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# **Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People**

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# **Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People**



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*Note*

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

## Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
Letter of transmittal . . . . .	4
I. Introduction . . . . .	5
II. Overview of the political context relating to the question of Palestine . . . . .	6
III. Mandate of the Committee . . . . .	10
IV. Organization of work . . . . .	11
A. Membership and officers . . . . .	11
B. Participation in the work of the Committee . . . . .	11
V. Action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights in accordance with General Assembly resolutions <a href="#">75/20</a> and <a href="#">75/21</a> . . . . .	12
A. Introduction . . . . .	12
B. Mobilization of the diplomatic community . . . . .	12
C. Raising awareness of the question of Palestine . . . . .	14
D. Cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations system entities . . . . .	17
E. Capacity-building . . . . .	18
VI. Action taken by the Department of Global Communications in accordance with General Assembly resolution <a href="#">75/23</a> . . . . .	19
VII. Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee . . . . .	21
A. Immediate action by the Committee in response to annexation and settlement activities . . . . .	21
B. Immediate action by the Committee in response to the conflict . . . . .	22
C. Immediate action by the Committee in response to postponement of elections in Palestine . . . . .	22
D. Action taken with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council . . . . .	22
E. Advocacy and outreach with the international community and civil society . . . . .	23
F. Action by Member States and regional organizations . . . . .	24
G. Support action in response to the coronavirus disease pandemic . . . . .	24
H. Action by the Secretariat and other United Nations entities . . . . .	25

## Letter of transmittal

[1 September 2021]

Mr. Secretary-General,

I have the honour to enclose herewith the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for submission to the General Assembly and circulation to all the competent bodies of the United Nations for necessary action, as appropriate, in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 10 of Assembly resolution [75/20](#) of 2 December 2020.

The report covers the period from 2 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.

(*Signed*) Cheikh **Niang**  
Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the  
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

## Chapter I

### Introduction

1. The present report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/20](#), adopted on 2 December 2020. It covers the implementation by the Committee of its programme of work ([A/AC.183/2021/1](#)), formulated to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination. Its objectives include maintaining international awareness, mobilizing efforts aimed at achieving a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace, enhancing international solidarity with the plight of the Palestinian people until those objectives are achieved and supporting the Government of the State of Palestine in its capacity-building efforts towards a future viable and sustainable independent State of Palestine.
2. Chapter II consists of an overview of the political context relating to the question of Palestine during the reporting period, from 2 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.
3. Chapters III and IV contain an outline of the mandate of the Committee as set out by the General Assembly and information on the membership of the Committee and the organization of its work.
4. Chapter V covers the action taken by the Committee, including its participation in meetings of the Security Council and its continuing dialogue with intergovernmental organizations and civil society. It also covers international conferences, including in virtual format, capacity-building workshops organized by the Committee and other mandated activities carried out by the Division for Palestinian Rights on behalf of the Committee.
5. Chapter VI provides an overview of the special information programme on the question of Palestine implemented by the Department of Global Communications in accordance with General Assembly resolution [75/23](#).
6. The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee to the General Assembly are set out in chapter VII of the report.

## Chapter II

### Overview of the political context relating to the question of Palestine

7. During the reporting period, several developments and trends continued to threaten the prospects of a two-State solution.

8. Israeli settlements continued to be constructed and expanded in the Occupied Palestinian Territory despite several Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), declaring them illegal under international law. As documented regularly to the Security Council by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, including in his briefings to the Security Council of 25 March 2021<sup>1</sup> and 24 June,<sup>2</sup> contrary to international law and United Nations resolutions, Israel has entrenched its illegal occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, through settlement construction, wall construction, demolitions and seizures of homes and structures, as well as expulsions and the forced displacement of Palestinian families. On 14 October, the Israeli authorities advanced plans for building some 5,000 settlement units in Area C settlements. In early November, United Nations human rights experts condemned the demolition of the homes and property belonging to a Palestinian Bedouin community in Khirbat Humsah, on 12 July in the northern Jordan Valley. At least 73 inhabitants, including 41 children, were displaced, and more than 75 structures were destroyed. In January, 1,200 units were built in the East Jerusalem settlement of Giv'at Hamatos, and 800 Palestinians were evicted from their homes in the same period.

9. Demolitions and confiscation of Palestinian property throughout the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem continued relentlessly, according to data collected by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. On 26 January 2021, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process reported to the Security Council that, in the previous three months, Israeli authorities had demolished, seized or forced owners to demolish 71 Palestinian-owned structures, including 19 residential structures, displacing 73 Palestinians, including 17 women and 37 children (see S/2021/91, annex 1). On 7 July, Israeli forces destroyed all standing structures in Khirbat Humsah in the Jordan Valley, forcing the transfer of the entire community situated adjacent to the settlement of Beqa'ot. Illegal actions intensified in East Jerusalem in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, where Palestinian residents live under a perpetual threat of forced expulsion and are subject to restriction of movement. Palestinians in the neighbourhoods of Shaykh Jarrah and Silwan in occupied East Jerusalem remain under threat of imminent evictions and forced displacement as Israeli settler organizations continue their attempts to seize their homes.

10. Violent incidents and provocations have continued daily throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with an alarming increase in scale and intensity, as reported by the Secretary-General (see S/2021/584). The Special Coordinator noted the increase in settler-related violence against Palestinians and urged Israel to ensure the safety and security of the Palestinian population, in line with its responsibilities as the occupying Power under international law. Clashes have also repeatedly broken out in Bayta village near Nablus in the West Bank, in the context of Palestinian protests against the seizure of land by Israeli settlers and the construction of a new Israeli settlement outpost. The deployment of Israeli forces at the Aqsa Mosque compound restricted access to thousands of Muslim worshippers during the final days of Ramadan, triggering tensions and clashes leading to widespread unrest and the military escalation between Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip and Israel. On 24 June, the Security Council was informed by the Special Coordinator for the Middle

<sup>1</sup> [https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security\\_council\\_briefing\\_-\\_25\\_march\\_2021\\_2334.pdf](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security_council_briefing_-_25_march_2021_2334.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> [https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security\\_council\\_briefing\\_-\\_24\\_june\\_2021\\_0.pdf](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security_council_briefing_-_24_june_2021_0.pdf).

