



DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

Bulletin

on action by the United Nations system and
intergovernmental organizations
relevant to the question of Palestine

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I. OIC HOLDS ISRAEL RESPONSIBLE FOR PALESTINIAN PRISONER'S DEATH

On 2 May, the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued the following [statement](#).

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held Israel, the occupying power, fully responsible for the death of the Palestinian prisoner Khader Adnan held in its occupation prisons under the so-called administrative detention, in which suspects are held indefinitely by Israel without charge or trial. The OIC also condemned the occupation's systematic policy of medical negligence, arbitrary measures, inhumane treatment of Palestinian prisoners, and deprivation of their basic rights guaranteed by the relevant international conventions and covenants.

The OIC affirmed its support for the Palestinian prisoners and called, at the same time, on the competent international bodies to intervene quickly to protect their rights, and to put pressure on Israel, the occupying power, to stop its continuous violations against them and to release them immediately.

II. PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE ELECTS ITS VICE-CHAIR AND RAPPORTEUR

On 3 May, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) held its 411th meeting. The Committee elected the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Faisal Muhamad, as Bureau Vice-Chair and Rapporteur and heard a briefing on the guidelines for advisory opinion submissions to the International Court of Justice. The press release issued after the meeting is excerpted below ([GA/PAL/1452](#)).

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People today elected its Vice-Chair and Rapporteur, as the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine updated the Committee on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and gave a briefing on the guidelines for opinion case submissions to the International Court of Justice.

By acclamation, the Committee unanimously elected Ahmad Faisal Muhamad (Malaysia) as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur.

Mr. Muhamad (Malaysia), speaking after his election, stressed that the hardship and agony suffered by the Palestinian people has persisted for far too long. His Government will continue to stand in solidarity with them and remains convinced that the internationally recognized two-State solution with East Jerusalem as its capital and based on pre-1967 borders can be realized if the international community — especially the Security Council — exerts all efforts to ensure its full implementation. “You can count on Malaysia’s commitment and support towards the work of this Committee and the realization of the Palestinian people’s inalienable rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty,” he said.

Riyad H. Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, spotlighted the recent events in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; Israel’s latest acts of aggression; the desecration of holy sites, including Christian ones during Easter; the massive onslaught against Palestinian prisoners,

some of whom have engaged in a hunger strike; and the aggression of extremist settler groups. While the international community is reacting appropriately, more must be done to implement relevant Security Council resolutions, end the Nakba and uphold the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence, sovereignty and return.

Turning to opinion case submissions in relation to General Assembly resolution A/77/247, which requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, he noted that there is a 20-page template and a bank of 27 lawyers willing to work on a pro-bono basis to assist countries on their submission. The aim is to have a tremendous amount of information for the Court so that the entire question of Palestine can be heard and receive a useful opinion, he underscored.

Several delegates then took the floor to share that they are working actively on their submissions.

In other business, Cheikh Niang (Senegal), Chair of the Committee, outlined its recent and upcoming activities which include a special meeting and a special commemorative event on 15 May in the General Assembly Hall of United Nations Headquarters. For the first time in history, the United Nations will commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Nakba, he noted.

At the outset, the Committee decided to defer the consideration of requests for the accreditation of civil society organizations to its next meeting.

The Committee will reconvene at a date and time to be announced.

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III. OIC CONDEMNS ISRAELI ATTACKS IN NABLUS, GAZA

On 4 May, the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued the following [statement](#).

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) condemned the horrific crime committed by the Israeli occupation forces in the city of Nablus, which resulted in the death of three martyrs and wounding of dozens of Palestinian citizens, and the recent Israeli military aggression on the Gaza Strip. The OIC considers these attacks an extension of the open Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

The OIC held Israel, the occupying power, fully responsible for the consequences of the continuation of its crimes that would increase tension and instability in the region. The OIC called upon the international actors to intervene to stop the continuous Israeli crimes throughout the occupied Palestinian territory and to hold Israel, the occupying power, accountable for its crimes and continuous violations, and to provide international protection for the Palestinian people.

IV. AD HOC LIAISON COMMITTEE OF DONORS MEETS IN BRUSSELS

The following is the [Chair's summary](#) of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) in Brussels, on 3-4 May 2023. It was chaired by the Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process of Norway, Ms. Hilde Haraldstad, and the host was the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell.

