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THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY & ZIONIST STRATEGY

The UN's Anti-Israel Ecosystem

Mapping the Institutions, Mechanisms, and Resources
Behind the Campaign Against Israel

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Executive Summary

- Over decades, the UN has developed a vast, complex, and interconnected ecosystem dedicated to condemning and singling out Israel, promoting its demonization and delegitimization, and advancing political, economic, and legal measures against the Jewish state. This report aims to map and analyze the UN's institutionalized and highly resourced Israel-focused machinery, expose the dangers it poses not only to Israel but to all democracies, and recommend practical ways to counter it.
- The report presents a systematic mapping of dozens of UN bodies and officeholders involved in anti-Israel activity, including specialized agencies, committees, Secretariat units, investigative mechanisms, and Special Rapporteurs. For each, it details the mandate under which it operates, its composition, and the way its members or officeholders are selected or appointed, together with a record of the anti-Israel activity it has advanced: resolutions, reports, investigations, publications, and political and legal initiatives. The mapping identifies who drives this activity, the authorities and tools they employ, and how the actions of different bodies combine into a sustained institutional campaign against Israel. On that basis, the report offers practical recommendations for confronting the system and changing the mechanisms that enable it.
- This report highlights how the parts of this ecosystem reinforce and complement one another. General Assembly majorities create mandates, committees, budgets, reporting requirements, and legal referrals. Secretariat units turn those decisions into permanent bureaucratic infrastructure. Human-rights mechanisms convert political claims into purported legal findings. Humanitarian and technical agencies supply statistics and institutional authority, while communications bodies disseminate the resulting narratives. One UN body cites another until allegations generated within the system acquire the appearance of independent validation.
- October 7 exposed the consequences of this structure. Hamas carried out the worst mass murder of Jews since the Holocaust, kidnapped hostages, fired rockets at Israeli cities, and operated from within Gaza's civilian environment. Yet much of the UN quickly returned to its established framework: Israeli conduct was investigated, condemned, and transformed into legal demands, while Hamas's responsibility was often marginalized or treated as background context - if it was mentioned at all.
- The machinery is rooted in the UN's basic political structure. Under the one-country-one-vote system, every General Assembly member has the same formal voting power regardless of population, financial contribution, democratic status, or human-rights record. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Arab Group, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and Group of 77 and China (G77+China) can generate automatic or near-automatic majorities. Since 2015, the General Assembly has adopted 187 condemnatory resolutions against Israel, more than twice the number adopted against



Russia, China, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Myanmar, Qatar, Pakistan, Cuba, and Venezuela combined.

- The system goes far beyond resolutions. Israel is the only country subject to a dedicated country-specific Human Rights Council agenda item at every regular session. It is also subject to an open-ended Commission of Inquiry and a uniquely indefinite Special Rapporteur mandate focused on Israeli conduct. Permanent Palestinian-focused institutions, including the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP), the Division for Palestinian Rights, the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices, UNRWA, and a dedicated communications programme, provide reports, databases, advocacy, and public-information infrastructure for one side of the conflict, with no comparable system for Israel.
- The same pattern extends through bodies with ostensibly universal or technical mandates. OCHA, OHCHR, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO, UNDP, ESCWA, UNESCO, the ILO, WFP, and other agencies repeatedly single out Israel for country-specific reporting, resolutions, programmes, and scrutiny rarely applied in comparable fashion to other states or conflicts. Their work focuses overwhelmingly on one side of the conflict, while paying far less sustained attention to Hamas, Palestinian armed groups, terrorism, and Palestinian governance.
- Almost every specialized arm of the UN has translated the war into the language of its own field - thereby creating an additional channel through which to accuse Israel. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) turned Gaza into a case study in ecological destruction, measuring construction debris, soil and water contamination, damage to vegetation, the collapse of sewage systems, and the accumulation of 61 million tonnes of rubble. Yet the vast underground system built by Hamas - hundreds of kilometres of tunnels, the diversion of cement, fuel, and electricity for military purposes, and the storage of explosives in densely populated areas - received almost no analysis as a source of environmental damage. UN-Habitat followed a similar pattern: it mapped the destruction of homes, infrastructure, and the built environment in Gaza and proposed reconstruction plans, but did not examine in parallel how Hamas transformed homes, roads, public buildings, and the underground urban space into military infrastructure. The result was reporting on cities destroyed by Israel with almost no explanation of how and why the city itself had been turned into a battlefield.
- The same mechanism operated in fields even further removed from the conflict. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) translated the war into the language of pregnancy, childbirth, hygiene kits, and women's hardship: only six days after October 7, it was already addressing the war's possible impact on Palestinian women without mentioning that Israeli women and children were still being held hostage. The International Labour Organization recast the suspension of Palestinian workers' entry into Israel after the October 7 massacre as a workers' rights crisis for which Israel was responsible, without mentioning Israeli workers who were murdered, evacuated, or called



up for reserve duty. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) calculated the 'economic cost of the occupation' and the collapse of the Palestinian economy, but not the economic cost of Hamas rule, tunnel construction, or Palestinian rearmament. The International Organization for Migration framed events as a story of Palestinian displacement without establishing a parallel mechanism for the hundreds of thousands of Israelis displaced by attacks from Hamas and Hezbollah. Across these fields, the same template prevailed: Palestinians were presented as victims, Israel as the active and responsible party, while Hamas and the war it initiated were marginalized or disappeared altogether.

- The claims and statistics produced in this way circulate from body to body across the UN system, acquire the authority of technical or professional expertise, and are then cited by governments, journalists, NGOs, courts, and other UN bodies. The result is a self-reinforcing institutional echo chamber in which ostensibly independent bodies repeatedly validate and amplify one another's conclusions.
- The machinery increasingly produces concrete political, economic, and legal pressure. Human Rights Council and OHCHR mechanisms have generated corporate blacklists and calls for arms restrictions. Special Rapporteurs have promoted sanctions, boycotts, asset freezes, and pressure on private actors. General Assembly initiatives have generated proceedings before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), whose conclusions are then used to justify further measures. While the International Criminal Court (ICC) is not a UN body, UN decisions helped create the pathway for Palestinian accession, while UN-generated claims and findings shape the wider environment surrounding its cases.
- Much of this machinery is extraordinarily difficult to reform because it is rooted in the UN's basic political structure. Under the one-country-one-vote system, authoritarian regimes, governments hostile to Israel, and states aligned with terrorist organizations can help create mandates, elect officials, determine budgets, and shape international norms on the same formal basis as liberal democracies. Organized blocs magnify their influence and allow them to preserve politicized institutions and shield themselves and their allies from comparable scrutiny.
- Yet the states that exercise this influence often bear only a small share of the financial burden. Democratic governments and their taxpayers provide a disproportionate share of the resources that sustain the UN system, including the mandates, offices, agencies, investigations, reports, databases, and bureaucratic structures directed against Israel. In 2024, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, and France together provided roughly 59 percent of all direct government contributions to the UN system; the United States alone contributed more than 183 other member states combined. The result is a striking inversion: democracies finance institutions that authoritarian and anti-Western blocs can use to undermine democratic allies, weaken democratic interests, and advance norms and mechanisms those same democracies often oppose.



- The danger extends far beyond Israel. The anti-Israel machinery generates legal theories, investigative practices, open-ended commissions, Special Rapporteur mandates, corporate blacklists, arms-embargo campaigns, sanctions proposals, and international criminal proceedings that can establish precedents for use against other democratic states. Methods developed against Israel can later be leveraged against democracies conducting counterterrorism operations or confronting terrorist organizations embedded among civilians. They can expose democratic officials and soldiers to politicized legal proceedings, pressure companies that supply democratic militaries, and delegitimize essential national-security tools.
- In this sense, Israel is not an isolated target. A system that normalizes permanent discriminatory machinery against one democracy lowers the barriers to its use against others, weakens the distinction between democratic self-defense and terrorism, and gives authoritarian regimes new instruments with which to constrain free societies.
- Challenging this machinery does not require defending every Israeli policy or arguing that Israel should be immune from scrutiny. The question is whether scrutiny rests on common standards, credible evidence, genuine impartiality, due process, realistic interpretations of international law, and equal consideration of all parties. Permanent mechanisms for one state, combined with a system that treats democratic self-defense as the central problem, undermine the principles of universality and equality on which legitimate international institutions depend.
- The report's detailed mapping provides a basis for action: identifying which bodies and mechanisms advance the campaign against Israel, how they operate, and who funds them - and then using budgetary, diplomatic, and legal tools to change the situation. To that end, the report proposes eight practical steps:
- **End automatic funding and determine where the money goes.** Donor states should conduct and publish a comprehensive mapping of their financial transfers to the UN system: how much money is transferred, to which bodies, for which activities, and through which channels, including indirect transfers through pooled funds and intermediary organizations. Recipient bodies should be required to provide detailed reporting on how funds are used and where they are transferred onward. Continued funding should be subject to explicit, periodic approval by the executive and legislative branches, in accordance with each country's constitutional division of powers. This would require governments and legislators to examine the activities they finance and accept public responsibility for them.
- **End or reduce funding for bodies that discriminate against Israel.** Donor states should use the report's mapping to identify bodies that devote resources to discriminatory activity against Israel and reduce or terminate their funding. Funding decisions should be based both on a body's mandate and on its actual conduct, including the reports it publishes, the initiatives it promotes, and the way it uses its resources. Safeguards should



ensure that withdrawn funds do not return to the same activity through a pooled fund, intermediary body, or alternative budget line.

- **Condition additional funding on dismantling special mechanisms directed against Israel.** Donor states should establish defined conditions for continued funding: abolishing Human Rights Council Agenda Item 7, which singles Israel out for a separate standing debate; terminating the open-ended Commission of Inquiry concerning Israel; ending the uniquely indefinite Special Rapporteur mandate; and abolishing permanent institutions that promote one side of the conflict, including CEIRPP and the Division for Palestinian Rights in the UN Secretariat. The release of additional funds should be conditioned on implementing these changes according to predetermined benchmarks and timelines.
- **Apply transparency and oversight across the UN system.** Scrutiny should not end with anti-Israel activity. Donor states should require all UN institutions to provide transparency concerning budgets, work programmes, appointment processes, implementing partners, and subcontractors. The objective is to enable democracies to identify when institutions they finance are being used by authoritarian regimes to advance anti-Western agendas and damage democratic interests - and to act on those findings.
- **Deny funding, cooperation, and political backing to discriminatory lawfare mechanisms.** Donor states should refrain from funding mechanisms and initiatives that promote legal proceedings, corporate blacklists, boycotts, and sanctions against Israel on the basis of discriminatory mandates. They should not participate in, sponsor, or adopt the conclusions of such initiatives without independently examining their evidence and methodology, and should avoid providing practical assistance to their operations. A resolution or report bearing the UN emblem should not receive automatic support when the process behind it fails the tests of equality, credibility, and fairness.
- **Take targeted measures against those driving the campaign.** Alongside institutional action, governments should consider measures against UN officials, Special Rapporteurs, and other officeholders who abuse their authority to advance discriminatory activity or engage in serious misconduct. Depending on their conduct and the legal authorities available, such measures may include visa restrictions or denials, economic sanctions, and the freezing of assets and bank accounts. Where there is a sufficient evidentiary and legal basis for involvement in, or support for, terrorism, governments should also consider using counterterrorism authorities, including designation under appropriate sanctions regimes. Any measure should rest on documented conduct and individual responsibility.
- **Establish a coordinated democratic front against lawfare and selective enforcement.** Democratic states should create a permanent framework for political and legal coordination: sharing information on discriminatory initiatives, developing common legal positions, coordinating votes, and jointly opposing biased mandates and appointments. They should also support one another when such mechanisms target elected officials, soldiers, or companies operating in their jurisdictions. In the face of organized voting



blocs within the UN, democracies require sustained collective action that insists on the application of the same standards to all states.

