqluq Community Association in Jerusalem's Old City for six months, following a raid and the denial of access, constitutes a dangerous escalation in targeting Jerusalem's national institutions and a direct blow to residents' right to community development. (February 17, 2026)
- The Colonization and Wall Resistance Commission [reported](#) that the occupation issued an order to confiscate 2,000 dunums of land from the towns of Sebastia and Burqa, north of Nablus, under an expropriation order targeting the archaeological site in the area. (February 17, 2026)
- The Commission of Detainees Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoners' Society [stated](#) that the Israeli occupation system's move to introduce legal amendments that would lead to harsher detention conditions for administrative detainees effectively entrenches existing crimes and violations against prisoners in general and represents a new attempt to evade the basic rights guaranteed to administrative detainees under international law. (February 18, 2026)
- The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [condemned](#) the statements of the US Ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, considering his claims regarding Israel's "biblical right" to control the entire Middle East to be contrary to religious and historical facts and international law. (February 21, 2026)

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

- The Israeli cabinet [approved](#) the resumption of land registration procedures in Area C of the West Bank for the first time since 1968. The government allocated NIS 244 million for the years 2026–2030 and set a target of registering 15% of unregistered land within five years. Peace Now criticized the move as a step toward de facto annexation, warning that large areas may be declared state land, which could significantly limit Palestinians’ ability to prove ownership and expand Israeli control over Area C. (February 15, 2026)

- Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich **announced** that one of his goals for the next government term is to abolish the Oslo Accords, arguing that this would lead to the dismantling of the Palestinian Authority in favor of establishing a new military administration to govern the area, with the ultimate aim of applying full Israeli sovereignty over the region. He also indicated additional goals, including encouraging Jewish immigration to the West Bank and The Gaza Strip and re-establishing Israeli military rule in Gaza. (February 17, 2026)

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

- **The Organization of Islamic Cooperation**, the **League of Arab States**, and **the Arab Parliament** condemned the Israeli occupation's decision to designate West Bank lands as so-called "State Land" under the control of the occupation authorities, stressing that this aggressive measure constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. (February 15-16, 2026)
- The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs **condemned** the ongoing incursions into the Al Aqsa Mosque/Al Haram Al Sharif, including the latest intrusion by a member of the **Israeli Knesset** describing it as a blatant violation of the legal and historical status of the holy site and a desecration of its sanctity. (February 16, 2026)
- UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini **expressed** deep concern over the recent attacks on UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, tasked with monitoring violations of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory, noting that these attacks are directly aimed at silencing her and undermining the work of the remaining independent human rights documentation mechanisms. (February 16, 2026)
- **Qatar**, **Jordan**, the **United Arab Emirates**, **Indonesia**, **Pakistan**, **Turkey**, **Saudi Arabia**, **Egypt**, and **Kuwait** strongly condemned Israel's decision to designate lands in the occupied West Bank as so-called "state land," considering the move an illegal step and a grave escalation aimed at accelerating illegal settlement activity, confiscating land, entrenching Israeli control, and asserting unlawful sovereignty over the Occupied Palestinian Territory, thereby undermining the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. (February 16-17, 2026)
- The Bureau of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People **condemned** the Israeli Government's decision to resume land registration

procedures in Area C of the occupied West Bank. The [UN Secretary-General](#) also condemned the move, warning that the decision could lead to the dispossession of Palestinians and expand Israeli control over land, and urging the Israeli Government to immediately reverse the measures. (February 16, 2026)

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- More than 85 countries and international organizations [condemned](#) - also [here](#) - the Israeli unilateral decisions and measures aimed at expanding Israel's illegal presence in the West Bank, affirming their rejection of any form of annexation. They also reiterated their opposition to any measures intended to alter the demographic composition, character, and status of the occupied Palestinian territory. (February 17, 2026)
 - The Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council [condemned](#) what it described as vicious, disinformation-based attacks by several State representatives against UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, affirming that some ministers relied on fabricated claims and criticized her for statements she never made. (February 17, 2026)
 - UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 Francesca Albanese [warned](#) that the Israeli security cabinet's decision to expand land expropriation in the occupied West Bank constitutes deliberate, incremental steps toward permanent annexation. She urged States to refrain from recognising or supporting these measures, to cut diplomatic, economic and military ties with Israel, and to take effective measures to bring the unlawful occupation to an end. (February 18, 2026)
 - At its annual conference in Stuttgart, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) [announced](#) its intention to impose stricter conditions on German and European financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority and to halt German funding for UNRWA. The party called for the agency's activities to be transferred to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other UN organizations, urged the suspension of payments to families linked to "terrorism" and the cessation of funding for educational curricula containing antisemitic or anti-Israel incitement. Furthermore, it proposed requiring all recipients of German or European funds to recognize Israel's right to exist and to adhere to Germany's strict policy against antisemitism. (February 18, 2026)
 - The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published a [report](#) warning of the risks of ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as a result of escalating Israeli attacks and the forced displacement of Palestinians between 1 November 2024 and 31 October 2025. The report also

documented grave violations in the West Bank, including excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, and torture, stating that these acts are intended to discriminate against and exert control over the Palestinian people. [Commenting](#) on the report, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, stressed that accountability is indispensable. (February 19, 2026)