East Peace Process that, on 15 June, several thousand Israeli extremists marched chanting racist slogans and threats against Arabs and Muslims, amid a heavy Israeli police presence, through the Old City of Jerusalem, leading to protests and clashes in East Jerusalem and other parts of the West Bank, where 66 Palestinians, including 12 children, were injured by rubber bullets, sound grenades and physical assaults. The Special Coordinator warned about the potential for Jerusalem to become the trigger for a larger conflict. Clashes continued throughout the West Bank. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, from 1 January to 21 July 2021, Israeli forces killed 50 Palestinians, including 11 children, and injured at least 11,231, including 584 children,<sup>3</sup> throughout the West Bank.

11. Hostilities between Palestinian militant groups in Gaza and Israel broke out on 11 May and led to 11 days of intense fighting, the most severe and deadly escalation of violence since 2014. Israeli military airstrikes and bombardment caused a considerable number of casualties, humanitarian suffering and significant destruction to infrastructure in Gaza, including to educational facilities, hospitals, health centres and water pipes. Israeli air strikes on Gaza were considered disproportionate and failing to protect civilians. On 27 May, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that at least 242 Palestinians, including 68 children, 37 women, 3 persons with disabilities and 1 journalist, were killed in Gaza by Israeli bombing of civilian areas. In some cases, entire Palestinian families, including women, children and infants, were killed in their homes. Long-range rockets launched from Gaza by Palestinian militants claimed the lives of 12 persons in Israel, including foreign nationals and two children. The hostilities displaced some 77,000 Palestinians, many of whom sheltered in United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools throughout Gaza.<sup>4</sup>

12. In his statement of 16 May to the Security Council, the Secretary-General demanded an immediate stop to the conflict. The international community welcomed a ceasefire reached on 20 May, following intense mediation efforts by Egypt, Jordan and Qatar and the United Nations. Continued Israeli evictions and demolitions threatened to undermine the ceasefire. For example, on 7 June, the Jerusalem Municipality issued demolition orders to 119 Palestinian families (1,500 persons) from al-Bustan suburb in the Silwan neighbourhood of occupied East Jerusalem to make way for an Israeli archaeological park. When Israeli officials allowed an extremist march in Old City of Jerusalem on 15 June, violent clashes between Israeli Forces and residents ensued. Militant groups in Gaza launched incendiary balloons into southern Israel allegedly as a response, to which Israel responded with reprisal military attacks. On 16 May, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights directly linked the escalation to protests and heavy response by Israeli forces, first in East Jerusalem then spreading to the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory and within Israel.<sup>5</sup> On 27 May, while welcoming the ceasefire, the High Commissioner warned of further violence and civilian suffering on all sides unless the root causes of the violence were addressed in a genuine and inclusive peace process to bring the occupation to an end.<sup>6</sup> Following the violence throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel in May, some 200 Israeli and Palestinian women's organizations released a joint statement<sup>7</sup> on 30 June calling for negotiations, based on the principles of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), to achieve long-term solutions to the conflict. Noting the particular importance of protecting women from all forms of violence, and ensuring women's representation in decision-making positions, they urged broader efforts towards a negotiated, long-term solution, "and not just a temporary calm."

<sup>3</sup> Latest reports available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/updates>.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=27116&LangID=E](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=27116&LangID=E).

<sup>5</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27095&LangID=E](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27095&LangID=E).

<sup>6</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27116&LangID=E](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27116&LangID=E).

<sup>7</sup> See [www.itach.org.il/wp-content/uploads/English.pdf](http://www.itach.org.il/wp-content/uploads/English.pdf).

13. The violent escalation had severe humanitarian consequences, in particular in Gaza, which remains under a 14-year blockade imposed by Israel by air, land and sea. Humanitarian access to the enclave was severely curtailed owing to the hostilities. Border crossing points, including the two Gaza crossing points with Israel – Erez and Kerem Shalom – remained closed during and after the outbreak of hostilities. In the immediate aftermath of the cessation of hostilities and ceasefire agreement, on 27 May, Member States made financial pledges to the United Nations humanitarian country team flash appeal of \$95 million for Gaza, which included UNRWA needs.<sup>8</sup> Several donors expressed a willingness to contribute to reconstruction efforts in Gaza, including Egypt, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America, the European Union and the World Bank. On 6 July, a joint rapid damage and needs assessment report<sup>9</sup> was released by the World Bank Group, the United Nations and the European Union, in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority and in consultation with civil society in Gaza, in which recovery needs of up to \$485 million during the first 24 months were estimated.

14. During the emergency General Assembly debate on the situation in the Middle East (Assembly agenda item 37) and the question of Palestine (Assembly agenda item 38) on 20 May, many Member States condemned the violence and called for a ceasefire, for the protection of civilians and for a resumption of negotiations on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, to lead to a long-term solution of the conflict, while the President of the General Assembly issued an appeal for peace.<sup>10</sup> On 22 May, the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/14527) stressing the immediate need for humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular in Gaza, and supporting the Secretary General's call for a ceasefire.<sup>11</sup>

15. At a special session on 27 May, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution [S-30/1](#), establishing an ongoing independent, international commission of inquiry to investigate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel all alleged violations and abuses of international humanitarian law and international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021, and all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity.

16. Throughout the reporting period, human rights violations have continued with impunity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as reported by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, at the thirtieth special session of the Human Rights Council on 27 May.<sup>12</sup> Human rights abuses have taken a particularly heavy toll on women, children and minority groups. It is estimated that 234,000 children need mental health and psychosocial support, as a result of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.

17. In a significant move towards ending impunity and ensuring justice, the International Criminal Court on 5 February confirmed its jurisdiction over grave crimes committed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including potential war crimes, which led the Court's Prosecutor on 3 March to initiate an investigation covering crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court alleged to have been committed since 13 June 2014. Israel, which is not a member of the Court, chose not to cooperate

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<sup>8</sup> See [www.unocha.org/story/un-and-ngos-launch-humanitarian-plan-support-palestinians-affected-recent-escalation](http://www.unocha.org/story/un-and-ngos-launch-humanitarian-plan-support-palestinians-affected-recent-escalation).

<sup>9</sup> [https://sites.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/gaza\\_rapid\\_damage\\_and\\_needs\\_assessment\\_july\\_2021\\_1.pdf](https://sites.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/gaza_rapid_damage_and_needs_assessment_july_2021_1.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PGALETTER\\_200521.pdf](http://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PGALETTER_200521.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> See [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-05-20/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-press-stakeout-following-the-ceasefire-announcement-between-gaza-and-israel](http://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-05-20/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-press-stakeout-following-the-ceasefire-announcement-between-gaza-and-israel).