The AHLC met in Brussels on 3-4 May 2023. The Chair commends the Israeli and Palestinian delegations for their constructive participation and thanks the International Monetary Fund, the Office of the Quartet, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, and the World Bank for their important reports and contributions to the meeting.

The goal of the AHLC is the realization of an independent and functioning Palestinian state, in the context of a two-state solution. AHLC members reaffirmed their commitment to providing political and financial support toward this end, including through support of Palestinian institution-building and measures to strengthen the Palestinian economy.

The AHLC meeting took place during a difficult time, with significant tensions and violence on the ground, with a negative impact on the security situation. A key concern was the critical Palestinian financial situation. With deductions in clearance revenues, and reduction in international aid, the Palestinian Authority (PA) is struggling to maintain its public finances. Its ability to provide quality services to its people is under tremendous pressure. Various fiscal files between the parties and PA public expenditure reform are still outstanding. Structural restrictions, including on access and movement for Palestinians posed by the occupation, limit economic growth. These challenges are particularly relevant in Area C of the West Bank and in Gaza.

In this context, it is crucial for the parties to improve the situation, strengthen the Palestinian economy and restart a political process. The AHLC commended the Israelis and Palestinians, as well as Egypt, Jordan, and the USA for their joint statements in Aqaba and Sharm el-Sheikh. The AHLC called on the parties to implement commitments from these meetings as well as previous AHLC meetings, and to continue the dialogue. The importance of maintaining the status quo around the holy sites in Jerusalem was emphasized.

The AHLC took note of progress made since the last meeting in September 2022:

- The increase in number of permits for Palestinian workers in Israel, and the electronic transferring of their salaries that could also increase tax revenues.
- Improvements in the infrastructure and movement at the Karm Abu Salem/Kerem Shalom crossing.
- Steps being taken to improve water and wastewater management.

- Increased tax revenues following the successful implementation of the e-Vat system pilot; the commitment to include all Israeli vendors in the system, as well as the commitment of both parties to ensure the sustainability of the system.

The AHLC also noted progress made on the PA reform agenda. In particular, the adoption of an attrition target for net public employment and continuous progress and growth made in the public revenue system.

Positive as these steps are, the meeting expressed deep concern about the lack of implementation on a range of matters that have been on the AHLC agenda for many years.

Delegates to the AHLC meeting made a series of recommendations of short- and long-term measures. In particular, the AHLC called on:

Both parties to:

- Implement previous agreements between them, commit to de-escalation and refrain from steps that undermine Palestinian institutions and the two-state solution.
- Consider agreed adjustments to the provisions of the Paris Protocol, address outstanding fiscal files and resume Joint Economic Committee (JEC) meetings.
- Accelerate progress on key infrastructure developments, including the PWA's Water and Wastewater infrastructure package; the deployment of 4G and 5G services, and renewable energy development, including in Area C.
- Continue the dialogue with a view to holding AHLC working group meetings ahead of the next AHLC meeting in September 2023.

The Palestinian Authority to:

- Carry out fiscal reforms to improve the financial situation and the ability to deliver quality services to the people, such as on the wage bill, net lending and health referrals, and develop a medium-term macro-fiscal adjustment framework.
- Strengthen the legitimacy of Palestinian institutions, including by continuing reforms.

Israel to:

- Reaffirm its commitment to the strengthening of Palestinian institutions and economy, including by transferring withheld Palestinian funds collected through clearance revenues and increasing transparency on transfers.
- Improve access and movement for Palestinians, including to promote investments and economic growth.

The international community to:

- Increase economic assistance to the Palestinians, including budget support to strengthen the PA, and also to align support to PA reform efforts.
- Increase support to UNRWA, civil society and other partners.
- Provide more accessible and transparent information about their aid contributions to Palestinians (including the PA) including through the Aid Information Management System (AIMS) and the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat (LACS).

All actors to contribute to coordinating efforts to improve the situation, to de-escalation, trust-building, and a resumption of a political process toward peace.

V. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR DISTURBED BY ISRAELI DEMOLITION OF EU-FUNDED PALESTINIAN SCHOOL

On 8 May, United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Tor Wennesland, issued the following [statement](#).