- The diplomatic missions of the European Union, along with Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, [expressed](#) concern over the Israeli authorities' decision to close the Burj Al-Luqluq Association in Jerusalem's Old City for six months. They stated that the closure constitutes a further restriction on Palestinian civic and cultural space in East Jerusalem. (February 19, 2026)
- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) [reported](#) that the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip remains dire with ongoing restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid. The agency stressed that the scale of needs far exceeds its current capacity and called for the immediate lifting of these restrictions. (February 19, 2026)
- Board of Peace High Representative Nikolay Mladenov [stated](#) that the new office will support the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) in assuming civil and administrative control over the Gaza Strip, noting that coordination will occur with Israel and the Palestinian Authority through a joint coordination committee. He also outlined the adoption of a disarmament program framework, affirming that reconstruction will not begin unless full disarmament in Gaza is achieved and an implementation plan is agreed upon with the factions. (February 19, 2026)
- The Peace Council, chaired by U.S. President Donald Trump, [held](#) its first meeting on the reconstruction of Gaza, announcing a \$10 billion commitment from the United States. Nine additional countries—Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, and Kuwait pledged a further \$7 billion in financial assistance. Five states, Indonesia, Morocco, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, and Albania also announced their participation with forces on the ground as part of an international force tasked with stabilizing security in Gaza. President Trump stated that the Peace Council would oversee the work of the United Nations to ensure its effectiveness, emphasizing coordinated financial support to strengthen the organization's budgets. (February 19, 2026)

- The U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, [stated](#) during an interview with American commentator Tucker Carlson that it may be “fine” for Israel to take control of most of the Middle East, arguing that such a move would be grounded in a biblical right to the land. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation condemned the remarks, describing them as an explicit call for Israeli expansion. The League of Arab States and the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also denounced the statements. (February 20, 2026)
- Current and former members of the United Nations system [sent](#) a letter to France’s permanent representatives to the UN in New York and Geneva, expressing concern over statements made by the French Foreign Minister and Prime Minister targeting the UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese. The letter emphasized that these statements were based on misleading information and contributed to escalating pressure and calls for her dismissal, and urged the French government to reassess its position. (February 20, 2026)

Publications of human rights NGOs:

- Al-Haq [condemned](#) the escalation of Israel’s annexationist plans in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and called on States and international organizations to take immediate concrete action to end the annexation and halt the forcible seizure of Palestinian land. (February 16, 2026)
- The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) [expressed](#) deep concern over Israel’s recent decision to designate additional areas in the occupied West Bank as so-called “State Land”, warning that the move facilitates land seizure and constitutes a violation of international law and agreements signed between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. (February 17, 2026)
- More than [150](#) international [figures](#), including former ministers, diplomats, and other senior officials, accused French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot of spreading “disinformation” after relying on a manipulated video to accuse UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese of making antisemitic statements. They said that using altered and inaccurate material to discredit the holder of an independent United Nations mandate is alarming and undermines the credibility of the multilateral system. (February 18, 2026)
- The Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council [issued](#) a statement affirming its full support and solidarity with UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, while rejecting the organized campaign of

incitement and defamation against her led by the U.S. administration and followed by several European states. (February 18, 2026)

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- BADIL Center [published](#) a statement saying that the Israeli regime's recent measures – including the launch a large-scale land registration process in Area C and facilitating settlers' purchases of private land in Areas A and B – mark a decisive shift from de facto control to the formal transfer of Palestinian land ownership to the Israeli regime, reflecting the ongoing trajectory of the Nakba. (February 19, 2026)
- B'Tselem [published](#) an analysis of statements by Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, stating that Israel is pursuing policies to expel Palestinians from both Gaza and the West Bank, and that plans for the re-occupation of Gaza and forcible transfer of Palestinians have long been prepared. The analysis added that Israel seeks to continue the demographic “revolution,” involving ethnic cleansing, dispossession of Palestinians, and entrenching Jewish domination, including over Palestinian citizens of Israel. (February 19, 2026)

Research and academic studies (in Arabic and English):