<sup>12</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/PS/SS\\_OPT\\_Statement\\_SR\\_OPT\\_27May2021.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/PS/SS_OPT_Statement_SR_OPT_27May2021.pdf).

with the ruling. On 9 July, the Special Rapporteur called on the international community to designate Israeli settlements as a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.<sup>13</sup>

18. On 15 January, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, issued a decree calling for legislative, presidential and Palestinian National Council elections in 2021. The Central Elections Commission embarked on voter and candidate registration, resulting in a published list of 36 parties and independent candidates for legislative elections, and a total of 2.55 million registered voters, including 1.247 million women and up to 800,000 young eligible voters. The Palestinian Government subsequently cancelled the legislative and presidential elections in the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory following the failure by Israel, the occupying Power, to guarantee that it would not impede the holding of the elections in East Jerusalem. In his June statement to the Security Council,<sup>14</sup> the Special Coordinator described the postponement as compounding frustrations and undermining hope for many Palestinians.

19. The ongoing Palestinian political divide continued, while the Egyptian-led intra-Palestinian reconciliation, scheduled for June, failed to take place. In his statement of 24 June to the Security Council, the Special Coordinator also reiterated the firm support of the United Nations for Egyptian efforts and called upon all Palestinian factions to make serious efforts to ensure the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under a single, legitimate, democratic, national government.

20. A new Israeli coalition government, with a member from the United Arab List, was sworn in on 13 June, under the Prime Minister, Naftali Bennett, and the Alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Yair Lapid.

21. In November, UNRWA, which provides essential core services to Palestinian refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the region, confronted a major budgetary crisis due to the halt of United States funding and aggravated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, welcomed the resumption by the United States of assistance to UNRWA in 2021 and confirmed plans by Jordan and Sweden to host an international conference later in 2021 to ensure sufficient, predictable and sustained funding for the Agency.

22. The COVID-19 pandemic in the Occupied Palestinian Territory saw a sharp increase in cases and remained a genuine threat to the health, security and prosperity of Palestinians and Israelis alike. In January, United Nations human rights experts<sup>15</sup> called on Israel to ensure swift and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for the Palestinian people under occupation.

23. In its periodic deliberations, the Security Council encouraged the Middle East Quartet to revitalize the stalled peace process with the goal of resuming meaningful negotiations on the question of Palestine. The new United States administration outlined a different policy on the question of Palestine from that of its predecessor and in support of a mutually agreed two-State solution, renewed diplomatic engagement and resumption of United States assistance for the Palestinian people. The President of the United States, Joseph Biden, and the Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, subsequently engaged directly with Israeli and Palestinian leadership during the May conflict.

<sup>13</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27295](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27295).

<sup>14</sup> [https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security\\_council\\_briefing\\_-\\_24\\_june\\_2021\\_0.pdf](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security_council_briefing_-_24_june_2021_0.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> [www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26655](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26655).

## Chapter III

### Mandate of the Committee

24. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was established by General Assembly resolution [3376 \(XXX\)](#) of 10 November 1975 with the task of recommending a programme designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and return to the homes and property from which they had been displaced, as recognized by the Assembly in its resolution [3236 \(XXIX\)](#) of 22 November 1974. The mandate of the Committee has evolved considerably over the years into greater advocacy for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the mobilization of assistance. Additional information about the Committee is available on the website maintained by the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat.<sup>16</sup>

25. On 2 December 2020, the General Assembly renewed the mandate of the Committee (resolution [75/20](#)), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division for Palestinian Rights with the resources necessary for its programme of work (resolution [75/21](#)), and to continue to implement the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat (resolution [75/23](#)). As of 2020, the mandates of the Committee and the Division are biennial. The Assembly also adopted resolution [75/22](#), entitled “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine”, in which it reaffirmed the near-consensus international position regarding the components of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution.

26. The work of the Committee is fully aligned with the decisions of the main intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice, as well as with the work of the Secretary-General and the programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, with which it collaborates extensively.

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<sup>16</sup> [www.un.org/unispal](http://www.un.org/unispal).

## Chapter IV

### Organization of work

#### A. Membership and officers

27. The Committee is composed of 25 Member States, representing different regional groups and supporting the international consensus for a two-State solution: Afghanistan, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Turkey and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

28. The 24 observers of the Committee are Algeria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Yemen, as well as the State of Palestine, the African Union, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

29. The Bureau of the Committee is elected each year from among the permanent representatives of Committee members. At its 402nd meeting, on 4 February 2021, chaired by the Secretary-General, the Committee elected, in their personal capacity, Cheikh Niang (Senegal) as Chair; Adela Raz (Afghanistan), Pedro Luis Pedrosa Cuesta (Cuba), Mohammad Kurniadi Koba (Indonesia), Neville Melvin Gertze (Namibia) and Jaime Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) as Vice-Chairs for the year. Adela Raz (Afghanistan) was also elected as Acting Rapporteur. In accordance with established practice, the State of Palestine participates in the work of both the Committee and the Bureau as an observer.

30. The day-to-day tasks of the Committee are undertaken by its Bureau. Members of the Bureau represented the Committee at all international conferences organized by the Committee, including by chairing and moderating conference sessions, and on all delegation visits. On the margins of the conferences and during delegation visits, they held meetings with senior officials of the respective host countries.

31. The Committee members and observers have actively advocated the rights of the Palestinian people, including in the Security Council. Currently, two Committee members, India and Tunisia, and two observers, the Niger and Viet Nam, serve on the Security Council as elected members.

#### B. Participation in the work of the Committee

32. As in previous years, the Committee reconfirmed that all States Members of the United Nations and observers wishing to participate in its work were welcome to do so. Committee activities regularly involve civil society organizations, including those from Israel.

## Chapter V

### **Action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [75/20](#) and [75/21](#)**

#### **A. Introduction**

33. In the implementation of its programme of work, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, the Committee is guided by its mandate to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and support the achievement, without delay, of an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 lines. Its work and activities are also fully aligned with Security Council and Assembly resolutions on the question of Palestine; the women and peace and security agenda; the programme of the United Nations country team; international law, including humanitarian law; human rights frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights; and, more recently, the Sustainable Development Goals and their achievement by the State of Palestine. As authorized by the Assembly, the Committee has adjusted its approved programme of work in view of developments.