I am deeply disturbed by the 7 May demolition by Israeli authorities of a European Union-funded Palestinian primary school for the children of Jubbet adh Dhib village, east of Bethlehem, in Area C of the occupied West Bank, directly affecting the education of at least 40 children.

The demolition followed an Israeli court order citing safety concerns in response to a petition by a settler organization. Currently, 58 schools, serving 6,500 children, face the threat of demolition due to a lack of building permits that are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain.

A child's right to education must be respected. I call on Israeli authorities to cease such demolitions and evictions which are illegal under international law, and to approve plans for Palestinian communities to build legally in Area C to address their development needs, including for schools.

As I reiterated at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) meeting in Brussels last week, such acts that negatively impact basic service delivery for Palestinians threaten stability and undermine the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, persistent drivers of conflict, including demolitions, breed a climate of mistrust and tension between Palestinians and Israelis and undermine the prospect of achieving a political solution.

VI. EU GRAVELY CONCERNED BY THE ESCALATION IN GAZA

On 9 May, the Spokesperson for the European Union Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Peter Stano, issued the following [statement](#).

The European Union is gravely concerned by the escalation in Gaza following today's Israeli air raids. The EU deeply regrets the loss of civilian lives, including children, and calls for the respect of international humanitarian law. Civilian lives must be protected under all circumstances.

We urge all parties to exercise maximum restraint, promote calm and work towards a political horizon and regional stability in line with the commitments in the Aqaba and Sharm el Sheikh declarations.

VII. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR DEEPLY CONCERNED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN GAZA

On 9 May, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Tor Wennesland, issued the following [statement](#).

I am deeply alarmed by developments in Gaza after Israel launched a military operation this morning targeting members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement (PIJ).

The Israeli airstrikes inside Gaza resulted in the killing of 13 Palestinians, including three members of PIJ, a doctor, five women and four children, and more than 20 injured.

I condemn the deaths of civilians in the Israeli airstrikes. This is unacceptable.

I urge all concerned to exercise maximum restraint and avoid an escalation. I remain fully engaged with all sides in an attempt to avoid a broader conflict with devastating consequences for all.

VIII. SECRETARY-GENERAL CONDEMNS CIVILIAN LOSS OF LIFE IN GAZA

On 10 May, the Spokesperson for United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, issued the following [statement](#).

The Secretary-General is following with deep concern the latest security developments in Gaza, and the ongoing escalation and risk of further loss of life.

The Secretary-General condemns the civilian loss of life, including that of children and women, which he views as unacceptable and must stop immediately. Israel must abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law, including the proportional use of force and taking all feasible precautions to spare civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of military operations.

The Secretary-General also condemns the indiscriminate launching of rockets from Gaza into Israel, which violates international humanitarian law and puts at risk both Palestinian and Israeli civilians.

The Secretary-General urges all parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint and to work to stop hostilities immediately. He reiterates his commitment to supporting Palestinians and Israelis to resolve the conflict on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements.

IX. UN HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE ALARMED BY ESCALATION OF HOSTILITIES IN GAZA

On 11 May, the spokesperson for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made the following [statement](#).

The UN Human Rights Office is alarmed by the escalation of hostilities in Gaza this week. Strikes on Gaza by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have killed at least 12 civilians, including women and children. Palestinian armed groups have fired rockets into Israel.

Since 9 May, a total of 25 Palestinians, including six children and four women, have been killed and dozens injured in Gaza, according to data verified by the UN. At least three senior members of Palestinian Islamic Jihad were among those killed.

Buildings that the IDF struck reportedly included residential apartments, raising serious concerns whether these attacks complied with the principles of distinction and proportionality. We are concerned about whether the IDF took sufficient precautions to avoid, and in any event to minimize, loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects.

The launching of indiscriminate rockets from Gaza into Israel, which puts at risk both Israeli and Palestinian civilians, violates international humanitarian law.

We urge all parties to take measures to de-escalate, and conduct prompt and transparent investigation into all killings, especially of civilians.

X. EU DEEPLY CONCERNED BY GRAVE ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN GAZA

On 11 May, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell, issued the following [statement](#).

The European Union is deeply concerned by the grave escalation of violence in recent days in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

The EU is deeply alarmed by this new round of violence and the deteriorating security situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel, and by on-going developments in and around Gaza, which has claimed unacceptable civilian casualties including children.

