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.

Legal Updates by Official Palestinian Bodies:

- **The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education condemned the Israeli occupation's targeting of the Islamic University campus in Gaza, stressing the need for humanitarian, human rights and media organisations to take a firm stand to put an end to the ongoing attacks against the education system in Palestine.** (October 25, 2026)
- **The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's entry into the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque under the protection of Israeli forces, describing it as a violation of the existing legal status quo in Jerusalem.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The Colonization and Wall Resistance Commission (CWRC) stated that Israeli authorities intend to review 11 settlement plans across several governorates in the West Bank covering a combined area of 374,293 dunams. It emphasised that these plans demonstrate the continued use of the planning system to reinforce the settlement enterprise.** (October 27, 2026)

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- **The Palestinian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Husam Zomlot, called on the British government to fulfil its obligations by imposing sanctions on entities that support or profit from illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.** (October 27, 2026)

Legal Updates by Official Israeli Bodies:

- **Israeli authorities prevented an international delegation of 23 people, including four elected officials and delegates from Britain, France, Spain, the United States and other countries, from entering the occupied West Bank. (October 26, 2026)**
- **The Likud Party, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, alleged that Arab political parties in Israel had "stolen the elections" through what it described as serious criminal offences, including bribery, threats, violence, electoral fraud and the use of prohibited software to mobilise voters. However, Israeli police rejected these allegations, stating that there was no evidence to substantiate the claims.** (October 28–29, 2026)
- **The Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, lambasted Francesca Albanese, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories, calling her a "liar" and a "fraud". He further rejected her latest report, which said that Israel had systematically targeted journalists during the war in Gaza.** (October 27, 2026)

United Nations Statements and Publications:

- **The United Nations Secretary-General expressed concern over the expansion of Israeli settlements, the displacement of Palestinians and escalating settler violence in the occupied West Bank, warning of the growing risk of ethnic cleansing. He stressed the need to halt these practices, emphasising that achieving lasting peace requires guaranteeing the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. He also called for the lifting of Israeli restrictions on humanitarian aid and the removal of obstacles hindering the implementation of the comprehensive plan to end the conflict in Gaza, endorsed by the Security Council.** (October 26, 2026)
- **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk stated that the ongoing Israeli military operation in the West Bank city of Hebron, which began on Friday, had resulted in the forcible displacement of more than 2,000 Palestinians. He emphasised that collective punishment constitutes a serious violation of international law and that threats to empty entire neighbourhoods raise grave concerns about ethnic cleansing.** (October 26, 2026)

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- **The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry issued a report confirming that Israel had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the occupied Palestinian territory, including killings, torture, rape and sexual violence, while noting the continuation of genocide in Gaza. The report highlighted the escalation of killings, military operations and the displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank since October 2023. The Commission concluded that Israeli military operations and settler violence form part of a widespread and systematic attack against Palestinians, warning that Israeli expansion and displacement undermine the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced that the United Nations and its partners were responding to new waves of displacement in Gaza and the West Bank. Urgent needs included shelter, food and cash assistance, as well as alternative education arrangements, amid continued Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement. OCHA also reported ongoing settler attacks in the West Bank and their impact on the olive harvest season, noting that more than 2,000 attacks since the beginning of 2026 had resulted in injuries or property damage.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the occupied Palestinian territory expressed grave concern over the Israeli military operation in the Hebron Governorate, which had displaced approximately 397 families comprising 2,456 people, amid severe movement restrictions, searches, arrests and the demolition of homes and commercial properties. The Office warned of the risks of continued forcible displacement, given the uncertainty surrounding when displaced residents would be allowed to return to their homes. It stressed that punitive measures targeting entire families and communities raise concerns about violations of the prohibitions on collective punishment and forcible transfer under international law, noting that Israeli restrictions obstruct access to essential services and humanitarian assistance.** (October 27, 2026)
- **United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese described the behaviour of Israeli representative Danny Danon, including what she characterised as cheap bullying and childish conduct, as bringing embarrassment and shame upon the United Nations.** (October 27, 2026)
- **United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development Surya Deva affirmed that the Israeli occupation deliberately violates the Palestinian people's right to development in the**

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occupied Palestinian territory. He noted that the occupation undermines the very essence of this right, which is rooted in the ongoing struggle for liberation from political and economic colonialism and the establishment of a just and equitable international order, depriving Palestinians of their right to self-determination and development. (October 29, 2026)

- **The United Nations Human Rights Office in the occupied Palestinian territory warned of growing concerns about ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip, as Israeli forces push Palestinians into an increasingly shrinking area while expanding their deployment zones, with a stated objective of covering 70% of the Strip's territory.** (October 30, 2026)

Legal Updates by Regional and International Bodies:

- **The foreign ministries of Jordan, Egypt and Qatar condemned the storming of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and groups of settlers, under the protection of the occupation police, describing it as a blatant violation of the existing historical and legal status quo.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The mayors of eight European cities called on European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in a letter, to take measures to protect the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague from US sanctions imposed on the Court, warning that the future of the international legal order and international organisations is at stake.** (October 28, 2026)
- **Twelve former US officials, who resigned in protest against the Biden administration's policy towards Gaza, called on candidates in the 2028 presidential election to pledge not to reappoint former officials whom they described as the architects of the administration's policy that enabled Israel to commit genocide in the Gaza Strip.** (October 29, 2026)

Publications of Human Rights NGOs:

- **B'Tselem urgently called on the international community, governments and international institutions to take immediate action to halt what it described as Israel's campaign of ethnic cleansing in Hebron and prevent the forcible displacement of Palestinian residents, collective punishment and widespread unlawful destruction.** (October 24, 2026)
- **The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor condemned the looting of Palestinian property by Israeli forces during raids in Hebron, calling for an independent international investigation into the acts of looting, forced displacement, and collective punishment, and demanding that those responsible be held accountable.** (October 25, 2026)

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- **The UNRWA Staff Union in Gaza announced the start of a ten-day administrative strike in protest against decisions and measures it said undermine employees' job security and negatively affect the provision and continuity of services to Palestinian refugees.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The Hind Rajab Foundation filed a criminal complaint with British authorities against Israeli soldier Lidor Dafna over his suspected involvement in war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide in the Gaza Strip. The Foundation called for an investigation, his arrest and questioning, amid reports that he was currently present in the United Kingdom.** (October 26, 2026)
- **Al-Haq sent an urgent appeal to UN Special Procedures, calling for urgent UN intervention to prevent Israel's escalating attacks and mass forced displacement operations in Hebron.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement announced an international mobilisation of port and transport workers scheduled for October 30, involving trade unions at more than 100 ports across over 17 countries. The action aims to protest against wars and end complicity in Israeli crimes against Palestinians and the peoples of the region, with the movement noting that more than 90% of Israel's imports arrive by sea.** (October 27, 2026)
- **Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) called on Belgium and the European Union to take effective measures to protect Palestinians and hold those responsible for international crimes accountable, in a position paper entitled "Gaza: Three Years of Genocide and Impunity".** (October 28, 2026)
- **Middle East Eye revealed that the World Travel Market (WTM) London is scheduled to take place from 3 to 5 November and will advertise the Jerusalem Development Authority (JDA), despite the letter's involvement in the construction of illegal Israeli settlements and efforts to dispossess Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem.** (October 29, 2026)
- **The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention called for the rejection of the candidacy of UAE Foreign Minister Lana Nusseibeh for the position of the next United Nations Secretary-General, arguing that she had acted contrary to the principles of the United Nations, downplayed acts of genocide and maintained close ties with two regimes accused of committing genocide.** (October 29, 2026)
- **Human Rights Watch (HRW) called on states to explicitly include "age" as a ground for persecution in the proposed treaty on crimes against humanity, to ensure recognition of the**

targeting of children, older people and others on the basis of their age and facilitate the prosecution of those responsible. The call followed findings by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry that Israeli authorities had committed the crime against humanity of persecution against Palestinian children by deliberately targeting them in the West Bank on the basis of their age. The Commission had reached the same conclusion regarding Gaza in June. (October 29, 2026)

Opinion Pieces and Features:

- **Al Jazeera published an opinion article by Yossi Mekelberg, titled: *"Who Israel Elects Matters, and Not Just for Israelis"*.** (October 25, 2026)
- **Völkerrechtsblog published an article by Nicolas Angelet, titled: *"Before It's Too Late: Fait Accompli, International Law, and the Israeli Settlements"*.** (October 26, 2026)
- **The New Arab published an opinion article by Rula Shadeed, titled: *"What Lula's Victory Means for Palestine Solidarity in Brazil"*.** (October 27, 2026)
- **NewsCord published an article by Nima Akram, titled: *"UK Lawyers for Israel Keep Raising False Alarms. Regulators Find Nothing. Yet Hospitals and Councils Delete Palestine Files"*.** (October 27, 2026)
- **Arab News published an opinion piece by Osama Al-Sharif, titled: "*The Arab vote just rewrote Israel's political map*".** (October 29, 2026)
- **This Week In Palestine published an article by Shawan Jabarin, titled: "*Gaza…Three Years On: "Preserving the Evidence, Breaking the Cycle of Impunity*".** (October 29, 2026)
- **EJIL:Talk! published an article by Kira Wigard, titled: "*The Hague Group and the Uneven Volatility of Intervention Coalitions at the International Court of Justice*".** (October 30, 2026)
- **Mondoweiss published an op-ed by Jonathan Ofir, titled: "*Liberal Zionists are trying to distance themselves from the reality that Israeli voters overwhelmingly want genocide*".** (October 30, 2026)
- **Al-Jazeera published an opinion piece by Samer Jaber, titled: "*A UN protection force must be urgently deployed to Palestine*".** (October 31, 2026)

Upcoming Human Rights Opportunities and Events:

- **The Legal Mobilization Platform and the Council of Arab Ambassadors announced the organisation of a lecture entitled "Bridging the Gap and Renewing the Promise: International Law**

and Global Solidarity in the Palestinian Quest for Justice", scheduled to take place on 16 November 2026 at the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, as part of The Hague Justice Week. The lecture will examine the gap between the guarantees provided under international law concerning the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, protection and access to remedies, and their implementation in practice, despite the advisory opinions issued by the International Court of Justice concerning Palestine.

Human rights conferences and events:

- **The United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held its 431st meeting under the theme "Human Dignity Under Pressure: Humanitarian and Human Rights Implications in the Occupied Palestinian Territory". Participants warned of the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the commission of crimes against humanity and war crimes in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, one year after the ceasefire entered into force.** (October 27, 2026)
- **An open letter, signed by academics, students, and alumni called on European university leaders to suspend institutional cooperation with Israeli universities and institutions linked to the military, the occupation, and the settlements.** (October 2026)
- **The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) announced its unwavering solidarity with its affiliates mobilising in strikes and demonstrations at more than 100 ports across 17 countries in protest against the movement of military cargo through civilian ports for use in war and genocide.** (October 28, 2026)

Research and academic studies (in Arabic and English):

- **Cambridge University Press published a research article by Lucas Lixinski and Alice Panepinto, titled: "*International heritage law as resistance to occupation*".** (October 22, 2026)