34. Taking a rights-focused approach, the Committee has made every effort to support the universally recognized rights of an occupied people and the rights of all States and peoples to live in peace and security. To that end, the Committee engaged the diplomatic community on the question of Palestine through formal and informal intergovernmental processes; employed the good offices of the Secretary-General; organized public awareness-raising activities that involved conferences, meetings, speakers' panels and the media, including social media; promoted partnerships with Governments, relevant bodies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, regional bodies and civil society organizations; and built capacities for the future State of Palestine.

35. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns, starting from April 2020, the Committee converted its meetings and activities to online events, using a variety of platforms, in line with General Assembly decision 74/544, in order to ensure continuity in the delivery of its mandate.

#### **B. Mobilization of the diplomatic community**

36. The Committee continued to mobilize the international community in support of the realization of the two-State solution and a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects on the basis of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

37. During the reporting period, all the Committee meetings were held in virtual format, including a special meeting on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (see para. 52 below). It also held seven virtual Bureau meetings.

38. On 23 November 2020, the Committee endorsed four draft resolutions for submission to the General Assembly. They concerned the mandates of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat. On 2 December, the Assembly, having before it the report of the Committee ([A/75/35](#)), adopted the four draft resolutions (resolutions [75/20](#), [75/22](#), [75/21](#) and [75/23](#)).

39. On 10 February, the Bureau met with the President of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, Volkan Bozkır, and agreed to increase collaboration on mobilizing Member States' and regional groups' efforts to resolve the question of Palestine in accordance with United Nations resolutions and to increase support for UNRWA.

40. In a meeting officiated by the Secretary-General on 4 February 2021, the Committee elected its Bureau members for 2021 (see para. 31 above) and officially adopted its programme of work for 2021 (A/AC.183/2021/L.2).

41. On 25 February 2021, the Committee, through the Division for Palestinian Rights, held its annual briefing session to familiarize delegates with the Committee's mandate and programme of work. A total of 20 participants attended the informative and interactive session, including members of the Security Council. The Department of Global Communications also gave a presentation on the special information programme on the question of Palestine.

42. In March 2021, the Bureau initiated a series of outreach meetings to members of the Middle East Quartet and the Security Council, advocating for the long overdue realization of the Palestinian people's rights and a reinvigoration of the Middle East Peace Process. Bureau delegations met with the European Union (5 March), the Russian Federation (18 March), China (24 March), France (26 April), Ireland (12 May) and Mexico (30 June), with more meetings planned, in line with the Bureau decision to adapt the Committee's programme of work to fast-evolving developments and needs on the ground. Member States that met with the Bureau underlined the need to resolve the question of Palestine on the basis of the two-State solution and in line with relevant United Nations resolutions. As part of its outreach efforts, the Bureau also met with the President of the General Assembly on 10 February, the President of the Security Council on 28 April and the Secretary-General on xx August.

43. On 28 April, the Bureau sent a letter to the President of the Security Council on behalf of the Committee, asking him to ensure that Israel comply with its obligations and allow unhindered elections in East Jerusalem, and on 10 May issued a press statement on its concerns and calling for Security Council action.

44. The Chair made statements on behalf of the Committee to the Security Council in the context of its quarterly debates on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, on 26 October 2020 and 26 January, 22 April and 28 July 2021. In those statements, the Committee highlighted the deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, called for a halt to the illegal policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, and drew attention to the Committee's key activities and recommendations. It also appealed to the Security Council to take appropriate action that would lead to a just, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the conflict in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. It reiterated its appeals for humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people and support for UNRWA.

45. On 10 May, the Bureau, on behalf of the Committee, issued a press statement expressing grave concern at the violence at the Aqsa Mosque compound and condemning the acts against Palestinian worshippers and acts of provocation, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric. It further expressed alarm at the escalation of Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip and the firing of rockets by Palestinian militants and called for all indiscriminate attacks against civilians to stop.

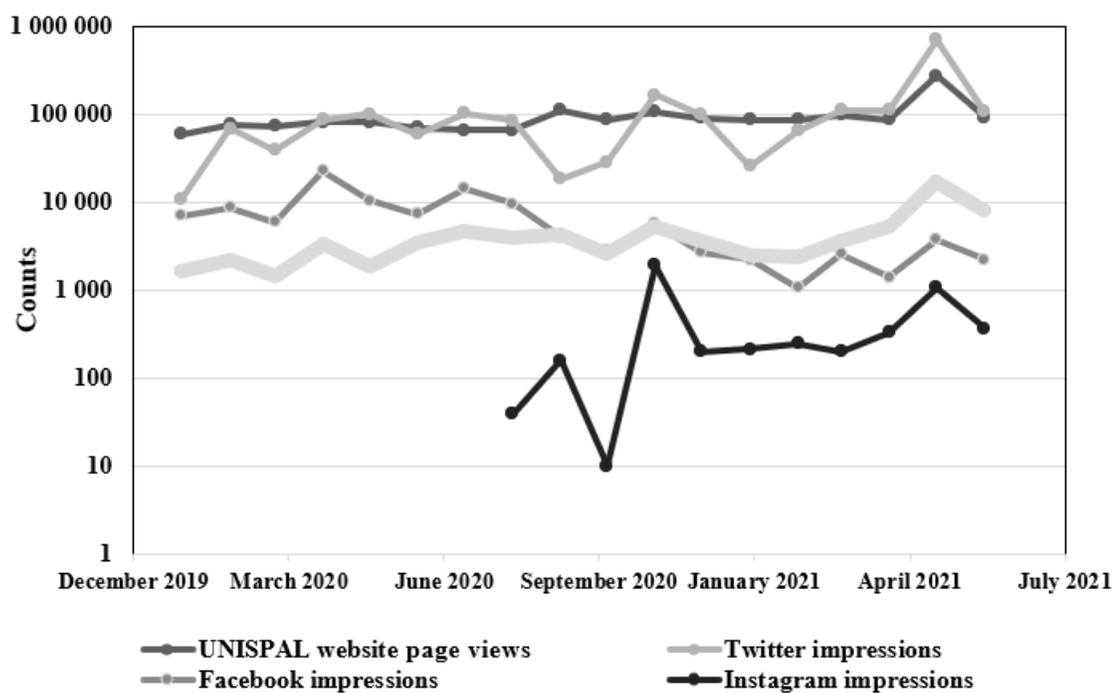
46. On 20 May, the Chair addressed the General Assembly formal plenary convened under agenda items 37 (The situation in the Middle East) and 38 (The Question of Palestine) in the context of the escalation in Jerusalem and conflict in Gaza.