- **Make clear that anti-Israel activity at the UN has consequences for bilateral relations.** Israel should take each state's conduct at the UN into account when shaping its relations with that state. Sponsoring discriminatory resolutions, voting for them, and participating in special mechanisms directed against Israel should affect Israel's willingness to support that state's international candidacies, expand cooperation with it, or grant it benefits. Israel should state in advance which actions will damage bilateral relations and apply those consequences consistently. At the same time, it should encourage its allies to consider such conduct when making decisions on aid, trade, and diplomatic support. States should understand that activity against Israel in international forums carries a price in their direct relations with Israel and its partners.



Introduction

While the disproportionate focus of the United Nations (UN) on Israel has been widely noted, the vast, complex, and institutionalized ecosystem dedicated to condemning and delegitimizing Israel has not been fully mapped or analyzed. Anti-Israel bias at the UN is not simply a matter of votes in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), nor is it confined to the Human Rights Council (HRC) or a handful of particularly hostile bodies and officials. The UN has developed a sprawling, interconnected, and highly resourced machinery that helps demonize and isolate Israel and advance economic, legal, and diplomatic measures against it. This ecosystem extends across more than thirty bodies, mechanisms, offices, commissions, committees, special procedures, agencies, databases, and other entities.

This report provides a comprehensive mapping of that ecosystem. It examines the bodies that constitute it, their formal mandates, how their leaders or members are selected, how decisions are made, and, where the information is available, how they are funded. Just as importantly, it examines the relationships among these bodies and the distinct role each plays within the broader Israel-focused machinery. Some were explicitly created to advance Palestinian claims and positions against Israel. Others have universal mandates in fields such as human rights, humanitarian assistance, health, education, gender, children, development, labor, culture, food security, migration, and international law, but have nevertheless become significant components of the UN's anti-Israel campaign. The purpose of this report is to make visible a system whose individual components are often examined separately, but whose scale, interconnectedness, and cumulative impact can only be understood when they are viewed together.

The architecture begins with member states. Automatic majorities in the UNGA create and renew Israel-specific mandates, authorize specialized committees, fund Secretariat units, request reports and advisory opinions, and provide political legitimacy for further action elsewhere in the system. Those decisions are then institutionalized through permanent staff, recurring budgets, investigations, conferences, databases, publications, and reporting requirements. HRC mechanisms and Special Rapporteurs convert political claims into purported human-rights findings. UN legal processes can transform those findings into arguments about international obligations and state responsibility. Humanitarian and technical agencies provide statistics, terminology, and institutional authority. Communications bodies disseminate the resulting narrative. One institution cites another, one report becomes the basis for the next, and allegations can move through the system until they emerge as ostensibly independent conclusions endorsed by multiple UN entities. In this way, political hostility is converted into budgeted bureaucracy, bureaucratic activity into supposed expertise, and supposed expertise into diplomatic, legal, economic, and reputational pressure.

October 7 exposed the consequences of this system with particular clarity. Hamas carried out the worst mass murder of Jews since the Holocaust, kidnapped hostages, fired rockets at Israeli cities, and deliberately operated from within Gaza's civilian environment. Yet much of the UN system quickly returned to its established framework: Israeli conduct was investigated, quantified, condemned, and transformed into legal demands, while Hamas's responsibility was frequently marginalized, generalized, or treated as background context. This asymmetry is not



simply the product of poor judgment during one war. It reflects an institutional structure built over decades in which Israel is the permanent object of scrutiny and condemnation, and Palestinian terrorism, incitement, responsibility, repression, and rejectionism are downplayed, ignored, or treated as far less consequential than Israel's alleged actions.

Much of this discriminatory machinery will be extraordinarily difficult to reform because it is downstream of the UN's most basic political structure. Under the one-country-one-vote system, every member of the UNGA has the same formal voting power regardless of population, financial contribution, form of government, human-rights record, or adherence to the principles the UN claims to uphold. This does not merely affect symbolic UNGA resolutions. These majorities determine budgets, create and preserve mandates, elect officials and judges, establish subsidiary bodies, commission reports, request legal opinions, and shape institutional norms throughout the UN system.

Within this structure, organized political blocs composed largely of authoritarian and non-democratic states enjoy tremendous influence. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Arab Group have long made hostility to Israel a central diplomatic priority. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 and China (G77 and China) provide much larger coalitions through which anti-Israel initiatives can obtain automatic or near-automatic majorities. China in particular has become highly effective at using bloc politics to influence the UN system, while shielding itself from comparable scrutiny.

The result is a fundamental imbalance: states that are deeply hostile to Israel, states that support or maintain close relations with terrorist organizations, and authoritarian regimes responsible for severe abuses can help determine the standards by which Israel is judged and create the institutions responsible for applying those standards. Yet those governments do not bear the principal financial burden of the system they shape. Democratic states do. Western democracies provide a disproportionate share of UN funding, including the resources that sustain mandates, offices, agencies, reports, investigations, and bureaucratic structures.¹

This matters far beyond Israel. The mechanisms examined in this report generate precedents, doctrines, investigative practices, databases, sanctions proposals, blacklists, legal theories, and institutional tools that can be redirected against other democratic states. A commission created to investigate a democracy fighting terrorist organizations can provide a model for future investigations of other counterterrorism campaigns. Unrealistic or distorted legal theories developed against Israel can later constrain other democracies confronting terrorism, insurgency, territorial conflict, or hybrid warfare. Corporate blacklists and calls for arms embargoes can be applied to companies supplying other democratic militaries. Politicized Special Rapporteurs can target other states' sanctions policies, security doctrines, or domestic legislation.

Challenging the UN's vast anti-Israel machinery does not require defending every Israeli policy or arguing that Israel should be immune from international scrutiny. The issue is whether that

¹ United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, "Revenue by Government Donor"; Fredman, *The UN Assault on Democracies*, 8.



scrutiny is based on common standards, credible evidence, genuine impartiality, realistic interpretations of international law, and equal consideration of the conduct of all parties. A system that establishes permanent mechanisms for one state, treats terrorism as context while treating democratic self-defense as the central problem, and repeatedly transforms politicized campaigns into purportedly neutral legal and humanitarian judgments undermines the very principles of universality and equality on which legitimate international institutions depend.

This report therefore has two purposes. The first is diagnostic: to expose and map the institutional infrastructure of the UN's anti-Israel campaign in order to deepen understanding not merely of individual manifestations of bias, but the system that produces them.

The second is operational. The report concludes with recommendations for democratic governments and other states committed to the UN's founding principles, including ending automatic funding for discriminatory mechanisms, making financial and political support conditional on concrete reforms, dismantling permanent Israel-specific structures, imposing stronger transparency and anti-terror safeguards, refusing to subsidize politicized lawfare and economic warfare, holding individual officials accountable for egregious misconduct, coordinating democratic responses to selective international lawfare, and developing alternative mechanisms where existing UN institutions have become irreparably compromised.

The objective is not to weaken legitimate international cooperation. It is to prevent international institutions from being used to institutionalize discrimination, distort international law, legitimize terrorism, and undermine the democracies whose citizens finance much of the system.

The UN's anti-Israel ecosystem did not emerge overnight. It is deeply embedded in mandates, budgets, bureaucracies, political coalitions, and institutional incentives. Meaningful change therefore requires more than protesting its latest output. It requires understanding the machinery itself, identifying who creates it, who sustains it, who finances it, and how its component parts reinforce one another. That is the goal of this report.



1. United Nations General Assembly

Organizational Status: Principal Organ.

Core Mandate: Serves as the primary deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations. Under Chapter IV of the UN Charter, the UNGA may discuss questions and matters within the scope of the Charter, make recommendations to Member States and other UN organs, approve the UN budget, elect members of other UN bodies, create subsidiary organs, mandate reports, and request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice.²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: USD 397.2 million in proposed 2026 regular-budget resources for UN Section 2.³

UNGA funding is not a separate standalone budget line. It is part of UN Section 2, “General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management.” For 2026, Section 2’s proposed regular budget was \$397.2 million, or \$422.8 million when extrabudgetary resources are included.⁴

Governance and Membership Selection: The UNGA is composed of all 193 UN Member States. Each Member State has one vote, regardless of population, financial contribution, democratic status, human-rights record, or compliance with the principles of the UN Charter.⁵

The UNGA is the political engine of the UN’s anti-Israel machinery. Its role is not limited to merely passing condemnatory resolutions. Through automatic majorities, it creates mandates, renews hostile bodies, funds the UN’s bureaucratic infrastructure focused on promoting Palestinian narratives and positions, approves Israel-focused reporting pipelines, upgrades Palestinian procedural status, requests International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinions, and then uses those opinions to demand political, diplomatic, legal, and economic pressure against Israel.

The structural problem begins with the UNGA’s voting system. An authoritarian state, a terror-supporting regime, a tiny island nation and a large liberal democracy each receive one vote. States that contribute little to the UN budget can outvote the democracies that fund much of it. Regimes

² United Nations, “Functions and Powers of the General Assembly,”

<https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>; United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, arts. 9–22 and 96, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>.

³ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, Part I, Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and Conference Management, A/80/6 (Sect. 2), <https://docs.un.org/A/80/6%28Sect.2%29>.

⁴ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, Part I, Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and Conference Management, A/80/6 (Sect. 2), <https://docs.un.org/A/80/6%28Sect.2%29>.

⁵ United Nations, “Functions and Powers of the General Assembly,”

<https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.



that violate human rights at home can sit in judgment of democratic states abroad. This creates the conditions in which blocs such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab Group, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the G77 and China can generate automatic majorities against Israel year after year.

The results are stark. Since 2015, according to the UN Watch database, the UNGA has adopted 187 condemnatory resolutions against Israel, more than twice the number adopted against Russia, China, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Myanmar, Qatar, Pakistan, Cuba, and Venezuela combined. The world's only Jewish state is condemned more often than many of the world's worst aggressors and human-rights abusers combined.⁶

The UNGA also built much of the permanent Palestinian-focused infrastructure inside the UN. It created and renews the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. It mandates and sustains the Division for Palestinian Rights. It renews the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine. It keeps alive the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices. It requests recurring reports, funds Secretariat support, and ensures that the "Question of Palestine" remains embedded in the UN's day-to-day work.⁷

The UNGA's bias became especially visible after October 7. Less than three weeks after Hamas carried out the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, the UNGA adopted an emergency resolution calling for a humanitarian truce. The resolution failed to condemn Hamas by name. A Canadian amendment that would have explicitly condemned Hamas was not adopted. At the very moment when the UN should have spoken with moral clarity, the UNGA could not bring itself to name the terrorist organization that had murdered, raped, burned, kidnapped, and terrorized Israeli civilians.⁸

That failure was not accidental. It reflected the UNGA's deeper moral corruption. Israeli actions are named, condemned, investigated, and converted into demands. Palestinian terrorism is diluted into context, generalized language, or silence. Israeli self-defense is treated as the central problem. Hamas's massacre, hostage-taking, use of human shields, rocket fire, militarization of civilian areas, and refusal to surrender are treated as background. Palestinian Authority support for terror, pay-for-slay, incitement, hate education, and violations of human rights are ignored.