We urge an immediate comprehensive ceasefire which will end Israeli military operations in Gaza and current rocket firing against Israel, which is unacceptable. International humanitarian law must be respected.

The EU subscribes fully to the joint declaration of the “Munich group” today in Berlin, where it was represented. In particular, the EU commends the efforts of Egypt to bring about an immediate ceasefire.

The EU will continue to work with all parties to restore a political horizon for the two-states solutions and the stability of the region.

XI. UNICEF DEPLORES ALL ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN GAZA

On 13 May, the Executive Director of the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), Ms. Catherine Russell, made the following [statement](#).

Escalating violence in and around the Gaza Strip is once again wreaking havoc on the lives of children.

At least six children – the youngest just four-years-old – have been killed and 36 reported injured in the Gaza Strip since 9 May. All schools in the Gaza Strip are closed, as well as those in Israel within 40 km, interrupting education for thousands of students. Water and sanitation systems in the Gaza Strip are running low on fuel, and health centers are now operating at half capacity, undermining access to essential services for children – especially the injured – and other vulnerable groups.

This latest escalation follows a spike in conflict-related violence that has left 26 Palestinian children and four Israeli children dead since the start of the year – three times the number of conflict-related child deaths recorded in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip during the same period in 2022. And it comes after 87 children were killed and more than 750 were injured during previous rounds of hostilities in the past two years.

For decades, children across the State of Palestine and Israel have been forced to endure a seemingly endless cycle of hostilities, many with nowhere safe to turn. They have been exposed to terrifying violence, exacting an incalculable toll on their mental health and well-being – young lives lost or changed forever.

UNICEF deplores all acts of violence against children and calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and for all parties to protect children from all forms of violence and grave violations, in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law.

The children in the region need and deserve a long-term political solution to the broader crisis so they can grow up in peace and safety.”

XII. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR CALLS ON ALL SIDES TO OBSERVE CEASEFIRE

On 14 May, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Tor Wennesland, issued the following [statement](#).

I welcome the announcement of a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel.

I am deeply saddened by the loss of life and injuries, including children and women, from Israeli airstrikes in Gaza and the indiscriminate firing of rockets toward Israel by Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other militant groups. Deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the violence and their loved ones.

I commend Egypt for its efforts to help restore calm. I call on all sides to observe the ceasefire.

I look forward to the immediate restoration of humanitarian access and all social and economic measures to support Palestinian livelihoods in Gaza.

XIII. UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES CEASEFIRE IN ISRAEL AND GAZA AND COMMENDS EGYPT'S FACILITATING ROLE

On 14 May, the Spokesperson for United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres issued the following [statement](#).

The Secretary-General welcomes last night's ceasefire agreement in Israel and Gaza.

The Secretary-General extends his deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the violence. The hostilities have led to needless human suffering.

The Secretary-General commends Egypt's key role in bringing the hostilities to an end, alongside the efforts of Qatar, Lebanon and the United States to reach a ceasefire. He calls on all sides to observe the ceasefire.

The Secretary-General reaffirms the United Nations' commitment to the achievement of the two-State solution based on relevant United Nations resolutions, international law, prior agreements and the importance of restoring a political horizon. He reiterates that only a negotiated sustainable political solution will lead to lasting peace and end, once and for all, these devastating cycles of violence.

XIV. UN COMMEMORATES 75TH NAKBA ANNIVERSARY

On 15 May, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People organized a high-level special meeting to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Nakba at UN Headquarters. The high-level event was presided over by the Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Cheikh Niang. It included a keynote address by the President of the State of Palestine, H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, and statements by [Rosemary A. DiCarlo](#), Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini (via video), representatives of regional groups and civil society ([press release GA/PAL/1453](#)). The [statement](#) of Ambassador Niang is reproduced below.

The Nakba is the epicenter of the tragic history of the Palestinian people, a moment in time in 1948 when a vibrant society was shattered, and its existence as a nation threatened. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced or expelled almost overnight, many fled for their lives believing they could return to their homes once the war ended. Many were killed or died in the process; hundreds of villages and communities were destroyed.