### C. Raising awareness of the question of Palestine

47. The Committee continued to raise awareness about the political, human rights and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the situation of Palestinian women, by facilitating up-to-date briefings by experts and exchanges of ideas on specific issues during virtual Committee meetings, side events and virtual conferences, as well as through the dissemination of publications and information via several electronic platforms and the Committee’s website. Details regarding each activity can be found on the website.

48. The Committee maintained an expanded and enhanced social media presence to disseminate information on the question of Palestine. During the reporting period, the Committee Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter accounts recorded steady growth in the number of visitors and followers, as shown in the figure. The Twitter account alone had gained 3,429 new followers by 31 July (total 20,062), while the Committee mailing list grew by 2,032 new subscribers (total 74,114). The website was visited 1,114,994 times during the reporting period. All Committee public events, including those held online, are regularly broadcast via United Nations Web TV and across its social media pages, garnering thousands of viewers per event. As at 31 July, this has resulted in an aggregate total of 926,726 views since November 2020. These efforts resulted in increased engagement with the public, extended outreach to new audiences and higher numbers of followers across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. In addition to English, the Committee is also increasingly disseminating its documents in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish on its website. Conferences and events organized by the Committee during the reporting period were livestreamed on UN Web TV and United Nations social media platforms.

#### Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, social media statistics



Abbreviation: UNISPAL, United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine.

49. The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, organized by the Committee and commemorated on 1 December, saw an impressive display of support and solidarity by Member States, civil society and the public despite the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

50. All speakers expressed their unwavering support for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and called upon the international community to work towards that objective. Many stressed the urgency of an expeditious solution and the responsibility of world leaders to make the Palestinian question a priority, underscoring the centrality of a just solution to regional and global peace and stability.

51. As is customary, similar events were coordinated in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People at the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. The messages of the Chair and the Secretary-General were delivered at those events, and the United Nations was represented at the highest levels. The commemorations were attended by representatives of members and observers of the Committee and other Member States, who expressed their solidarity with the Palestinian people and support for the two-State solution. A message from the Secretary-General was issued in all six official languages.

52. The 2020 exhibit organized for the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was entitled “The writing is on the wall: annexation – past and present”. The virtual exhibit displayed striking images of the separation wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and included murals, pieces of art and graffiti painted onto the Wall by, among others, international activists such as Banksy, Blu, several Palestinian artists and activists, as well as anonymous visitors expressing solidarity. The exhibit was launched virtually on 29 November 2020, and can be viewed on the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine website.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the Bureau decided to reproduce and print, with a funding contribution by the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the four past exhibits (2017–2020) into individual booklets, to be distributed physically and digitally to enhance the Committee’s advocacy and reach a wider global audience. On XX August, the Bureau presented the Secretary-General with the 2017 and 2018 booklets, featuring prominent Palestinian personalities, which were distributed to all Member and Observer States of the United Nations.

53. On 12 November, the Committee held a virtual event, “International Parliamentarians and the Palestine Question”, which brought together members of parliament from the European Union, South Africa and the United States. The speakers and participants – among them, some from the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean – emphasized the need for unified actions to keep the protection of Palestinians and their rights on the international agenda, to strengthen multilateral approaches to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to provide urgent support to UNRWA. Participants called for closer interaction between legislative bodies and international organizations, requesting the Committee to organize further such events in the future.

54. A virtual event on “Women, peace and security and Beijing+25: progress and challenges for women and girls in Palestine” was organized on 10 March in the margins of the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The women speakers – former and current Palestinian officials and civil society representatives from throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory – focused on the unique situation of Palestinian women under occupation and traditional norms, their roles and challenges since the first intifada to date, including in the upcoming Palestinian elections, as well as the shrinking space of civil society in the Occupied

<sup>17</sup> [www.un.org/unispal/event/2020-solidarity-day/](http://www.un.org/unispal/event/2020-solidarity-day/).

Palestinian Territory. They also called for the number of women in leadership positions and in parliament to be increased.

55. On 7 April, the Committee organized a virtual event on “Delivering critical assistance for Palestine refugees: challenges and opportunities in a complex context”, featuring briefings by the UNRWA Commissioner-General, Mr. Lazzarini, and the Director of UNRWA Operations in the West Bank, Gwyn Lewis. The President of the General Assembly, Mr. Bozkır, delivered a keynote address. The aim of the event was to strengthen international support for the rights of Palestine refugees and mobilize political and financial support to UNRWA, ahead and in support of a planned international UNRWA conference. UNRWA representatives called to protect the Agency’s mandate and the rights of Palestine refugees against a campaign using misinformation to deter donors and supporters.

56. On 18 May, the Committee held its annual United Nations forum, under the theme “International parliamentary support to the question of Palestine” with a two-panel interactive discussion, moderated by a Member of Parliament of Portugal and the Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, and included parliamentarians from Canada, Chile, France, South Africa and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The forum focused on parliamentary support on the full implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), including through incorporation of its requirements into national legislation, and the revival of multilateral efforts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Recommendations included establishing an international commission to investigate crimes of “apartheid” of Israel, revising bilateral agreements with Israel to include the 1967 borders and prohibiting tax benefits for companies operating in the settlements and the importation of their goods and services.

57. On 1 July, the Committee held the annual International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem, with support from OIC, under the theme “Forced demographic change in Jerusalem – grave breaches and a threat to peace”. The discussion panel comprised Palestinian, Israeli and international experts and community activists from East Jerusalem and highlighted decades-long Israeli policies and actions to promote Jewish settlement into and Palestinian emigration from Jerusalem, enabled by an Israeli legal system ignoring international law and excluding the political context of a power imbalance between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians. The young Palestinian representatives shared their daily struggles against the indignities and coercion of the occupation and their means of peaceful resistance, highlighting the power of social media and international support.