Since October 7, the UNGA has adopted more than forty Israel-focused resolutions. These resolutions have demanded ceasefires, condemned Israeli conduct, supported enhanced Palestinian status at the UN, and pushed for follow-up to ICJ proceedings against Israel. The ceasefire

⁶ UN Watch, "Israel," *UN Watch Database*, <https://unwatch.org/database/country/israel/>; UN Watch, "Resolution Database," <https://unwatch.org/database/resolution-database/>.

⁷ United Nations, "The Question of Palestine," *UNISPAL*; United Nations General Assembly, Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat, A/RES/77/24, November 30, 2022, para. 4.

⁸ United Nations, "General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling for Immediate, Sustained Humanitarian Truce Leading to Cessation of Hostilities between Israel, Hamas," GA/12548, October 27, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/ga12548.doc.htm>.



demands were not conditioned on Hamas's surrender, disarmament, removal from power, or the release of the hostages.⁹

The September 2024 UNGA resolution following the ICJ advisory opinion showed how the machinery works. First, the UNGA requested an advisory opinion from the ICJ through a politically framed question adopted before October 7. Then, after the Court issued its July 2024 opinion, the UNGA adopted a sweeping follow-up resolution demanding that Israel withdraw from Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), Gaza, and East Jerusalem within twelve months, and calling on states to turn the advisory opinion into concrete punitive measures: arms-transfer restrictions, sanctions, non-recognition measures, and trade and investment restrictions and boycotts.¹⁰

The UNGA has repeatedly communicated to the Palestinian Authority (PA) that not only are there no penalties for its rejectionism, continued support for terror and its campaign of anti-Israel delegitimization, but that these are rewarded. For example, in May 2024, the UNGA adopted a resolution granting the "State of Palestine" additional rights and privileges at the UN, despite its continued terror incitement, despite Hamas's control of Gaza, and despite the October 7 attack.¹¹

The UNGA supplies the votes, mandates, budgets, committees, reports, legal referrals, and political legitimacy that the rest of the UN's anti-Israel system operationalizes. It is therefore not merely one biased forum among many. It is the source code of the UN's anti-Israel campaign. It is where automatic majorities become institutional mandates, where political hostility becomes budgeted bureaucracy, and where the world's most persistent campaign against Israel is given the seal of the United Nations.

⁹ UN Watch, "Resolution Database," filtered for General Assembly resolutions concerning Israel, <https://unwatch.org/database/resolution-database/>.

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem*, A/RES/ES-10/24, September 18, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/ES-10/24>.

¹¹ United Nations General Assembly, *Admission of New Members to the United Nations*, A/RES/ES-10/23, May 10, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/ES-10/23>.



2. United Nations Economic and Social Council

Organizational Status: The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is a principal organ of the UN.

Core Mandate: Serves as the United Nations' principal organ for economic, social, cultural, educational, health, humanitarian, development, and related matters. Under Chapter X of the UN Charter, ECOSOC may make or initiate studies and reports, make recommendations to the UNGA, Member States, and specialized agencies, and establish commissions in economic and social fields and for the promotion of human rights.¹²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: USD 397.2 million in proposed 2026 regular-budget resources for UN Section 2.

ECOSOC funding is not a separate standalone budget line. Like the UNGA, it is part of UN Section 2, "General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management." For 2026, Section 2's proposed regular budget was \$397.2 million, or \$422.8 million when extrabudgetary resources are included.¹³

Governance and Membership Selection: ECOSOC consists of 54 Member States elected by the UNGA. Eighteen members are elected each year for three-year terms, and retiring members are eligible for immediate re-election. Each ECOSOC member has one vote, and decisions are made by a majority of members present and voting.¹⁴

ECOSOC's contribution to the UN's anti-Israel machinery lies in its ability to translate political hostility into bureaucratic, development, humanitarian, and "civil society" channels. As one of the UN's six principal organs, ECOSOC coordinates a wide range of economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, and development work across the UN system. Its importance is therefore that it gives anti-Israel narratives the appearance of technical, humanitarian, gender-based, economic, and development expertise.

The most important ECOSOC mechanism related to Israel is the recurring agenda item on the "economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation" on Palestinians and the Arab population of the Golan Heights. ECOSOC regularly considers reports prepared by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and transmitted by the UN Secretary-General on this subject, and has repeatedly adopted resolutions under the same

¹² United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, arts. 7, 61–68, <https://www.un.org/en/node/125814>.

¹³ United Nations, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, A/80/7, sec. 2, 109, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4089854/files/A_80_7-EN.pdf.

¹⁴ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, arts. 61 and 67, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-10>.



agenda item. In practice, this creates a recurring ECOSOC reporting pipeline that presents Palestinian economic and social conditions overwhelmingly through the lens of Israeli responsibility, while marginalizing Palestinian governance failures, terrorism, Hamas rule in Gaza, corruption, incitement, intra-Palestinian repression, and the role of regional actors.¹⁵

The resolution on this item adopted in July 2025, for example, contains no mention of Hamas or the October 7 attack. Israeli actions are named, condemned, and linked to Palestinian economic and social suffering, while Hamas's massacre, hostage-taking, rocket fire, militarization of Gaza's civilian areas, and responsibility for the war are absent from the resolution's narrative. The resolution also makes no mention of PA incitement, glorification of terror in the education system, or violations of human rights. Indeed, it goes so far as to "commend" the PA for "its efforts to improve the economic and social situation... especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture..."¹⁶

A second major ECOSOC track is the recurring resolution on the "situation of and assistance to Palestinian women." The problem is not merely that ECOSOC singles out Palestinian women while giving far less attention to women living under regimes across the Middle East where severe legal and social discrimination is entrenched. The resolution also presents a distorted account of the situation of Palestinian women themselves, minimizing or overlooking major sources of discrimination, repression, and hardship within Palestinian society while placing overwhelming responsibility on Israel. The 2025 resolution, for example, "reaffirms" that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle to Palestinian women and girls in the fulfillment of their rights, advancement, self-reliance, and integration in the development of their society. In doing so, ECOSOC turns the genuine challenges facing Palestinian women into a recurring vehicle for condemning Israel rather than offering a comprehensive assessment of the forces affecting their rights and well-being.¹⁷

ECOSOC also controls access to the UN system through its power to grant NGOs consultative status. ECOSOC accreditation gives NGOs access, legitimacy, badges, side-event opportunities, and the ability to participate in UN forums.¹⁸ ECOSOC has granted such status to Palestinian

¹⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, "Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab Population in the Occupied Syrian Golan," A/79/187-E/2024/68, July 18, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/economic-and-social-repercussions-report-18jul24/>; United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and the Arab Population in the Occupied Syrian Golan," E/RES/2025/33, July 30, 2025, <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?l=en&s=E%2FRES%2F2025%2F33&t=pdf>.

¹⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation," E/RES/2025/33, 2–3, July 30, 2025, <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?l=en&s=E%2FRES%2F2025%2F33&t=pdf>.

¹⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," E/RES/2025/34, July 30, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/situation-of-and-assistance-to-palestinian-women-resolution-30jul25/>.

¹⁸ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Giving Civil Society a Voice at the United Nations," <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/intergovernmental-coordination/giving-civil-society-voice-at-un.html>.



NGOs with links to terrorist organizations. For example, ECOSOC granted the Palestinian Return Centre consultative status despite links to Hamas,¹⁹ and to Al-Haq despite links to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) terror group.²⁰ More broadly, the NGO accreditation system has often empowered highly politicized anti-Israel advocacy groups while forcing pro-Israel and human-rights watchdog organizations to fight for limited access and speaking opportunities.²¹

ECOSOC thus plays a distinctive role in the UN's anti-Israel machinery. Rather than focusing primarily on overtly political condemnations, it embeds the same narratives across development, economics, women's rights, humanitarian affairs, regional analysis, and civil-society participation. This gives politically driven claims about Israel the appearance of independent validation by technical experts, humanitarian bodies, development institutions, and NGOs, allowing them to circulate throughout the wider UN system and beyond.

¹⁹ United Nations, "[Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends 10 Groups for Special Status with Economic and Social Council, Defers Action on 43 Others](#)", June 1, 2015; Palestinian Return Centre, [official website](#), accessed September 17, 2026; State of Israel, Ministry of Strategic Affairs, [Terrorists in Suits: The Ties between NGOs Promoting BDS and Terrorist Organizations](#), p. 55.

²⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Council, Decision 2000/214, May 3, 2000, <https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023/decision-2000-214.pdf>; State of Israel, National Bureau for Counter Terror Financing, "The Minister of Defense Designated Six Organizations of the 'Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine' as Terror Organizations," January 3, 2022, <https://nbctf.mod.gov.il/en/Pages/211021EN.aspx>. The Dutch government subsequently stated that it had not received evidence sufficient to justify Israel's designation: Government of the Netherlands, Parliamentary Questions 2021–2022, no. 3085, <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/ah-tk-20212022-3085.html>.

²¹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on Its Resumed 2007 Session*, E/2007/32 (Part II), draft decision III and paras. 7–17, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n07/367/32/pdf/n0736732.pdf>.



3. International Court of Justice

Organizational Status: ICJ is a principal organ of the UN.

Core Mandate: Serves as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Under Chapter XIV of the UN Charter and the Statute of the ICJ, the ICJ settles legal disputes submitted to it by states and gives advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized UN organs and specialized agencies.²²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: USD 36.8 million in proposed 2026 regular-budget resources for UN Section 7.²³

The ICJ is funded through the UN regular budget under Section 7, “International Court of Justice.” For 2026, proposed regular-budget resources for Section 7 amounted to \$36.8 million, including \$8.9 million for Members of the Court, \$22.4 million for the Registry, and \$5.5 million for program support.²⁴

Governance and Membership Selection: The ICJ is composed of 15 judges elected for nine-year terms by UNGA and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), voting independently. One third of the Court is elected every three years, and sitting judges are eligible for re-election. The Statute requires that the Court represent the “principal legal systems of the world” and the “main forms of civilization.”²⁵

The ICJ’s contribution to the UN’s anti-Israel machinery lies in its ability to transform political campaigns into instruments of international legal pressure. The ICJ gives legal prestige and grounding, institutional authority, and the appearance of neutral judicial validation to campaigns that often begin in automatic anti-Israel majorities at the UN.