This tragedy started - but did not end in 1948. Seventy-five years since the General Assembly's decision to partition historic Palestine with the adoption of resolution [181 \(II\)](#) and over 55 years since Israel's occupation of the remainder of the Palestinian Territory in 1967, including East Jerusalem, generations of Palestinians, including Palestine refugees, have continued to suffer violations of their basic and inalienable human rights, enduring dispossession, displacement, violence, and insecurity, in what is considered an "ongoing Nakba". Tragically, after all these years, the realization of Palestinian people's rights, including of self-determination, independence and return to their homeland, remains unfulfilled.

Over the years, the Palestinian people have shown incredible resilience, never giving up on their legitimate national aspirations and never losing their hope and identity. Such resilience should not absolve the international community from its obligations and responsibility to deliver justice to the Palestinian people and assist in the realization of their rights and the attainment of peace and stability for Palestinians, Israelis and the Middle East as a whole.

Reminding the world about the Nakba and the ongoing suffering of Palestinian people is needed now more than ever. As we gather today for this historical moment, the situation is particularly dire in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Gaza. This 75th anniversary puts the spotlight on the world's longest refugee crisis and is a reminder that a population of over 5.9 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA continue to live amidst conflict, violence, dispossession, and an illegal occupation that is depriving them of all of their inalienable rights. They rightly aspire to — and we owe them — a just and lasting solution to their plight, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution [194 \(III\)](#), which affirmed the rights of the Palestine refugees to return and to just compensation. In the continued absence of a just solution, the Committee continues to strongly support the mandate of UNRWA to provide vital humanitarian and development support to the refugees and a crucial contribution to regional stability and appeals to ensure sufficient and predictable funding for the Agency.

We regret that the reports of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and other prominent entities actively engaged in promoting a just and lasting peace are all pointing towards increasingly negative and worrying trends on the ground. The Committee is concerned by the dangerous escalation of violence throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem, amidst increased political tension and a peace process that has been stalled for nearly a decade. In 2022 and so far in 2023, we witnessed an increase in Israel's deadly military raids across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as settler-generated violence and attacks, and military assaults against Gaza, leading to the killing and injury of more Palestinian civilians, including women and children. We also condemn the ongoing escalation in Gaza and the loss of civilian lives from the recent Israeli military operation which shattered the existing truce. The death of civilians, Palestinians and Israelis alike, is unacceptable and we urge all parties involved to end the hostilities.

Violence, in whatever form, only takes us further away from the international consensus to achieve a just peace in the Middle East as outlined in international law and countless UN resolutions. Such violence is not the answer. Civilians must be protected. International law and respect for human rights comprise the path forward for sustainable peace, and Palestine is not the exception.

Last year, the General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to request the International Court of Justice to render an advisory opinion regarding the prolonged violation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the legality of Israel's policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including settlement colonization, and its discriminatory policies and measures against the Palestinian people, which many international, Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations have deemed constitute apartheid. The Committee views the General Assembly's request as an important and positive step at this crucial juncture. The Committee is gravely concerned that Israel's occupation of Palestinian land is not temporary, but rather a de facto creeping annexation as argued by several UN Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory and countless others.

We are dismayed by the grave human rights abuses and discriminatory policies imposed by Israel against the Palestinian people. The plight of Palestinian families facing expulsion from their homes and land in the East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Sheikh Jerrah and Silwan, in the South Hebron Hills, in Hebron and everywhere in the Occupied Palestinian Territory must be heard and supported. Israel must reverse the dispossession and forcible displacement of Palestinians as well as the transfer of its population to that occupied land in contravention to international law and grave breach of the IV Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

On this solemn occasion, let me reiterate that a just and lasting peace — and the most solid foundation for regional — will be achieved through a just solution to the Question of Palestine in all its aspects. It will be achieved by bringing an end to the injustice of the Nakba. It will be achieved through the two-State solution, bringing an end to Israel's occupation that began in 1967, realizing the long-delayed right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence and a just resolution to the plight of Palestine refugees. The Committee will continue to stand in

solidarity with the Palestinian people and to work tirelessly to uphold its mandate, in cooperation with all international partners, to make these noble goals a reality.

XV. UNRWA DEMANDS AN END TO STAFF INTIMIDATION AND HARASSMENT IN WEST BANK

On 18 May, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East made the following [statement](#).

Many UNRWA staff members and their families are coming under increased intimidation, harassment and threats of violence because they have continued to support service delivery to Palestine Refugees and have not joined the West Bank staff strike ongoing since 4 March.