58. The United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, now in its twenty-seventh year of operation, remains a valuable resource on the question of Palestine for diplomats and researchers around the world, averaging 100,000 page views per month. Accessed through the Committee’s website, it consists of more than 40,000 documents and is the largest and most comprehensive online repository on the subject. The collection ranges from the latest United Nations documents to rare records dating back decades. On 7 June, the System completed a comprehensive four-year migration and technological upgrade and progressed to make the website information in all six official languages of the United Nations, with a special emphasis on Arabic. Efforts are under way to improve the accessibility of the Committee’s website for the visually impaired. The Division for Palestinian Rights has initiated a project to deploy a virtual chatbot on the System to enhance user experience on the Committee’s website.<sup>18</sup>

59. Further to its monitoring mandate, the Committee also produced several publications disseminated by the Division for Palestinian Rights. They include

<sup>18</sup> <http://un.org/unispal>.

monthly bulletins, compiling all official documents of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations relating to the question of Palestine, assembled United Nations resolutions and decisions, widely disseminated quarterly newsletters on the activities of the Committee and an annual compilation of United Nations reports on the question of Palestine, as well as an annual compilation of all resolutions issued by United Nations bodies on the question of Palestine.

60. Through its weekly publication entitled “NGO Action News”, the Committee continued to raise awareness of the work of civil society and United Nations actors in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and around the globe towards the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

61. The Committee commissioned a legal study for the Irish Centre for Human Rights at the National University of Ireland to examine the legality of the Israeli occupation. It is expected to be finalized in 2021.

62. The Committee’s publications were disseminated through a growing mailing list that includes more than 8,000 subscribers, including research libraries, universities and key stakeholders such as community leaders, political figures, members of the diplomatic community, students, university professors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations and journalists, as well as prominent personalities and opinion leaders. All the publications of the Committee are posted on the Committee’s website.

#### **D. Cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations system entities**

63. The Committee continued its cooperation with intergovernmental organizations and United Nations system entities and expressed its appreciation for the active participation of representatives of those bodies at various events held under its auspices. OIC continued to support the annual International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem, organized by the Committee. The African Union, LAS and OIC regularly attended the meetings of the Committee as observers and participated in its work.

64. During its activities, the Committee, through the Division for Palestinian Rights, continued its long-standing cooperation with the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations country teams, UNRWA, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Global Communications (including the United Nations information centres and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, in Brussels), the Human Rights Council and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations System Staff College.

65. The Committee also continued its collaboration with NGOs promoting the rights of the Palestinian people. Representatives of civil society organizations, including from Israel, were invited to attend all public events of the Committee. Those meetings and interactions allowed the Committee to be informed about civil society concerns and actions and to share the Committee’s mandate and activities with them. These in-depth exchanges have informed the programme of work, statements and reports of the Committee. The Committee also continues to provide a space in which Israeli and Palestinian civil society organizations can interact, through the facilitation of their participation in Committee events, at a time when such interaction is increasingly restricted on the ground. As is customary, a civil society representative was invited to speak at the special meeting of the Committee held on 1 December to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The Committee

continued to send out a weekly NGO Action News. As part of its periodic interactions with civil society organizations, on 3 August, the Committee organized a virtual engagement with civil society organization representatives from Palestine, Israel and the international community to receive first-hand briefings on the situations in Jerusalem and Gaza and on advocacy in the United States.

## **E. Capacity-building**

66. As requested in General Assembly resolution [75/21](#), the Committee continued to identify training opportunities to expand the capacity of officials of the State of Palestine. The Committee continued to assess the impact of its programmes. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Committee prioritized online training during the reporting period.

67. The Committee, in collaboration with the United Nations System Staff College supported the participation of three diplomats from the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a five-week online training course on effective writing skills that took place from 7 September to 9 October 2020. Furthermore, in collaboration with UNITAR, the Committee supported the participation of four diplomats from the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in a virtual immersion training course on the workings of the United Nations in Geneva from 9 to 20 August 2021.

## Chapter VI

### **Action taken by the Department of Global Communications in accordance with General Assembly resolution 75/23**

68. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 75/23 of 2 December 2020, the Department of Global Communications continued to implement its special information programme on the question of Palestine, organizing its activities and outreach in mostly online formats, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

69. The Department worked with the Al-Jazeera Media Institute to organize a special virtual training programme for Palestinian journalists, from 23 November to 3 December. The online course was focused on three themes: mobile journalism; data journalism; and news verification; and benefited 12 Palestinian journalists from Gaza, the West Bank, Jerusalem and the diaspora. The International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, held virtually on 8 and 9 December 2020, was officially opened by the Committee Chair, with speakers from Israel, Palestine the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as United Nations representatives, to discuss two themes: “The Israel-Palestine conflict and challenges of the new decade”, and “A tale of two narratives: misinformation and disinformation”. The International Day of Solidarity website was updated in the six official languages. The Department continued to provide guidance and assistance for maintenance of the website, including in the six official languages. In collaboration with the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the Department assisted with modernizing the presentation and searchability of digital materials on multiple aspects of the question of Palestine.

70. The Department provided communications support for live and on-demand streaming coverage of the Committee’s meetings and events outlined in section V.C of the report, in all available languages on UN Web TV. The Department issued 75 press releases, in English and French, related to the question of Palestine and the Middle East peace process, including coverage of the Committee, the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as statements and messages by the Secretary-General. UN News in the six official languages, as well as Hindi, Kiswahili and Portuguese, produced some 300 stories and multimedia products related to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including stories about COVID-19 and interviews with representatives of United Nations agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

71. The Department’s UNifeed service produced 42 packages for broadcasters related to the question of Palestine during the reporting period. UNifeed coverage of the escalation of the situation in Gaza and Israel was aired 20,298 times in May, breaking all previous monthly records for broadcast pick-up. UN Video also produced news and social media videos to highlight the voice of the United Nations and its leaders during the period of escalation. These videos were widely viewed and generated strong audience engagement. UNifeed videos received close to 60 hours of airtime during this period. Audience engagement was also strong, with two news videos produced by UN Video on the conflict, both rating among the top three produced for the month of May on YouTube and Twitter. On YouTube, the video featuring the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly speaking about the deadly violence generated more than 76,000 views, 2,400 reactions and 500 comments. On the Secretary-General’s Twitter account, the video on his stakeout reacting to the ceasefire received more than 53,000 views, some 700 retweets and 110 comments.