This dynamic has been especially clear since October 7. South Africa’s genocide case against Israel recast a war launched by Hamas’s massacre, hostage-taking, rocket fire, and use of civilian areas for military purposes as an Israeli campaign of genocide. The accusation was baseless and absurd, but the ICJ’s decision to entertain the case gave it international legitimacy. On January 26, 2024,

²² International Court of Justice, “The Court,” <https://www.icj-cij.org/court>; United Nations, *Statute of the International Court of Justice*, arts. 34 and 65, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/statute-of-the-international-court-of-justice>.

²³ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part I, Section 7, International Court of Justice*, A/80/6 (Sect. 7), <https://docs.un.org/A/80/6%28Sect.7%29>.

²⁴ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part I, Section 7, International Court of Justice*, A/80/6 (Sect. 7), <https://docs.un.org/A/80/6%28Sect.7%29>.

²⁵ International Court of Justice, “Members of the Court,” <https://www.icj-cij.org/members>; United Nations, *Statute of the International Court of Justice*, arts. 3, 9, and 13, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/statute-of-the-international-court-of-justice>.



the Court ordered Israel to take provisional measures under the Genocide Convention. Although the Court did not find that genocide was occurring, its procedural language was immediately weaponized by Israel's adversaries as proof that the genocide charge itself had legal credibility.²⁶

This created a profound asymmetry. Israel, a democratic state defending itself from radical Islamist terror groups, was placed under continuing judicial scrutiny and subjected to a series of binding provisional measures. Hamas, the terrorist organization that launched the war, murdered civilians, kidnapped hostages, embedded itself in civilian infrastructure, and continued fighting from inside Gaza, was not a party before the Court and was therefore not subject to any binding ICJ measures. The proceedings therefore subjected Israel to continuing judicial constraints during an ongoing war while leaving the principal terrorist actor that initiated the conflict outside the Court's direct legal reach.

South Africa repeatedly returned to the Court for additional measures, and the ICJ issued further orders in March and May 2024. Each round intensified diplomatic pressure on Israel and amplified the narrative that Israel, rather than Hamas, was the central legal problem in the war. The May 2024 order, concerning Rafah, placed legal pressure on Israel at a decisive stage of its campaign against Hamas's remaining battalions.²⁷

A second major ICJ track is the July 19, 2024 advisory opinion on the Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. This advisory opinion arose from a UNGA request adopted in 2022, before the October 7 massacre. The question was therefore shaped by a political UN process that had already framed Israel as the wrongdoer and stripped Israeli security measures of their context. The Court then concluded that Israel's continued presence in the territories was unlawful and should end as rapidly as possible.²⁸

The opinion was sweeping, one-sided, and detached from the reality of the conflict. It largely ignored Palestinian rejectionism, terrorism, the consequences of Israel's past withdrawals, and the security threats Israel faces from Gaza, Judea and Samaria, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and Iran-backed terrorist groups. The result was a judicial document that could be, and immediately was, used to support broad diplomatic, economic, and political pressure against Israel.

²⁶ International Court of Justice, Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (*South Africa v. Israel*), Order of January 26, 2024, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192/provisional-measures>.

²⁷ International Court of Justice, Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (*South Africa v. Israel*), Orders of March 28 and May 24, 2024, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192/provisional-measures>.

²⁸ International Court of Justice, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem*, Advisory Opinion of July 19, 2024, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/186>; United Nations General Assembly, Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, A/RES/77/247, December 30, 2022, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/77/247>.



A third ICJ track emerged with the advisory proceedings on Israel's obligations in relation to the presence and activities of the United Nations, other international organizations, and third states in and in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The proceedings aimed to counter Israeli measures against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), despite extensive evidence of Hamas's infiltration of the agency, participation by UNRWA employees in the October 7 attack, and the agency's role in perpetuating the conflict.²⁹

On October 22, 2025, the Court delivered its advisory opinion. It concluded that the population of Gaza was inadequately supplied within the meaning of Article 59 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and that Israel was therefore required to agree to and facilitate relief schemes for the population, including relief provided by the United Nations and, in the circumstances addressed by the Court, UNRWA. By votes of 10–1, the Court also held that Israel was required to cooperate in good faith with the United Nations, including UNRWA, in and in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and to respect the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its personnel. The Court acknowledged Israel's security concerns and the allegations concerning UNRWA, but concluded that security concerns did not constitute a free-standing exception to otherwise applicable international-humanitarian-law obligations and that any limitations had to be grounded in a specific legal rule and exercised in good faith. Vice-President Julia Sebutinde dissented from much of the operative outcome, arguing, among other things, that Israel's national-security concerns and sovereign authority over UNRWA operations within Israeli territory warranted substantially greater weight.³⁰

The ICJ's credibility gap was highlighted by the absurd case of Nawaf Salam. Salam served as Lebanon's ambassador to the United Nations from 2007 to 2017, during which he established an extensive public record of extremely harsh accusations against Israel. In official UN forums, Salam accused Israel of "State terrorism," invoked allegations that Israel had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, condemned what he described as its "inhumane blockade" and "expansionist" policies, and attributed "terrorism and economic asphyxiation" of the Palestinians to Israel. In a 2017 UNSC debate, he declared that "Israel and terrorism are two sides of the same coin."³¹

²⁹ International Court of Justice, *Obligations of Israel in Relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, Other International Organizations and Third States in and in Relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Case No. 196, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/196>; United Nations, "Allegations on UNRWA Staff Participation in the 7 October Attacks," August 5, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unrwa-investigation-statement-05aug24/>.

³⁰ International Court of Justice, *Obligations of Israel in Relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, Other International Organizations and Third States in and in Relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Advisory Opinion of October 22, 2025, General List No. 196, A/80/502, paras. 88–90, 102–124, 211–215 and operative conclusions, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/icj-advisory-opinion-22oct2025/>; International Court of Justice, Separate Opinion of Vice-President Sebutinde, A/80/502/Add.1, October 22, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/separate-opinions-and-declarations-advisory-opinion-of-the-international-court-of-justice-on-the-obligations-of-israel-in-relation-to-the-presence-and-activities-of-the-united-nations-other-interna/>

³¹ United Nations Security Council, "With 'Perfect Storm' Engulfing Middle East, Divisions Open Door for Foreign Intervention, Manipulation, UN Special Coordinator Tells Security Council," SC/12800, April 20, 2017, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/with-perfect-storm-engulfing-middle-east-divisions-open-door-for-foreign->



Yet Salam was subsequently elected to the ICJ, became its president in February 2024, and presided over some of the Court's most consequential proceedings involving Israel, including South Africa's genocide case and the advisory proceedings concerning Israel's policies and practices in the Palestinian territories. The bias and distortion of basic judicial standards were extraordinary: a former ambassador of a state with a long history of conflict with Israel, who had personally accused Israel of terrorism and grave international crimes, was sitting at the head of the world's highest UN court as it adjudicated accusations of international crimes against Israel.³²

The problem is institutional. The ICJ has become the endpoint of a political-legal pipeline in which automatic UN majorities, Palestinian-aligned blocs, and hostile states first generate legal questions, then turn to the Court to cloak those campaigns in the authority of judicial proceedings and decisions. In this manner, the ICJ gives political campaigns generated elsewhere in the UN the language, prestige, and authority of international law.

intervention-manipulation-un-special-coordinator-tells-security-council-security-council-press-release-sc12800/; UN Watch, "Report: Head of World Court Condemned Israel 210 Times as Lebanon's UN Rep," July 18, 2024, <https://unwatch.org/report-head-of-world-court-condemned-israel-210-times-as-lebanons-un-rep-sided-with-regimes-in-iran-syria-belarus-cuba/>.

³² International Court of Justice, *Annual Report 2023–2024*, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/annual-reports/2023-2024-en.pdf>; International Court of Justice, *South Africa v. Israel*, Case No. 192, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192>; International Court of Justice, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel*, Case No. 186, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/186>.



4. Secretary-General and United Nations Secretariat

Organizational Status: Principal Organ and administrative arm of the United Nations.

Core Mandate: Carries out the day-to-day work of the UN, supports the principal organs, prepares reports, services meetings, administers mandates, coordinates field activities, and gives institutional voice to UN positions. The Secretary-General serves as the UN's chief administrative officer under the Charter.³³

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The Secretariat is financed principally through the UN regular budget, supplemented by voluntary and extra-budgetary resources for particular offices and activities. The UNGA approved a 2026 UN regular budget of approximately \$3.45 billion.³⁴

Governance and Membership Selection: The Secretary-General is appointed by the UNGA upon the recommendation of the UNSC.³⁵

The Secretariat shapes the language, reports, priorities, and moral framing of the entire system. It decides what to emphasize, what to omit, what to elevate to the UNSC, how to frame reports, and how to speak in moments of crisis. In a system where reports become legal material and briefings become headlines, Secretariat framing matters.

This tendency long predated October 7. In January 2016, amid a wave of Palestinian stabbing, shooting, and car-ramming attacks against Israelis, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the UNSC that, while terrorism could never be justified, “as oppressed peoples have demonstrated throughout the ages, it is human nature to react to occupation,” which he described as a “potent incubator of hate and extremism.” The statement exemplified a recurring tendency within the UN leadership to contextualize Palestinian violence primarily through Palestinian grievances and Israeli policies, even while Israelis were being targeted in terrorist attacks.³⁶

A similar example came under Ban Ki-moon's successor, António Guterres, in the immediate aftermath of October 7. Addressing the UNSC, Guterres stated that Hamas's attacks “did not happen in a vacuum,” before recounting decades of Palestinian grievances and Israeli policies. Guterres also condemned Hamas's attacks. Nevertheless, the formulation became emblematic of the UN's persistent instinct to place Palestinian terrorism within an explanatory framework

³³ United Nations, “Main Bodies,” <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/main-bodies>.

³⁴ United Nations, “General Assembly Approves \$3.45 Billion Regular Budget for 2026,” January 6, 2026, <https://www.un.org/en/node/238586>.

³⁵ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, art. 97, <https://www.un.org/en/node/125814>.

³⁶ Ban Ki-moon, remarks to the Security Council, in United Nations Security Council, 7610th mtg., S/PV.7610, January 26, 2016, 2, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/818294>.



centered on Israeli conduct. Coming only two weeks after Hamas's October 7 massacre, the statement reinforced the perception that even in the face of extraordinary atrocities against Israelis, senior UN officials were quick to redirect attention toward Palestinian grievances and alleged Israeli wrongdoing.³⁷

The Secretariat's power is not limited to speeches. It drives the reporting machinery that feeds the UNSC, UNGA, HRC, UN agencies, media outlets, NGOs, and international legal bodies. Its reports on children and armed conflict, sexual violence in conflict, humanitarian conditions, and human rights can carry severe reputational and legal consequences. When the Secretariat chooses to list Israel in global accountability frameworks alongside terrorist groups and brutal regimes, it does more than record allegations. It embeds Israel inside UN blacklists that are then cited by governments, journalists, activists, and legal actors around the world.³⁸

The Secretariat also gives bureaucratic life to the UN's Palestinian-focused infrastructure. It houses the Division for Palestinian Rights, supports the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), services the committees and reporting pipelines that keep the "Question of Palestine" at the center of UN activity, and coordinates field missions and humanitarian structures that often reproduce the same one-sided assumptions and condemnations. In practice, the Secretariat turns anti-Israel political mandates into staff work, reports, websites, meetings, newsletters, briefings, and institutional DNA.³⁹

The Secretariat is not just another voice in the UN. It is the administrative bloodstream of the organization. The Secretary-General and Secretariat help convert political hostility into institutional reality. They give the anti-Israel campaign vocabulary, procedure, paperwork, and permanence. The result is a UN system in which Israel is not simply criticized, but continuously framed as a central cause of international disorder.