UNRWA demands an immediate end to such acts against its staff and called on the Palestinian Authority for support to enable the delivery of UNRWA services to Palestinian refugees in line with its mandate.

UNRWA staff members in the West Bank who chose to uphold their right to work must be able to continue delivering services freely to Palestine refugees without being under pressure and threat. The intimidation includes the forced shutting down of UNRWA premises, threatening phone calls, aggressive public statements that target them, including on social media and threats of consequences for those who continue to support UNRWA delivery of services to Palestine Refugees.

The West Bank labour dispute and ensuing strike have severely impacted the delivery of services to nearly 900,000 Palestine Refugees in the area, including over 45,000 children who have not been to school for over three months. Their safety, security and wellbeing are compromised. The longer children stay out of school the bigger the damaging effect on their education and future and the more likely they would fall prey to exploitation and abuse.

UNRWA hopes that ongoing discussions, under the auspices of the Palestinian Authority and through the High Level Committee established for this purpose, will help resolve the dispute in line with the interests of the Agency as a whole, all staff and the refugees.

XVI. OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT CONDEMNS ISRAELI ACTIONS IN NABLUS

On 22 May, the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued the following [statement](#).

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) strongly condemned the heinous crime committed by the Israeli occupation forces in the city of Nablus on 22 May 2023, which led to the death of three martyrs and wounding of a number of Palestinian citizens. The OIC considers that this crime constitutes an extension of the daily crimes and aggression committed by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and calls for investigation and accountability.

The OIC held the Israeli occupation government fully responsible for this continuous escalation, and renewed its call on the international community to intervene to stop the continuous Israeli crimes and violations on the entire occupied Palestinian territory, including the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and to provide international protection for the Palestinian people.

XVII. EU GRAVELY CONCERNED BY AND CONDEMNS SETTLEMENTS EXPANSION AND HOUSING DEMOLITIONS IN OCCUPIED WEST BANK

On 24 May, the spokesperson for European Union Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Peter Stano issued the following [statement](#).

The European Union is gravely concerned by and condemns the decision of the Israeli authorities to allow Israeli citizens to establish permanent presence in the outpost in Homesh in the occupied West Bank. The EU urges the Israeli government to reverse this and its decisions taken on 17 May to advance plans for more than 600 housing units in existing and new settlements in the West Bank.

Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine the viability of the two-state solution. Such unilateral actions go against efforts to lower tensions on the ground.

The EU is appalled to learn that the Palestinian community of Ein Samiya in the occupied West Bank, which comprises 172 people, including 78 children, was forced to leave their homes permanently, as a result of repeated settler attacks and demolition orders. The EU firmly condemns settler violence and calls on Israel to ensure accountability.

XVIII. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL

On 24 May, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Tor Wennesland, delivered the following statement ([S/PV.9328](#)) during a Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

This past month, we have been reminded again of the volatile security situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, as yet another deadly escalation between Israel and Palestinian armed factions in Gaza took place. While the ceasefire is holding, conflict mitigation efforts must also be met with steps by both sides, supported by the international community, to reset a trajectory out of the cycle of violence. I call on all parties to stop unilateral and inflammatory actions that undermine prospects for peace and to address the acute financial and institutional challenges faced by the Palestinian Authority (PA).

I am particularly alarmed by the funding crisis facing United Nations agencies supporting basic services and social support, including emergency food assistance, to Palestinians. Without new funding, the World Food Programme (WFP) will suspend cash assistance to approximately 200,000 Palestinians next week, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will not have the resources to deliver core services in September. That comes alongside existing financial challenges faced by the PA and declining

donor support overall. I encourage Member States to immediately seek ways to increase their support for Palestinians, including funding to UNRWA and WFP, without which we will face serious humanitarian and, potentially, security challenges. There is no time to spare.