72. During the reporting period, the United Nations social media platforms continued to cover news and provide information about issues related to the question

of Palestine in the six official languages, as well as Hindi, Kiswahili and Portuguese. United Nations social media platforms continued to promote virtual events and activities organized by the Committee, including by drawing traffic to the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine and the Committee's social media accounts, and by making the information available for use on public-facing platforms, such as Trello.<sup>19</sup>

73. Together with UNRWA, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth invited a young member of the first-ever "UNRWA Student Parliament" to speak at the ministerial round table of the Economic and Social Council youth forum),<sup>20</sup> which was held on 7 and 8 April. Following the event, the young Palestinian speaker was featured on the Office's blog series titled "Meet 23 young people leading on resilient recovery in the decade of action".<sup>21</sup>

74. On 15 July, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth participated in the "Palestine refugee youth empowerment" virtual event, hosted by the UNRWA Representative Office in New York, which aimed to put the spotlight on Palestine refugee youth success stories.

75. The quest for a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine was highlighted in the UN75 commemorative book: "Achieving our common humanity: Celebrating global cooperation through the United Nations"<sup>22</sup> under the "Self-determination of all peoples" section.

76. On the International Day of Solidarity, the Department facilitated a virtual exhibit, discussed in paragraph 52, to engage a wide range of audiences and collaborated with the United Nations Regional Information Centre for promotions of the event in Western Europe in Brussels, and Centres in Ankara, Beirut, Brussels, Cairo, Canberra, Nairobi and Pretoria.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://trello.com/b/772QZEh1/question-of-palestine>.

<sup>20</sup> [www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/ecosoc-youth-forum-2021](http://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/ecosoc-youth-forum-2021).

<sup>21</sup> [www.un.org/youthenvoy/meet-23-young-people-leading-resilient-recovery-in-the-decade-of-action-aseel-2/](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/meet-23-young-people-leading-resilient-recovery-in-the-decade-of-action-aseel-2/).

<sup>22</sup> [https://cdn.un.org/unyearbook/yun/un75/achieving\\_our\\_common\\_humanity.pdf](https://cdn.un.org/unyearbook/yun/un75/achieving_our_common_humanity.pdf).

## Chapter VII

### Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee

77. In developing its recommendations set out below, the Committee has taken into account the deliberations at Committee and Bureau meetings, briefings received, outreach, international conferences and events involving Member States, civil society organizations and regional organizations.

#### A. Immediate action by the Committee in response to annexation and settlement activities

78. The Committee expresses concern about the failure of the Government of Israel to halt the creeping annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank, which would constitute a most serious violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions, and would undermine the contiguity of the Palestinian territory and the physical viability of the two-State solution based on pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine, in accordance with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions, internationally agreed parameters, the Madrid principles and the Arab Peace Initiative. The Committee calls on Israel, the occupying Power, to halt all such illegal measures and to act towards bringing an end to its illegal occupation, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#).

79. The Committee supports the Secretary-General's clear position on the question of Palestine, based on international law, countless United Nations resolutions and the search for a just solution and calls for Israel to uphold its obligations under international humanitarian and international human rights law, respect the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem, including for the historic and legal status quo at Aqsa Mosque compound and the right of Muslims to peacefully worship there free from threats, intimidation and violence. The Committee calls on the Secretary-General to continue to utilize his good offices and mediation capacities, as well as on all parties with influence, to act with urgency to de-escalate this volatile situation.

80. The Committee will continue to advocate the resolution of the question of Palestine on the basis of an international framework and against annexation and in support of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence.

81. The Committee notes that any initiative aimed at a just solution to the question of Palestine must, first and foremost, consider the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people, engage the Palestinian leadership, and be based on the two-State solution, according to international law, United Nations resolutions and agreements between the parties. In this context, the Committee notes the concerns expressed by the Palestinian leadership, and the response of the international community, that the bilateral agreements between Israel and some Arab countries did not commit Israel to halting plans to further extend its sovereignty over Palestinian territory and its people. To this end, the Committee reiterates that annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is illegal.

82. The Committee expresses concerns at the occupying Power's continued expansion of its illegal settlement network and related infrastructure, including the wall, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem and deep inside the West Bank, in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and deemed illegal under international law, as reaffirmed, inter alia, in Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#). The Committee calls on Israel to immediately halt all

settlement construction and expansion and its ongoing transfer of its population to those settlements as they are unlawful and constitute an obstacle to peace and are destroying the viability of the two-State solution.

83. The Committee expresses its deep concern about the imminent evictions of Palestinian families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods of occupied East Jerusalem settlements and Bayta village and reiterates its calls for a halt to all illegal Israeli policies and practices, including all settlement activities, home demolitions, evictions, forced displacement and all other acts of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population.

## **B. Immediate action by the Committee in response to the conflict**

84. The Committee expresses its deep alarm at the dramatic deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially following the escalation of violence in May and continuous acts of provocation and incitement, in particular by Israeli extremists in occupied East Jerusalem. The Committee reminds Israel and Palestinian militants that indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks and failure to distinguish between military and civilian objects, and their use, thereby constitute clear violations of international humanitarian law and may constitute war crimes.

85. The Committee calls on all parties to the May conflict in Gaza and Israel to respect a ceasefire to allow for medical, humanitarian and reconstructions efforts, and for an investigation by the International Criminal Court into the attacks on civilian populations and other gross violations of human rights. It emphasizes the need to address the root causes of the violence to avoid the next round of violence with further pain and suffering for civilians on all sides and to advance the realization of a just solution.

## **C. Immediate action by the Committee in response to postponement of elections in Palestine**

86. The Committee regrets the postponement of parliamentary and presidential elections in the State of Palestine and underlines that those democratic elections are a crucial factor for the full realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. To this end, the Committee urges the Palestinian leadership to announce new dates for holding the elections and urges the Security Council to ensure that Israel guarantees the holding of democratic Palestinian elections throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

## **D. Action taken with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council**

87. The Committee urges the Security Council and the General Assembly to ensure the implementation of the long-standing parameters for peace affirmed in relevant United Nations resolutions, including Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) and Assembly resolution [74/11 \(2019\)](#). The Committee requests the Secretary-General to continue to submit his reports to the Council on the implementation of resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) in written format and, pursuant to paragraph 5 of the resolution, to include references to implementation of the provision by Member States. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of the resolution, the Committee also calls upon the Council to examine practical ways and means to secure the full implementation of relevant Council resolutions, including the use of sanctions on States and private entities violating Council resolutions.

88. The Committee further urges the Security Council and the Middle East Quartet to revitalize the stalled peace process in view of resuming meaningful negotiations towards the achievement of a just and peaceful solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The international community has an abiding responsibility towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all aspects, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions and must act without delay.