³⁷ António Guterres, remarks to the Security Council, in United Nations Security Council, 9451st mtg., S/PV.9451, October 24, 2023, 2, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4025983>.

³⁸ United Nations Secretary-General, *Children and Armed Conflict*, A/78/842–S/2024/384, June 3, 2024, para. 351 and annex I, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4051293>.

³⁹ United Nations, Division for Palestinian Rights, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>.



5. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Organizational Status: The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) is a subsidiary committee of UNGA.⁴⁰

Core Mandate: Promotes the realization of the “inalienable rights of the Palestinian people,” including self-determination, national independence, sovereignty, and “return.” It mobilizes international support for Palestinian positions and works with the Division for Palestinian Rights (DPR) and other UN bodies.⁴¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: CEIRPP does not have a separate standalone budget. Its activities are supported through UN regular-budget resources and Secretariat support, primarily through the DPR. DPR’s budget, which finances much of the Secretariat infrastructure supporting CEIRPP, is addressed separately below. CEIRPP’s work is renewed and reinforced through recurring UNGA mandates.⁴²

Governance and Membership Selection: CEIRPP is composed of UN Member States selected through the UNGA process. It also includes observers and works closely with the DPR, which serves as its secretariat.⁴³

CEIRPP is one of the clearest examples of how the UN turned the Palestinian cause into a permanent institutional project: a standing UNGA committee dedicated to advancing one side’s political claims inside the UN system.

CEIRPP was created in 1975 as part of the same UNGA political wave that produced the infamous “Zionism is racism” resolution. On November 10, 1975, the UNGA adopted Resolution 3376 establishing CEIRPP, and Resolution 3379 declaring that “Zionism is a form of racism and racial

⁴⁰ United Nations, “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/committee/>.

⁴¹ United Nations, “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/committee/>.

⁴² United Nations, “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/committee/>; United Nations, “About the Division for Palestinian Rights,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>; United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part II, Section 3, Political Affairs, A/80/6 (Sect. 3), Subprogramme 5, “Question of Palestine,”* [https://docs.un.org/A/80/6\(Sect.3\)](https://docs.un.org/A/80/6(Sect.3)).

⁴³ United Nations, “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/committee/>; United Nations, “About the Division for Palestinian Rights,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>.



discrimination.” Although Resolution 3379 was revoked in 1991, CEIRPP survived, leaving in place one of the institutional products of that same anti-Zionist moment.⁴⁴

CEIRPP’s work includes meetings, annual reports, commemorations, international conferences, civil-society engagement, publications, diplomatic outreach, and coordination with DPR, all aimed at promoting Palestinian positions and embedding them across the UN system. These activities give the Palestinian political narrative a permanent institutional home. The Committee does not disappear or change course when Palestinian leaders reject peace offers, when Hamas starts wars, when hostages are taken, or when Palestinian institutions incite violence. Its mandate continues uninterrupted.⁴⁵

CEIRPP’s outputs and platforms reveal the extremism of the infrastructure it sustains. The Committee has advanced claims that Israel is committing “genocide,” pursuing “erasure of the Indigenous Palestinian people,” maintaining “apartheid,” and engaging in “ethnic cleansing.” CEIRPP civil-society programming featured claims that trade with Israel enables and finances “genocide, apartheid and ethnic cleansing.” This language recasts Israel’s war against Hamas after October 7 not as a response to massacre, hostage-taking, and terrorist entrenchment in civilian areas, but as a campaign of extermination and colonial erasure. In this way it launders some of the most extreme anti-Israel accusations through an official UN committee.⁴⁶

The Committee’s Nakba commemorations are another example. By turning the Palestinian narrative of 1948 into an annual UN event, CEIRPP helps institutionalize a version of history that casts Israel’s very birth as an original sin. The result is a recurring UN ritual that places the legitimacy of Israel’s founding under permanent moral indictment.⁴⁷

CEIRPP’s cooperation with DPR and UNISPAL gives the campaign bureaucratic depth. A Secretariat division supports it, a UN information platform amplifies it, and recurring UNGA

⁴⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 3376 (XXX), “Question of Palestine,” November 10, 1975, [https://docs.un.org/A/RES/3376\(XXX\)](https://docs.un.org/A/RES/3376(XXX)); United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 3379 (XXX), “Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,” November 10, 1975, [https://docs.un.org/A/RES/3379\(XXX\)](https://docs.un.org/A/RES/3379(XXX)); United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 46/86, “Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination,” December 16, 1991, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/46/86>.

⁴⁵ United Nations, “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/committee/>; Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, September 1, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-2025-annual-report-01sep2025/>.

⁴⁶ Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, September 1, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-2025-annual-report-01sep2025/>; United Nations, “Amid States’ Negligence, Activists Working to Ensure Accountability for Violations of Palestinian Rights,” May 16, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-cso-consultations-2025-press-release-16may25/>.

⁴⁷ United Nations Web TV, “Special Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the Nakba,” May 15, 2023, <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k11/k11ddp7105>.



resolutions reinforce it. Together they form a permanent Palestinian advocacy complex inside the UN.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>; United Nations, "Question of Palestine," <https://www.un.org/unispal/>.



6. Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

Organizational Status: The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) is a UN special political mission operating under the authority of the Secretary-General, with political oversight and support provided through the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).⁴⁹

Core Mandate: UNSCO represents the Secretary-General in political and diplomatic efforts related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and serves as the UN's principal field-based political mission dealing with the peace process. Established following the Oslo Accords, it engages Israeli and Palestinian officials, regional governments, and international actors; supports diplomatic and de-escalation efforts; briefs the UNSC; monitors implementation of relevant UNSC resolutions; and coordinates UN humanitarian and development activity related to the Palestinians.⁵⁰

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNSCO is financed through the UN regular budget within the special political mission framework, with proposed 2026 resources of approximately \$12.0 million. Its budget is separate from DPPA's "Question of Palestine" subprogramme, which finances the DPR and is addressed in the following section.⁵¹

Governance and Membership Selection: UNSCO is led by the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, appointed by the Secretary-General. The Special Coordinator serves as the Secretary-General's senior political representative on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and conducts diplomatic engagement with the parties, regional governments, international partners, and other relevant actors. DPPA provides political oversight and support as part of the UN's special political mission system.⁵²

⁴⁹ United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "Special Political Missions," last updated August 27, 2026, <https://dppa.un.org/en/special-political-missions>; United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "UNSCO, Middle East Peace Process," <https://dppa.un.org/en/factsheet/unsco-middle-east-peace-process>.

⁵⁰ United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "UNSCO, Middle East Peace Process," <https://dppa.un.org/en/factsheet/unsco-middle-east-peace-process>.

⁵¹ United Nations, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/7 (2025), sec. II.3, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4089854/files/A_80_7-EN.pdf; United Nations General Assembly, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026: Part II, Political Affairs, Section 3, Political Affairs*, A/80/6 (Sect. 3) (April 23, 2025), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4081287/files/A_80_6_%28Sect._3%29-EN.pdf?version=1.

⁵² United Nations Secretary-General, "Ms. Sigrid Kaag of the Netherlands—United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) ad interim," January 17, 2025, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments/2025-01-17/ms-sigrid-kaag-of-the-netherlands-united-nations-special-coordinator-for-the-middle-east-peace-process-%28unsco%29-ad-interim>; United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "UNSCO, Middle East Peace Process," <https://dppa.un.org/en/factsheet/unsco-middle-east-peace-process>.



One of UNSCO's most consequential functions is its role in implementing and reporting on UNSC Resolution 2334. Adopted on December 23, 2016, by a vote of 14–0, with the United States abstaining, Resolution 2334 declared that Israeli settlements in territory captured in 1967, “including East Jerusalem,” have “no legal validity” and constitute a “flagrant violation under international law.” It demanded that Israel “immediately and completely cease all settlement activities” in those territories and called upon states to distinguish in their dealings between the territory of the State of Israel and territories captured in 1967. The resolution also condemns violence against civilians, including terrorism, as well as incitement and provocation by the parties. Crucially, however, it requires the Secretary-General to report to the UNSC every three months on its implementation, creating a permanent reporting mechanism in which UNSCO has played a central role.⁵³

These quarterly reports created a repeated framework that places Israeli policies—particularly construction in eastern Jerusalem, demolitions, military operations, and settlements—under recurring international legal and diplomatic scrutiny. UNSCO representatives routinely repeat Resolution 2334's conclusion that Israeli settlements have “no legal validity” and constitute a “flagrant violation” of international law and call upon Israel to cease settlement activity “immediately and completely.” They also monitor whether governments and other actors distinguish between Israel and territories captured in 1967. In this way, UNSCO does more than mediate between the parties: it serves as a recurring reporting and implementation mechanism for a UNSC resolution that Israel strongly rejected as prejudging core final-status issues and encouraging international pressure against it. The reports do also address Palestinian terror, rocket fire, and other behavior.⁵⁴

UNSCO officials have also repeatedly employed severe language regarding Israeli conduct. During the Gaza war, Special Coordinator Tor Wennesland stated that “nothing can justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people,” employing a term with serious implications under international humanitarian law while discussing Israel's military campaign. At times, UNSCO went beyond general criticism to condemn specific Israeli military operations while important facts surrounding them remained contested.⁵⁵

⁵³ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2334 (2016), S/RES/2334 (2016), December 23, 2016, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unsc-resolution-2334-illegality-israeli-settlements/>; United Nations Security Council, “Israel's Settlements Have No Legal Validity, Constitute Flagrant Violation of International Law, Security Council Reaffirms,” SC/12657, December 23, 2016, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-200647/>.

⁵⁴ United Nations, Secretary-General, “Implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016),” S/2026/513, June 24, 2026, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/sg-report-24jun26/>; United Nations, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “29th Quarterly Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of UNSCR 2334 (2016),” March 26, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/29th-quarterly-report-of-sg-on-implementation-of-sc-res-2334-2016-26mar24/>; Peter Beaumont, “Israel Rejects ‘Shameful’ UN Resolution amid Criticism of Netanyahu,” *The Guardian*, December 24, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/24/israel-rejects-shameful-un-resolution-amid-criticism-of-netanyahu>.