Tensions increased between Israel and Palestinian armed factions in the Gaza Strip on 2 May, when a Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) leader, Khader Adnan, died in an Israeli jail following an 86-day hunger strike. In response, PIJ and other armed factions in Gaza fired more than 100 rockets towards Israel, causing damage, but no injuries. The Israeli Air Force responded with air attacks against what it said were Hamas and PIJ targets in the Strip, killing one Palestinian and causing damage. Following intensive efforts by Egypt, Qatar and the United Nations, hostilities ended on 3 May. One week later, in the early hours of 9 May, the Israeli Air Force carried out air strikes in Gaza that killed three senior members of PIJ's military wing in their homes. Israeli officials said that the three were responsible for firing the rockets on 2 May. The strikes against residential structures also killed 10 civilians — family members and neighbours — including women and children. Over five days, Israel conducted 323 air strikes against what it said were PIJ military targets in Gaza, while Palestinian militants — mainly PIJ's Al-Quds Brigades — launched more than 1,200 rockets and 250 mortars towards Israel, of which nearly 300 fell short within Gaza, and more than 400 were intercepted by Israel's aerial defence system.

Thirty-three Palestinians, including at least 12 civilians, four women and six children, were killed during the hostilities. Of those, one Palestinian worker was killed in Israel by rocket fire from Gaza, and the United Nations is verifying reports that at least three fatalities were due to rockets falling short within the Strip. According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, 190 Palestinians were injured, including at least 38 women and 64 children. One Israeli civilian woman was killed by rocket fire. According to Israeli authorities, six Israelis were moderately injured, and 89 lightly injured.

The escalation compounded the already dire humanitarian situation in the Strip. According to authorities in Gaza, nearly 100 housing units were completely destroyed, and more than 125 were damaged and rendered uninhabitable, displacing more than 1,100 Palestinians. Israeli authorities closed both crossings between Gaza and Israel, preventing the entry of food, medical supplies and fuel for the Gaza power plant. As a result, hundreds of patients were unable to access essential medical care in the West Bank or Israel. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations engaged intensively with all parties, alongside with efforts by Egypt, together with regional and international partners, including Qatar, to end the hostilities and prevent further loss of life. I commend Egypt for its role in bringing the parties to a ceasefire.

I am deeply concerned that civilians continue to bear the brunt of such hostilities. I am particularly appalled that children, who must never be the target of violence, continue to be victims. I echo the Secretary-General's condemnation of the unacceptable loss of civilian lives and his call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law, including the proportional use of force and the taking of all feasible precautions to spare civilians in the conduct of military operations. I also reiterate the Secretary-General's condemnation of the indiscriminate launching of rockets from Gaza towards Israel, including from densely populated residential areas, which violates international humanitarian law.

Turning to the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the level of violence remained high. Seventeen Palestinians, including two children, were killed and 138 Palestinians, including two women and 23 children, were injured by Israeli security forces during demonstrations, clashes, search-and-arrest operations, attacks and alleged attacks on Israelis and other incidents. Another 24 Palestinians, including two children, were injured by Israeli settlers or other civilians in shooting attacks, stone-throwing and other incidents. Thirty-three Israeli civilians, including four women, as well as four Israeli security forces personnel, were injured by Palestinians in shooting and ramming attacks, clashes, the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails and other incidents.

As in previous months, many Palestinian casualties occurred in the context of Israeli military operations in Area A and subsequent armed clashes. On 4 May in Nablus, Israeli security forces killed three Palestinian members of Hamas's military wing who, according to Israeli security forces, were responsible for the April killing of three Israeli civilians in the Jordan Valley. Israeli security forces also killed three Palestinians during an operation in Qabatiya, south of Jenin, on 10 May, one of whom was an unarmed bystander. Three Palestinians were killed while carrying out attacks or alleged attacks on Israeli security forces, including a person killed in an alleged ramming attack near Salfit on 27 April, a Palestinian woman who committed a stabbing attack that resulted in light injury in Huwwara, near Nablus, on 4 May, and one person killed in an alleged stabbing attempt at a checkpoint west of Jenin on 13 May.

During the reporting period, Israeli forces imposed significant movement restrictions, particularly around Jericho, Nablus and Hebron, following either Palestinian attacks or stone-throwing, affecting tens of thousands of Palestinians and their local economies.

Thousands of right-wing Israeli activists, including senior Government ministers, participated in the highly provocative annual Flag Day march through Jerusalem's Old City, marking Jerusalem Day. Many chanted racist slogans, including "Death to Arabs", with scuffles breaking out between Israeli participants and Palestinians. Israelis also threw bottles and other objects at media personnel covering the event, injuring two journalists. Such provocations and incitements — which continued in the days after the march — are unacceptable and should be condemned by all. I also reiterate that the status quo at the holy sites must be respected. Levels of settler-related violence also remained high, with five Palestinians shot and injured by Israeli settlers using live ammunition. I reiterate that all perpetrators of violence must be held accountable and swiftly brought to justice. Security forces must exercise maximum restraint and use lethal force only when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life.