89. The Committee deplores the use of excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians, including during the protests in the Gaza Strip in 2018 and 2019 and during the 11-day conflict in May 2021 and reiterates its call for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory ([A/HRC/40/74](#)). The Commission was mandated by the Human Rights Council to investigate violations committed in the proximity of the fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip during those protests. The Committee also calls for an end to all violations of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including arbitrary arrests and detentions, restrictions to freedom of movement, discrimination and collective punishment, as well as the denial of the rights to self-determination and independence.

90. The Committee is of the view that only full respect for the human and collective rights of the Palestinian people will ensure a lasting and just resolution to the question of Palestine. In support of justice and respect for the rule of law and human rights that are indispensable for peace, the Committee welcomes Human Rights Council resolution [S-30/1](#) for an independent, international commission of inquiry to investigate all violations and abuses of international humanitarian law and international human rights law since 1 April 2021.

91. The Committee urges Member States and the Organization to call upon Israel, as the occupying Power, to respect its obligations under international law to protect civilians. Further to the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/20](#), the Committee emphasizes the need for the implementation of an international protection mechanism that can credibly ensure the safety and welfare of Palestinian civilians. The Committee calls upon the international community to shift from a humanitarian to a human rights framework in addressing the plight of the Palestinian people, and demands also an end to the 14-year Israeli air, land and sea blockade of Gaza and the lifting of all closures under Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#).

## **E. Advocacy and outreach with the international community and civil society**

92. The Committee will continue to mobilize the international community to stop Israel's annexation plan and will exert efforts to contribute to the achievement of the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders and is encouraged by the numerous statements in support of international legality by members of the international community, including the Arab world and international civil society. Any comprehensive resolution of the conflict will require a regional approach, such as that offered by the Arab Peace Initiative. The Committee calls upon regional organizations, such as the European Union, LAS and OIC, to take on a more politically active role in mediating an end to the conflict.

93. The Committee calls upon the international donors to fulfil without delay all pledges to expedite the provision of humanitarian assistance, the reconstruction process and economic recovery, which are essential to alleviate the distress of Palestinians, including women and children, who face additional and gender-specific challenges that need to be addressed through targeted actions. It stresses the urgency

of sufficient and predictable funding to UNRWA to ensure its vital humanitarian and development assistance to the Palestine refugees.

## **F. Action by Member States and regional organizations**

94. The Committee emphasizes the importance of the acknowledgement by Israel of the Nakba and its impact upon the Palestinian people as a necessary requirement for a viable and lasting peace. Palestine refugees should be treated as dispossessed nationals of a country – the State of Palestine – rather than as stateless refugees. It strongly advocates the right to return as well as just compensation for Palestine refugees, as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

95. The Committee deems unilateral decisions by Member States to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the transfer of embassies in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as null and void, as they are in violation of Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980). The Committee calls upon Member States to rescind those decisions and reiterates that the historic status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem must be respected and that the international community shares the responsibility to preserve the legal, demographic and historical multicultural and multireligious character and status of the city.

96. The Committee underscores the responsibility of States, private entities and corporations not to contribute to grave Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, including with respect to their activities in settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. It welcomes efforts by Governments, parliamentarians and civil society actors to sanction support, including economic, for illegal Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

97. The Committee calls upon Member States to implement the relevant obligations under international law, including as set out in paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), in which the Council called upon Member States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967.

98. The Committee looks forward to the report of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights on the effects of annexation, as requested by the Human Rights Council in paragraph 16 of its resolution 43/31 on 23 June 2020. The Committee expresses appreciation for the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 and his reports submitted to the Human Rights Council.

99. As the international community embarks on renewed efforts to restart meaningful negotiations within a credible peace process on the basis of the longstanding international parameters for a just solution, the Committee commits to continue its outreach to key stakeholders with influence on the question of Palestine and to offer support for initiatives, including by the Middle East Quartet, with a view to holding an international peace conference leading to a two-State solution, as highlighted in the 23 March 2021 statement of the Middle East Quartet envoys. The Committee will continue to encourage all supporters of the two-State solution to assist the parties to resume negotiations towards the achievement of a peaceful settlement in line with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

## **G. Support action in response to the coronavirus disease pandemic**

100. The Committee expresses concern about the unprecedented spread of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory and commends

the stringent measures adopted by the Government of Palestine to contain its effects throughout the region.

101. The Committee draws the attention of the international community to the dire socioeconomic situation, the deteriorating living conditions of Palestinians in the occupied territory, in particular in the Gaza Strip, as well as to the predicament of the Palestinian Government, due to the twin combination of the adverse impact of COVID-19 and the ongoing Israeli occupation and creeping annexation policies.

102. The Committee echoes the concern of the international community about the way in which Israeli authorities are rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine, disregarding their obligations as the occupying Power to ensure public health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Committee calls upon Israel to immediately comply with its duties under international humanitarian law by ensuring the provision of vaccines for the Palestinian population under its control in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as to Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in Israeli jails.

## **H. Action by the Secretariat and other United Nations entities**

103. The Committee notes with appreciation the contribution of the Division for Palestinian Rights in support of its mandate and requests the Division to continue its substantive and secretariat support for all aspects of its mandate. The Committee also highlights the growing importance of cooperation among developing countries and regional and subregional organizations within the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation for sharing replicable experiences towards the achievement of self-determination and independence.

104. The Committee encourages the Division for Palestinian Rights to continue with efforts to disseminate information on the question of Palestine by continue broadening outreach and promoting multilingualism, with a special emphasis on Arabic, on its website and social media platforms. It also requests the Division to continue to implement projects, including capacity-building for officials of the State of Palestine, that are aimed at further promoting the Committee's mandate.

105. The Committee requests the continuation of the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications, which has made an important contribution to informing the media and the public.

106. The Committee intends to continue to work closely with other United Nations actors and entities, including the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and UNRWA, to synergize efforts in fields of common concern and uphold the permanent responsibility of the Organization towards the question of Palestine until it is justly resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner and in accordance with international law. The Committee wishes to express its deep appreciation to OIC and other partners for the contribution of extrabudgetary resources and their active participation in its conferences and events.

107. The Committee will continue to promote inclusivity and gender balance in all its activities, including its capacity-building programme for the civil servants of the State of Palestine, and encourages a full utilization of online capacity-building opportunities, especially in the context of COVID-related travel restrictions.