⁵⁵ United Nations, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “29th Quarterly Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of UNSCR 2334 (2016),” March 26, 2024,



In September 2024, for example, Wennesland stated that he “strongly condemn[ed]” Israeli airstrikes in the Al-Mawasi humanitarian zone in Khan Younis. Israel said the strike had targeted three senior Hamas operatives operating from within the humanitarian zone and that extensive precautions had been taken to reduce civilian casualties. Wennesland did acknowledge that civilians must never be used as human shields, but nevertheless directed his explicit condemnation at the Israeli strike.⁵⁶

UNSCO’s conduct immediately following October 7 was highly problematic. On October 14, 2023—one week after the Hamas massacre—Wennesland met and publicly shook hands with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. Iran was Hamas’s principal state sponsor, providing the organization with funding, weapons, training, and political support. Israel’s UN ambassador responded by severing contact with Wennesland, accusing him of meeting the Iranian foreign minister without condemning Iran’s role in supporting Hamas.⁵⁷

A further controversy involved Lynn Hastings, who simultaneously served as UNSCO’s Deputy Special Coordinator and as the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Palestinian territories. In late 2023, Israel refused to renew her visa. The Israeli Foreign Ministry publicly charged that Hastings, who was supposed to be “impartial and objective,” was neither, and accused her of using “dangerous rhetoric” and of being slow to condemn Hamas after October 7 while sharply criticizing Israeli actions.⁵⁸

UNSCO’s activities extend beyond public statements. Its political assessments enter UNSC deliberations; its reporting helps shape international diplomatic understandings of developments on the ground; and its humanitarian and socioeconomic work feeds into donor discussions and international policy toward the PA. UNSCO therefore occupies an influential position between field observation and international diplomacy. The way it characterizes an Israeli operation, government decision, Palestinian attack, economic measure, or outbreak of violence can become

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/29th-quarterly-report-of-sg-on-implementation-of-sc-res-2334-2016-26mar24/>.

⁵⁶ United Nations, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, on the Situation,” September 10, 2024, <https://unsco.unmissions.org/en/news/statement-un-special-coordinator-middle-east-peace-process-tor-wennesland-situation-9>; Israel Defense Forces, “Senior Hamas Terrorists Who Were Operating within a Command and Control Center Embedded inside the Humanitarian Area in Khan Yunis,” September 10, 2024, <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/israel-hamas-war-gaza/articles-israel-hamas-war-gaza/distributions-swords-of-iron-war-gaza/southern-gaza/100924-senior-hamas-terrorists-who-were-operating-within-a-command-and-control-center-embedded-inside-the-humanitarian-area-in-khan-yunis/>.

⁵⁷ The Times of Israel, “Israeli Envoy Slams UN Official: ‘Don’t Forget to Wash Babies’ Blood off Your Hands,” October 14, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-envoy-slams-un-official-dont-forget-to-wash-babies-blood-off-your-hands/>; United States Department of Justice, “The Government of Iran and Its Proxies’ Support for Hamas,” in federal complaint material concerning Hamas leadership, [https://www.justice.gov/opa/media/1366141/dl?inline=](https://www.justice.gov/opa/media/1366141/dl?inline=;); United States Department of State, “Country Reports on Terrorism 2023,” <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2023/>.

⁵⁸ United Nations, Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, “Daily Press Briefing,” December 6, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/db231206.doc.htm>; The Times of Israel, “Israel Opts Not to Extend UN Envoy’s Visa,” December 1, 2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-opts-not-to-extend-un-envoys-visa/.



part of the official UN record and then be repeated through UNSC debates, diplomatic statements, humanitarian advocacy, and other UN mechanisms.⁵⁹

UNSCO thus gives the UN's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict a permanent diplomatic and operational presence on the ground. Unlike CEIRPP and DPR, which institutionalize Palestinian-focused political advocacy and bureaucratic activity within the UN system, UNSCO translates established UN positions into day-to-day diplomacy, UNSC reporting, political pressure, humanitarian and economic coordination, and direct engagement with the parties. When those underlying positions are themselves deeply contested by Israel, UNSCO can function not simply as a neutral mediator but as an institutional mechanism for carrying the UN's political and legal assumptions into the conflict itself.

⁵⁹ United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "UNSCO, Middle East Peace Process," <https://dppa.un.org/en/factsheet/unsco-middle-east-peace-process>.



7. Division for Palestinian Rights

Organizational Status: Specialized unit within the UN Secretariat, under the DPPA.⁶⁰

Core Mandate: Serves as the secretariat of the CEIRPP; supports its meetings, reports, publications, outreach, and program of work; maintains UNISPAL; organizes international meetings and capacity-building activities; engages with civil-society organizations; and disseminates UN and NGO materials relating to the Question of Palestine.⁶¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: DPR is financed through the UN regular budget as part of DPPA's Section 3, "Political affairs," under Subprogramme 5, "Question of Palestine." In the proposed 2026 budget, this subprogramme receives approximately \$3.2 million and 15 posts. As a result, all assessed Member States, including the United States, are required to help finance the Secretariat unit that supports CEIRPP, maintains UNISPAL, organizes Palestinian-focused meetings and publications, conducts civil-society outreach, and provides capacity-building for officials and staff of the State of Palestine.⁶²

Governance and Membership Selection: DPR is staffed as a UN Secretariat unit. Its personnel are appointed through the UN system and operate under Secretariat authority.⁶³

The DPR is the permanent bureaucratic staff arm of the UN's Palestinian advocacy infrastructure. CEIRPP provides the member-state committee; DPR provides the staff, publications, conferences, digital platforms, civil-society networks, training, communications support, and institutional continuity. Its mandate is not to provide a balanced examination of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It exists specifically to advance the UN program on the "Question of Palestine" and to support CEIRPP in promoting the "inalienable rights of the Palestinian people." It has no parallel mandate to advance Israeli rights, scrutinize Hamas or PA conduct, combat Palestinian incitement, or advocate on behalf of Israeli victims of terrorism.

The one-sidedness becomes clearer when examining the programs that DPR supports and publicizes. In June 2022, for example, the Palestinian Rights Committee held an event entitled "Apartheid, International Law, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory." The discussion focused on

⁶⁰ United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>.

⁶¹ United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://dppa.un.org/en/leadership/division-for-palestinian-rights>; United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>.

⁶² United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, Part II, Section 3, Political Affairs, A/80/6 (Sect. 3), Subprogramme 5, "Question of Palestine," [https://docs.un.org/A/80/6\(Sect.3\)](https://docs.un.org/A/80/6(Sect.3)).

⁶³ United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://dppa.un.org/en/leadership/division-for-palestinian-rights>; United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>.



reports accusing Israel of apartheid and considered how international legal mechanisms could be used against Israel. DPR served as the Committee's Secretariat and the event and its summary are published through DPR's UNISPAL infrastructure. Rather than organizing a debate over a highly contested accusation, the UN machinery devoted to Palestinian rights provided an official platform built around the apartheid framework itself.⁶⁴

The pattern became substantially more extreme after October 7. In April 2024, CEIRPP convened a two-day civil-society conference in Geneva serviced by DPR. The official UN press release—issued under the heading “Division for Palestinian Rights, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs”—was entitled “Israel’s Genocide Must Not Go Unpunished.” Speakers described Israel’s war as a “live-streamed” genocide, called Israel an extension of European colonialism, accused Western governments of supporting genocide and apartheid, and called for sanctions, an arms embargo, international isolation of Israel, and an end to relations with the country. One participant went so far as to propose that the UNGA seek Israel’s expulsion from the United Nations and reconvene the Special Committee against Apartheid to target it.⁶⁵

These were statements by invited participants, not formal declarations by DPR itself. But DPR was not merely archiving an external debate: it serviced the conference, helped provide the institutional platform through which the claims were presented, and issued and disseminated the official UN coverage. The event also illustrates how allegations can be transformed into assumed premises within the Palestinian-rights machinery. At the time, the ICJ had issued provisional measures in *South Africa v. Israel* but had not adjudicated the merits or found that Israel was committing genocide. Nevertheless, the conference and the UN press release presented “Israel’s genocide” not merely as an allegation requiring adjudication but as an established fact that “must not go unpunished.”⁶⁶

The same pattern continued in 2025. At the UN’s official Nakba commemoration in May, the Palestinian Rights Committee provided a platform for a presentation summarized by the UN under the headline “Israel Racializing Palestinians as Security Threat to Normalize Its Genocide.” The following civil-society consultations, organized under the banner “International Action Towards Ending the Nakba and Realizing the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,” included claims that trade with Israel enables and finances “genocide, apartheid and ethnic cleansing.” DPR’s own Committee newsletter described these consultations as a forum for coordinating Member States

⁶⁴ United Nations, “Palestinian Rights Committee Virtual Event ‘Apartheid, International Law and the Occupied Palestinian Territory’—Chair Summary,” June 24, 2022, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/palestine-rights-committee-virtual-event-apartheid-international-law-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory-chair-summary/>.

⁶⁵ United Nations, “Israel’s Genocide Must Not Go Unpunished, Speakers Say as Civil Society Organizations Conference Working on Question of Palestine Concludes,” GA/PAL/1465, April 4, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/gapal1465.doc.htm>.

⁶⁶ International Court of Justice, Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (*South Africa v. Israel*), Provisional Measures, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192/provisional-measures>.



and civil-society organizations and reported that DPR was working on advocacy, communications, “amplifying key messages,” and expanding the Committee’s outreach.⁶⁷

DPR also institutionalizes the Palestinian interpretation of 1948. Pursuant to UNGA mandates, DPR was instructed to devote activities to commemorating the Nakba and subsequently to organize annual Nakba commemorations and disseminate relevant archives and testimonies. The result is not simply historical documentation. The creation of Israel and the 1948 war are incorporated into a recurring UN program centered on Palestinian displacement and dispossession, without an equivalent institutional program addressing the Arab rejection of partition, the invasion of the newly established State of Israel by Arab armies, Jewish displacement from Arab and Muslim countries, or Israel’s account of the conflict.⁶⁸

DPR’s civil-society information program provides another channel for amplification. NGO Action News is explicitly a project of the DPR. It regularly circulates the activities, campaigns, reports, and accusations of NGOs working on the Palestinian issue. For example, a March 2024 edition disseminated Al-Haq’s claim that “apartheid and genocide” were occurring within the context of Israeli “settler colonialization.” Earlier and later DPR newsletters have circulated NGO campaigns accusing Israel of genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. DPR states that this material is supplied “as is” and that it does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of material on linked NGO websites. That disclaimer, however, does not change the institutional reality that a UN Secretariat division maintains a recurring distribution system dedicated to amplifying the advocacy and campaigns of organizations working on one side of the conflict.⁶⁹

DPR goes beyond advocacy and information dissemination into direct capacity-building for the Palestinian government. Its mandate includes an annual training program for Palestinian officials, and in 2024 DPR organized a six-week program specifically for civil servants of the State of Palestine. The program included training intended to strengthen professional and diplomatic capabilities; DPR also supported a dedicated program on the “Art of Speechwriting.” This is an extraordinary role for a supposedly neutral international Secretariat: assessed contributions from all UN Member States finance a permanent UN division that provides training and institutional

⁶⁷ United Nations, “Israel Racializing Palestinians as Security Threat to Normalize Its Genocide, Scholar Says, as Palestinian Rights Committee Marks Nakba Anniversary,” May 15, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/israel-racializing-palestinians-as-security-threat-to-normalize-its-genocide-scholar-says-as-palestinian-rights-committee-marks-nakba-anniversary/>; United Nations, “Amid States’ Negligence, Activists Working to Ensure Accountability for Violations of Palestinian Rights,” May 16, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-cso-consultations-2025-press-release-16may25/>; United Nations, “Newsletter on UN Palestinian Rights Committee Activities—No. 24 / April–June 2025,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/newsletter-on-un-palestinian-rights-committee-activities-no-24-april-june-2025/>.

