



## Special Political and Decolonization Committee

### *Topic 1: The question of Human Rights violation in Palestinian Territories*

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### 1. Definition of Key Terms

**Human Rights:** are the rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world. Human rights include freedom from slavery, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, the right to life and liberty, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.

**Palestinian Territories:** the Palestinian population is divided between West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip. Israel had occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in Six-Days War of 1967. The Palestinian territories are part of the area intended by the United Nations to become the territory of the future State of Palestine. In the 1948 Palestine war, the Israel army conquered major parts of it. While in the Partition Plan about 45% of historic Palestine was destined for the Arabic state.

## 2. Introduction

It has been 50 years since Israel's occupation of the Palestinian Territories and the start of the 11th year of its illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip, subjecting approximately 2 million inhabitants to collective punishment and a growing humanitarian crisis. The Israeli authorities intensified expansion of settlements and related infrastructure across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem,



and restricted the freedom of movement of Palestinians. Israel forces unlawfully killed Palestinian civilians, including children, and unlawfully detained within Israel thousands of Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), holding hundreds in administrative detention without charge or trial. Torture and other ill-treatment of detainees, including children, remained pervasive and was committed with exemption. Israel continued to destroy Palestinian homes in the West Bank and in Palestinian villages inside Israel, violently removing residents. Conscientious objectors to military service were imprisoned. Thousands of African seekers were threatened with deportation.

## 3. Background Information

Israel maintains entrenched discriminatory systems that treats Palestinians unequally. Its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, lasted by now 50 years, involves systematic rights abuses including: collective punishment, routine use of excessive lethal force, and prolonged administrative detention without charge or trial for hundreds. It builds and supports illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, expropriating Palestinian land and imposing burdens on Palestinians but not on settlers, restricting their access to basic services and making it nearly impossible for them to build in much of the West Bank without risking demolition. The closure of Gaza, supported by Egypt, stiffly restricts the movement of both people and goods, with a consecutive devastating humanitarian impact. The Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza both sharply restrict dissent, arbitrarily arresting critics and abusing those in their custody.

Israel authorities intensified agreement expansion and land appropriation in the OPT. US and international efforts to negotiate failed, Israeli-Palestinian relations remained therefore tense. In March 2017, Israel authorities passed the so-called "Regularization Law" that retroactively legalized the settler takeover of thousands of hectares of privately-owned Palestinian land and an estimated 4,500 settler homes. In addition, Israel authorities announced and issued tenders for tens of thousands of new settlement units in East Jerusalem and across the rest of the West Bank.

Palestinians carried out knifings, car-ramming, shootings and other attacks against Israelis in the West Bank and in Israel. The attacks, mostly carried out by individuals unaffiliated to armed groups, killed 14 Israelis and one foreign national. Israeli forces killed 76 Palestinians and one foreign national.

In March, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia issued a report determining Israel to be “guilty of the crime of apartheid” against Palestinians. In May, a UNESCO resolution reaffirmed the occupied status of East Jerusalem and criticized Israel’s conduct in the city. Following the killing of two Israeli policemen by Palestinians, in July Israel installed metal detectors to screen Muslim worshippers entering the Temple Mount. The new security measures led to heightened tensions and mass protests by Palestinians, including collective prayers, across the West Bank. The prayer protests, often met with excessive force, ended once the metal detectors were removed.

In September, the Hamas de facto administration in Gaza and the “national consensus” government in the West Bank embarked on a reconciliation process, which was rejected by Israel.

In December, US President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital in violation of international law, sparking widespread protests across the OPT and globally.

## Major Country Involved

**Palestine** is politically under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian government and the Hamas Government in Gaza. Since the Palestinian Declaration of Independence in 1988 and the consequent admission into UN as an observer state in 2012, Palestine is today recognized by three-quarters of the world's countries. Although recently promoted to a non-member state status in the UN, the State of Palestine is not recognized by Israel and some major Western nations, including much of the European Union as well as **Canada, Australia, Japan, the United States, and Mexico.**



The major countries involved are the ones near Palestine. **Israel**, in the first place, that comprehends West Bank and Gaza Strip. All the neighbouring countries were affected by the Israel war, **Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.**

## 5. UN Involvement

Though the Security Council has “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security,” it has not been able to address and resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Council has taken no significant action since 1967, when it passed Resolution 242 calling on Israel to surrender the territories acquired during its war with Syria and Egypt. The United



States has used its influence to keep the issue off the Council's agenda and it has repeatedly used its veto power on Israel's benefit.

The General Assembly has taken a more active role in the conflict, repeatedly taking action and often calling on parties to respect human rights. In 1988, the Assembly took the unprecedented step of calling a special session in Geneva after the United States refused to grant Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat the visa needed to address the Assembly in New York. Israel accuses the General Assembly of having a "pro-Palestinian" preference. Yet the Assembly is unable to compel the parties to work towards peace since its resolutions only have moral and symbolic weight and are not legally binding. Both the Assembly and the Security Council could be more effective if governments were reliable to risk the displeasure and pressure of the United States.

Demoralized by the impotence and by the inaction of the Security Council, the General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice to evaluate the legal status of Israel's "separation wall". In July 2004, the Court declared the illegality of the obstruction. The Security Council has yet to accept and adopt the Court's ruling and the United Nations remains side-lined in the conflict, acting primarily through the Secretary General's special envoys and through its role as a member of the Quartet (UN, USA, Europe Union, Russia).



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## 6. Useful Links

<http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/human-rights/>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/what-are-human-rights>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14630174>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/>

<https://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/index-of-countries-on-the-security-council-agenda/israel-palestine-and-the-occupied-territories/un-involvement.html>