From 3 to 4 May, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee convened in Brussels, where the parties and donors discussed measures to support Palestinian institution-building and strengthen the Palestinian Authority and economy. The Chair's summary called on both sides to implement previous agreements between them, commit to de-escalation and refrain from steps that undermine Palestinian institutions and the possibility of a two-State solution, while calling on the international community to increase assistance to the Palestinians, including through support to UNRWA.

I regret to say that we have observed more settlement plans being moved forward, with tenders published for some 310 housing units in Area C and demolitions continuing. On 18 May, the Israeli military issued an order, in line with the Knesset's March amendment to the 2005 Disengagement

Plan, to allow Israelis to re-enter the area of the evacuated settlement of Homesh, built on private Palestinian-owned land in the northern West Bank. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished, seized or forced owners to demolish 33 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C and 17 in East Jerusalem, including a donor-funded school east of Bethlehem, displacing 89 Palestinians, including 45 children. The demolitions were carried out due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain.

On 7 May, Israel's High Court of Justice rejected a petition to compel Israeli authorities to carry out demolition orders against the Palestinian village of Khan Al-Ahmar. The justices agreed with the Government of Israel's position that the Court should not intervene in setting a timeline for the demolition. The Court also agreed that the demolition would not be carried out at this time, citing Israel's security and foreign relations as reasons. I reiterate that all settlements are illegal under international law and a substantial obstacle to peace, and they must stop. I also call on Israeli authorities to end the displacement and eviction of Palestinians and to approve plans that will enable Palestinians to build legally and address their development needs.

Turning to the region, in the Golan, while the ceasefire between Israel and Syria has been generally maintained, the situation continues to be volatile owing to violations of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement by the parties. The situation along the Blue Line remained stable following the 6 April breach of the cessation of hostilities.

In recent weeks, the United Nations, together with regional and international partners, mobilized once again to end hostilities between armed factions in Gaza and Israel. Such efforts are crucial to saving Palestinian and Israeli lives. Nevertheless, we must also keep at the forefront the issues that are fundamental to creating the conditions for a lasting peace. The immediate priority is to support steps to bolster the Palestinian Authority and preserve the provision of critical services to the Palestinian people. Those steps should be implemented in a way that encourages the Palestinian parties to engage with each other, including on underlying political issues. That requires greater efforts by Israeli and Palestinian leaders, alongside increased support and attention from the international community. We must take action, not only to ensure Palestinians' well-being and governance but also as an integral part of ending the occupation and restoring a political horizon toward a viable two-State solution, based on United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements.

**XIX. ACTING UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR
UNDERScores TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAELI DEMOLITIONS
AND SETTLER VIOLENCE FOR PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES**

On 25 May, Acting Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory Ms. Yvonne Helle issued the following [statement](#).

On Monday 22 May, the Palestinian herding community of Ein Samiya (Ramallah) began dismantling and leaving their homes, citing settler violence as their main reason. Until this week, Ein Samiya was home to 178 people, including 78 children.

“These families are not leaving by choice; the Israeli authorities have repeatedly demolished homes and other structures they own and have threatened to destroy their only school. At the same time, land available for the grazing of livestock has decreased due to settlement expansion and both children and adults have been subjected to settler violence,” said the Acting Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Yvonne Helle. “We are witnessing the tragic consequences of longstanding Israeli practices and settler violence.”

Pursuant to international humanitarian law, the Government of Israel has obligations to protect Palestinians living under occupation and ensure that those responsible for violence against Palestinians are held accountable. Several communities have recently been displaced in similar circumstances; since 2022, 81 Palestinians, including 42 children, have had to leave their communities of Wadi as Seeq and Lifjim and similarly, last year, about 100 people left their community of Ras a Tin.

Repeated demolitions, settlement expansion, loss of access to grazing land, and settler violence continue to cause concern about the coercive environment, which together with loss of homes and access to lands, generate more humanitarian need.

Humanitarian actors are assessing the needs of the community and will continue to provide them with assistance.