⁶⁸ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 79/82, “Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat,” December 3, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/79/82>.

⁶⁹ United Nations, “NGO Action News—14 March 2024,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ngo-action-news-14-march-2024/>; United Nations, “Newsletter on UN Palestinian Rights Committee Activities—No. 24 / April–June 2025,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/newsletter-on-un-palestinian-rights-committee-activities-no-24-april-june-2025/>.



support to officials of one party to an unresolved international conflict, while no comparable Secretariat division exists to train Israeli officials or advance Israeli diplomatic claims.⁷⁰

DPR's location within DPPA adds institutional significance. It places this permanent Palestinian-focused advocacy and support infrastructure inside the same Secretariat department responsible for political affairs and for supporting the Secretary-General's diplomatic machinery. DPR therefore connects UNGA mandates and CEIRPP's political program to permanent staff, publications, conferences, civil-society outreach, digital communications, Palestinian capacity-building, and the wider UN bureaucracy.

Most importantly, DPR gives this system permanence. Political controversies fade, individual reports disappear, and personnel change. DPR remains. It services the Committee, trains Palestinian officials, organizes conferences, maintains civil-society networks, disseminates advocacy material, administers UNISPAL, commemorates the Nakba, and preserves decades of Palestinian-focused material. The UNGA renewed its mandate again in December 2024, more than a year after the October 7 massacre. The result is a permanent UN Secretariat infrastructure whose institutional purpose is not neutral mediation between Israelis and Palestinians but the sustained advancement and international amplification of one side's political narrative and claims.⁷¹

⁷⁰ United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>; Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/79/35, <https://docs.un.org/A/79/35>.

⁷¹ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 79/82, "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat," December 3, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/79/82>; United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://dppa.un.org/en/leadership/division-for-palestinian-rights>.



8. United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine

Organizational Status: UNISPAL, a specialized information system and digital repository established and maintained by the DPR.⁷²

Core Mandate: Collects, preserves, organizes and disseminates current and historical material on the Question of Palestine, the Arab-Israeli conflict and related Middle East issues. The collection includes UN resolutions, reports, statements and publications, as well as selected material from NGOs and other external sources.⁷³

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNISPAL has no separate standalone budget. It is maintained through the regular-budget resources allocated to the DPR under DPPA's "Question of Palestine" subprogramme.⁷⁴

Governance and Administration: UNISPAL is administered by the DPR under successive UNGA mandates and in connection with DPR's support for the CEIRPP.⁷⁵

UNISPAL originated in UNGA Resolution 46/74 B of December 11, 1991. Acting on CEIRPP's recommendation, the UNGA directed the Secretary-General to provide DPR with the resources necessary for its work, including a computer-based information system. A 1992 resolution called for an adequately staffed and equipped system to strengthen DPR's research, studies and publications. UNISPAL became operational in 1994 and subsequently expanded into a publicly accessible online database.⁷⁶

Its original purpose was broad. The UN envisaged a full-text repository of significant UN documents concerning the Question of Palestine, together with functions supporting DPR research, publications, NGO activity and CEIRPP programming. By 1996, it contained more than 1,400 documents. By July 2025, the collection had surpassed 45,000 records, including

⁷² United Nations, "About the Division for Palestinian Rights," <https://www.un.org/unispal/about-division-palestinian-rights/>; United Nations, "Question of Palestine," <https://www.un.org/unispal/>.

⁷³ United Nations, "Question of Palestine," United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, <https://unric.org/en/info-point-library/online-databases/question-of-palestine/>.

⁷⁴ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026: Section 3, Political Affairs*, A/80/6 (Sect. 3), [https://docs.un.org/A/80/6\(Sect.3\)](https://docs.un.org/A/80/6(Sect.3)).

⁷⁵ United Nations, "The Origins of the UN Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL)," April 23, 2019, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/the-origins-of-the-un-information-system-on-the-question-of-palestine-unispal-information-note/>.

⁷⁶ United Nations, "The Origins of the UN Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL)," April 23, 2019, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/the-origins-of-the-un-information-system-on-the-question-of-palestine-unispal-information-note/>.



current UN material and historical documents dating back decades. The UN describes it as the world's largest online repository on the Question of Palestine.⁷⁷

UNISPAL is highly unusual within the UN system. The UN itself has described it as a "unique UN-run information system."⁷⁸ While the UN maintains other databases, there is no equivalent UNGA-mandated, Secretariat-run information system devoted to another single country or national conflict. UNISPAL therefore represents another layer of exceptional institutional treatment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Its significance goes beyond documentation. UNISPAL brings together UNGA resolutions, CEIRPP and DPR publications, HRC and Special Rapporteur material, Secretariat statements, UN agency reports and selected external documents in one searchable, continuously updated platform. DPR itself states that the collection and dissemination of information is considered particularly important to CEIRPP's political advocacy work.⁷⁹ UNISPAL therefore gives the wider UN campaign a permanent research and dissemination infrastructure through which material produced across different bodies can be preserved, found and reused. The database gives the Palestinian political narrative an institutional archive and platform, while no comparable infrastructure exists for the Israeli side.

UNISPAL also connects the different components of the UN's Palestinian-focused infrastructure. CEIRPP provides the political framework, DPR administers and disseminates it, UN bodies generate political, humanitarian and legal material, and UNISPAL collects and preserves the resulting output. It turns thousands of separate documents into a permanent, searchable institutional record.

⁷⁷ United Nations, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/51/35, 1996, <https://docs.un.org/A/51/35>; United Nations, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/80/35, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/A/80/35>.

⁷⁸ United Nations, "The Origins of the UN Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL)."

⁷⁹ United Nations, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/80/35, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/A/80/35>.



9. Department of Global Communications: Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights Section and Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine

Organizational Status: The Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights Section is part of the Department of Global Communications (DGC), within the UN Secretariat's strategic-communications apparatus. The UN states that the Section promotes its agenda on human rights, the rule of law, decolonization and indigenous peoples and is responsible for carrying out the UNGA-mandated Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine.⁸⁰

Core Mandate: The dedicated UN public-information program on Palestine dates back to 1979, when UNGA Resolution 34/65 D established the basis for a Palestine-focused information program within the Department of Public Information (DPI), the predecessor of today's DGC. Subsequent UNGA resolutions have repeatedly renewed the mandate and instructed the Department to carry out a "special information programme on the question of Palestine" in coordination with the CEIRPP. DPI was renamed the DGC in 2019, but the Palestine program continued within the new department. Today it is implemented principally through DGC's Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights Section.⁸¹

The program was conceived not merely as a passive information service but as an instrument for influencing international awareness and public opinion. Over the decades, its UNGA mandate has included the dissemination of Palestine-related UN material, production of publications and audiovisual content, organization of fact-finding missions and encounters for journalists, and support for Palestinian media development. The program's flagship International Media Seminar continues this approach: DGC describes the annual event as seeking to "sensitize public opinion to the question of Palestine."⁸²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The UN does not provide a separate budget line identifying the precise annual cost of the Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights Section or the Special Information Programme on Palestine. The program is instead embedded within the DGC, whose activities are financed under Section 28, "Global communications," of the UN regular budget. The proposed program budget for 2026 under Section 28 was approximately \$101.9 million, compared with approximately \$123 million in 2025. The UN does not separately identify what portion of this amount supports the Palestine-related program. Nevertheless,

⁸⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications, "Strategic Communications: Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights," <https://www.un.org/en/departments-global-communications/campaigns-and-country-operations>.

⁸¹ United Nations, Yearbook of the United Nations 1979, "Questions Relating to the Middle East", discussion and text of General Assembly Resolution 34/65 D; United Nations General Assembly, Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, A/RES/51/25, adopted December 4, 1996; United Nations, "New Year, New Name".

⁸² United Nations General Assembly, "Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat," Resolution 55/54, December 1, 2000, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-188254/>; United Nations Department of Global Communications, "2024 Annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East," November 1, 2024, <https://indico.un.org/event/1013648/overview>.



insofar as these activities are financed from DGC's regular-budget appropriation, they are funded through the UN's assessed budget. Member States therefore finance the communications infrastructure that implements the Palestine mandate as part of their required contributions to the Secretariat.⁸³

While the percentage of the DGC's budget dedicated to the Palestine track is non-transparent, the activities reported by the UN itself demonstrate that the program is substantial and continuous. In the reporting period covered by the Committee's 2025 annual report, DGC held its annual International Media Seminar, conducted a five-week training program for five Palestinian journalists, issued 348 press releases in English and French on the Question of Palestine, produced approximately 200 short news videos, captured more than 1,000 relevant photographs, posted roughly 600 photographs online, and maintained a permanent UN Headquarters exhibition, "The United Nations and the Question of Palestine," viewed by more than 196,000 visitors.⁸⁴

Governance and Institutional Control: DGC is a Secretariat department under the authority of the Secretary-General. Unlike an intergovernmental committee, it has no separate State membership. Its Palestine program is implemented by professional UN staff pursuant to UNGA mandates, with its communications products distributed through the UN's institutional platforms, including UN websites, press releases, video services, social-media channels, exhibitions and media programming. DGC describes its broader mission as communicating the UN's work across traditional and digital platforms in order to "build support" for the Organization's aims and work.⁸⁵

DGC effectively provides the public-communications component of the UN's permanent Palestinian-focused infrastructure. CEIRPP supplies the political framework; the DPR supports and amplifies the Committee's advocacy; UNISPAL preserves the resulting documentary record; and DGC packages and distributes Palestine-related narratives to journalists, civil society and the broader public. The institutional purpose is unusually explicit: the annual International Media

⁸³ United Nations Secretary-General, *Revised Estimates Relating to the Proposed Programme Budget for 2026 and the Support Account for Peacekeeping Operations* for the 2025/26 Period, A/80/400, September 4, 2025, table 173, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4090039/files/A_80_400-EN.pdf. The table lists \$123.5602 million as the initial 2026 proposed programme budget for Section 28 and \$101.8529 million as the revised 2026 estimate after UN80 changes; the 2025 approved amount was \$123.4795 million. Thus, approximately \$101.9 million is the revised estimate rather than the original proposed budget.

⁸⁴ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/80/35, September 1, 2025, paras. 71–77, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-2025-annual-report-01sep2025/>.

⁸⁵ United Nations, Department of Global Communications, "Department of Global Communications," <https://www.un.org/en/departments-global-communications>.