- Journal of Political Science [published](#) a research paper by the researcher Hasibur Rahaman and others, titled: “*The Selective Application of Justice: Comparing ICC Investigations in Ukraine and Palestine*”. (2026)
- International Journal of Heritage Studies [published](#) a research paper by Benjamin Isakhan, titled : “*UNESCO's institutional drift and normative vacuum: interpreting the failure to protect Palestinian heritage in Gaza*”. (2026)
- Taylor & Francis Journal [published](#) a research article by Roopak Kumar and others titled, “*Silence, Solidarity, and Standpoints: P5 Discourse on Israel-Palestine Conflict in the UNSC.*”(2026)
- The International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation [published](#) a research paper by Daoud Khalaf and others titled, “*Knowledge Encircling as a Strategic Resistance Weapon - Case of Palestine* ”(2026)

Opinion Pieces and features:

- Arab News [published](#) an article by Osama Al-Sharif titled: *“Why West Bank annexation is a direct threat to Jordan”*. (February 15, 2026)
- Taghrid Al-Mawad [published](#) an article titled: *“When a Museum Erases a Word: Why the Removal of “Palestine” Matters”*. (February 15, 2026)
- Middle East Monitor [published](#) an opinion piece by Kurniawan Arif Maspul titled: *“Who fears the truth? The lawfare campaign to silence Francesca Albanese”*. (February 15, 2026)
- AlJazeera [published](#) an opinion piece by Ronny P Sasmita titled: *“Indonesia’s Gaza gamble”*. (February 16, 2026)
- EUobserver [published](#) an opinion article by Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff titled, *“Israel’s demand for personal data on Palestinians working for Gaza NGOs is a disgrace.”*(February 17, 2026)
- The Canary [published](#) an article by Jody McIntyre titled, *“Do senior Labour politicians have relatives fighting in the Israeli military?”*(February 17, 2026)
- PassBlue [published](#) an article by Damilola Banjo titled, *“UN Security Council Meets on Gaza, the Day Before Trump’s Board of Peace Convenes.”*(February 18, 2026)
- The European Council on Foreign Relations [published](#) an article by Muhammad Shehada titled, *“Dispelling Trump’s dystopia: A European blueprint for Gaza’s renewal.”*(February 18, 2026)
- The Electronic Intifada [published](#) an article by David Cronin entitled: *“Firm selling Israel’s spy tech woos Europe’s cops.”*(February 19, 2026)
- The Global Observatory [published](#) an analytical article by Carol Daniel-kasbari entitled: *“From Ambiguous Governance to Stabilization Failure in Gaza: The Limits of the Board of Peace.”*(February 19, 2026)
- Mondoweiss [published](#) an opinion piece by Mitchell Plitnick entitled: *“Trump’s ‘Board of Peace’ reveals grim future the U.S. and Israel have planned for Gaza.”*(February 20, 2026)

Legal Achievements/Impacts for Palestine:

- **The Crown Prosecution Service in the United Kingdom [said](#) it has decided to drop aggravated burglary charges against 18 defendants accused of a Palestine Action break-in at an Israeli defence firm's UK site, following the acquittal of six other defendants by a jury. (February 18, 2026)**

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Human rights conferences and events:

- **The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) [announced](#) the cancellation of the Eurovision Song Contest Live Tour due to ongoing controversy and objections to Israel's participation in the 2026 edition. In an official statement, the EBU explained that the decision came amid escalating boycotts and pressure linked to Israel's participation, stemming from the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip. (February 15, 2026)**
- **A group of civil society organizations, led by SUDS, NOVACT, and Comité de Solidaridad contra la Causa Árabe, with the support of SOMO and Al-Haq, [announced](#) the filing of a criminal complaint before the Investigating Courts in Madrid, Spain, against eDreams ODIGEO, S.A., accusing it of laundering proceeds linked to crimes committed in occupied Palestine and Syria. The complaint alleges that the company promoted and facilitated tourist bookings in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, profited from these bookings. Booking.com and Travelscape LLC are also named as potential accomplices in the illegal activity. (February 17, 2026)**
- **The Public Interest Law Centre (PILC), [supported](#) by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), announced that they have filed a complaint with the Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorism Command to initiate a criminal investigation into four current and former directors of Elbit Systems UK Ltd for possible complicity in war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Gaza, under the International Criminal Court Act 2001 (ICCA). (February 18, 2026)**

Upcoming human rights opportunities and events:

- **The journal Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal has [announced](#) a special issue titled "MAKING A KILLING - THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF GENOCIDE IN GAZA." This issue examines the structural, political, and economic factors enabling the continuation of genocide, the role of national and international corporations in facilitating it, and its connection to the political economy of**

occupation and apartheid. It also highlights available legal accountability mechanisms. Researchers from various disciplines are invited to submit abstracts by March 1, 2026.

- Trinity College Dublin, through its School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, [announced](#) a lecture by Dr. Mandy Turner, a senior researcher with Security in Context, entitled: *“Colonial Administration, Counterinsurgency Pacification, and Disaster Capitalism in Trump’s Plan for Gaza: These Are the Dangers Palestinians Face”*, scheduled for February 26, 2026.