Seminar is intended not merely to report on the conflict but to “sensitize public opinion to the question of Palestine.”⁸⁶

This mandate has produced a communications program that is highly asymmetrical in both subject matter and institutional resources. DGC operates an annual training program specifically for Palestinian broadcasters and journalists—renamed the Shireen Abu Akleh Training Program—and in 2024 brought five Palestinian journalists to New York and Washington for media-skills training. There is no parallel DGC program devoted to training Israeli journalists affected by terrorism or war. Likewise, the United Nations maintains a permanent Headquarters exhibit devoted to “The United Nations and the Question of Palestine,” while no equivalent permanent communications program focuses on Israeli victims of terrorism, the October 7 massacre and hostage-taking, the historical displacement of Jews from Arab countries, Palestinian incitement and terrorism, Israel’s historical and legal rights or its security challenges.⁸⁷

The content presented through the Special Information Programme further illustrates the problem. At the 2024 International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, organized by DGC at the Palais des Nations, the two substantive sessions were entitled “Freedom of the Press and Safety of Journalists in a Time of War” and “Behind the Headlines of Gaza: Media Challenges and Perspectives.” The opening program included the Palestinian Permanent Observer and the Chair of CEIRPP, while senior DGC officials moderated both substantive sessions. Although an Israeli journalist participated in one panel, the institutional framing centered overwhelmingly on Israel’s conduct in Gaza rather than on Hamas’s October 7 attack, its hostage-taking, its operation from civilian areas or restrictions imposed on journalists by Hamas.⁸⁸

At the DGC-organized seminar, the Chair of the CEIRPP asserted that “over 130 Palestinian journalists have been killed by Israeli forces in Gaza” and portrayed them as journalists whose voices had been “silenced” while reporting on possible Israeli war crimes. This was not simply an imprecise formulation. Numerous individuals counted and presented internationally as journalists in Gaza were, in fact, operatives of Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). For example, Ismail al-Ghoul, an Al Jazeera journalist killed in July 2024, was identified by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and Israel Security Agency (ISA) as a Hamas military-wing operative and Nukhba terrorist who participated in the October 7 massacre; documents recovered in Gaza identified him as an engineer in Hamas’s Gaza Brigade. Hamza al-Dahdouh, also presented as an Al Jazeera journalist, was identified by the IDF as a PIJ operative who had previously served as a deputy commander in the Zeitoun Battalion’s rocket array. Mustafa

⁸⁶ United Nations Department of Global Communications, “2024 Annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East,” November 1, 2024, <https://indico.un.org/event/1013648/overview>.

⁸⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/80/35, September 1, 2025, paras. 72, 77, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-2025-annual-report-01sep2025/>.

⁸⁸ United Nations Department of Global Communications, “2024 Annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East: Scientific Programme,” November 1, 2024, <https://indico.un.org/event/1013648/program>; United Nations, “1st Meeting, UN International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East 2024,” UN Web TV, November 1, 2024, <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1y/k1ygg66pwo>.



Thuraya, widely described as a freelance journalist, was identified in captured Hamas records as a member of Hamas's Gaza City Brigade and deputy commander of a squad in its al-Qadisiyyah Battalion.⁸⁹

These individuals were not journalists “silenced”; they were members of armed terrorist organizations. By erasing that distinction, the CEIRPP Chair, using the DGC platform, transformed a complex wartime casualty figure into an accusation that Israel was systematically eliminating Palestinian journalists and suppressing evidence of war crimes. Israel provided multiple examples of purported journalists in casualty databases whom it identified as Hamas or Islamic Jihad operatives. Yet none of this complexity appeared in the message presented at DGC's seminar. Instead, an official UN communications forum amplified the far more incendiary suggestion that Israel had killed more than 130 journalists and “silenced” them while they attempted to expose its crimes.⁹⁰

This was not an isolated occurrence. At DGC's 2022 International Media Seminar, the UN's own official meeting coverage amplified claims by participants that Israel was an “apartheid State”. Earlier iterations of the same DGC seminar similarly gave extensive space to analogies between Israel and apartheid South Africa. These statements were made by invited participants rather than adopted as formal DGC findings, but DGC selected the event format, convened the speakers and subsequently disseminated their claims through official UN communications channels.⁹¹

The institutional linkage is also explicit from the Palestinian-rights machinery itself. In its 2024 reporting, CEIRPP called for “enhanced collaboration” with DGC's Special Information Programme in order to obtain “broader outreach” and welcomed the use of communications and outreach tools to advance its advocacy and awareness-raising. The relationship therefore extends beyond parallel UN entities discussing the same issue: DGC functions as an amplification mechanism for a political and advocacy infrastructure created specifically around Palestinian rights.⁹²

⁸⁹ Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, “Chair Video Statement for 2024 International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East,” November 1, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/chair-ceirpp-statement-01nov24/>; Israel Defense Forces, “ELIMINATED: Ismail al-Ghoul, a Hamas Military Wing Operative and Nukhba Terrorist,” August 1, 2024, <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/august-24-pr/eliminated-ismail-al-ghoul-a-hamas-military-wing-operative-and-nukhba-terrorist/>; Israel Defense Forces, “IDF Response to CPJs' Report from February 12th 2025,” <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-response-to-cpjs-report-from-february-12th-2025/>

⁹⁰ Israel Defense Forces, “IDF Response to CPJs' Report from February 12th 2025,” <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-response-to-cpjs-report-from-february-12th-2025/>.

⁹¹ United Nations, “Secretary-General Declares ‘We Must Pursue Every Avenue to Revitalize the Peace Process’ for Israel and Palestine, at Opening of International Media Seminar,” PAL/2244, November 3, 2022, <https://press.un.org/en/2022/pal2244.doc.htm>. The UN meeting coverage records invited participants describing Israel as an “apartheid state” and making comparisons with South Africa; these were participant statements, not formal findings adopted by DGC.

⁹² United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/79/35, August 31, 2024, paras. 119–20, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/2024-annual-report-ceirpp-31aug24/>.



The asymmetry is particularly striking because DGC presents its general role as providing the world with trusted and objective information. Yet on the Question of Palestine, the United Nations has created a standing, UNGA-mandated communications program whose express purposes include influencing public awareness, training Palestinian journalists, organizing Palestine-focused media events, maintaining a permanent public exhibition and producing hundreds of Palestine-related press and audiovisual products. There is no comparable UN public-information infrastructure dedicated to explaining Israeli security concerns or documenting the victims, historical experiences and legal claims of the Israeli and Jewish side.⁹³

DGC therefore does more than communicate UN decisions concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It gives the UN's Palestinian-focused institutional system reach. Political claims generated by CEIRPP, DPR and other UN mechanisms can be converted into press coverage, seminars, videos, photographs, exhibitions, journalist training and social-media content carrying the legitimacy of the United Nations. In this manner, a political framework established by UNGA majorities is transformed into a permanent, publicly funded global communications campaign.

⁹³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications, "Department of Global Communications," <https://www.un.org/en/department-global-communications>; United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, A/80/35, September 1, 2025, paras. 70–77, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-2025-annual-report-01sep2025/>.



10. Human Rights Council

Organizational Status: Intergovernmental body and subsidiary organ of the UNGA, created by UNGA Resolution 60/251 in 2006.⁹⁴

Core Mandate: Mandated to promote and protect human rights globally. The HRC conducts the Universal Periodic Review, appoints Special Procedures mandate-holders, establishes commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions, and adopts resolutions on country-specific and thematic human-rights situations.⁹⁵

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The HRC is supported administratively and substantively by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and funded through the UN regular budget. OHCHR's 2026 operating-resources table allocates approximately \$34.0 million in regular-budget resources to the subprogramme supporting the HRC and its Special Procedures.⁹⁶

HRC-related activities are sustained by assessed Member State contributions through the UN regular budget. This includes support for regular and special sessions, commissions of inquiry, fact-finding missions, Special Procedures mandate-holders, documentation, interpretation, translation, and distribution.

Governance and Membership Selection: The HRC consists of 47 Member States elected by the UNGA for three-year terms, with seats distributed by regional group. Members may serve two consecutive terms before rotating off the Council.⁹⁷

The HRC is one of the clearest institutional expressions of UN bias against Israel. Israel is the only country subject to a dedicated country-specific agenda item at every regular HRC session: Agenda Item 7, the Council's permanent agenda item on the "Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories." Every other country situation in the world, including Iran, China, Russia, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Syria, Sudan, and others, is addressed under general agenda items. This structure creates a dedicated forum at every regular session for singling out Israel. Some of the world's worst human-rights violators use that platform to accuse

⁹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 60/251, "Human Rights Council," March 15, 2006, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/60/251>.

⁹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 60/251, "Human Rights Council," March 15, 2006, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/60/251>.

⁹⁶ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026: Section 24, Human Rights*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24), [https://docs.un.org/A/80/6\(Sect.24\)](https://docs.un.org/A/80/6(Sect.24)).

⁹⁷ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 60/251, "Human Rights Council," March 15, 2006, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/60/251>.



and condemn Israel of some of the world's worst crimes, while promoting and legitimizing the most extreme Palestinian claims. Item 7 is not normal scrutiny. It is structural discrimination.⁹⁸

The imbalance is reflected in the Council's resolutions. Since its establishment in 2006, the HRC has adopted a vastly disproportionate number of condemnatory resolutions against Israel compared to other countries, including some of the world's most brutal regimes. According to UN Watch's database, since 2006, the HRC has passed 116 resolutions against Israel, compared with 45 against Syria, 19 against North Korea, 18 against Iran, 15 against Eritrea, 14 against Russia, 6 against Sudan, and 4 against Venezuela. The result is not a universal human-rights system. It is a system in which the world's only Jewish state receives a level of institutional condemnation unmatched by dictatorships, terror-sponsoring regimes, and mass human-rights violators.⁹⁹

The Council's efforts to translate its condemnations of Israel into practical pressure long predate October 7. In 2016, for example, the HRC adopted Resolution 31/36, directing the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to create a database identifying companies involved in specified activities connected to Israeli settlements. The database was subsequently published, creating an institutional mechanism capable of generating economic and reputational pressure on companies doing business connected to Israeli-controlled territories. In July 2023, less than three months before the October 7 attack, the Council adopted Resolution 53/25 requiring that the database be updated annually and calling for additional resources to ensure implementation of the mandate.¹⁰⁰

After October 7, however, this practical pressure escalated significantly and extended directly to Israel's ability to wage war. In April 2024, the HRC adopted Resolution 55/28, calling on all states to cease the sale, transfer, and diversion of arms, munitions, and other military equipment to Israel. This was adopted while Israel was fighting Hamas after the October 7 massacre, while hostages were still being held in Gaza, and while Hamas continued to embed itself in civilian areas. The Council did not focus its institutional pressure on disarming Hamas. It focused on restricting Israel's ability to defend itself.¹⁰¹

In addition to resolutions, the HRC creates commissions of inquiry, fact-finding missions, Special Procedures mandates, and other mechanisms whose outputs are used by governments, NGOs, universities, activists, and courts. These outputs are raw material for lawfare and pressure on states and companies to distance themselves from Israel.

⁹⁸ United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution 5/1, "Institution-Building of the United Nations Human Rights Council," June 18, 2007, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/RES/5/1>.

⁹⁹ UN Watch, "UN Watch Database," <https://unwatch.org/database/>.

¹⁰⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Database of Business Enterprises Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolutions 31/36 and 53/25," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/business/bhr-database>.

¹⁰¹ United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution 55/28, "Human Rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and the Obligation to Ensure Accountability and Justice," April 5, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/RES/55/28>.



This pattern is especially visible in the Council's Israel-focused investigatory mechanisms. The current ongoing Commission of Inquiry was not created in a vacuum. It followed a long line of HRC mechanisms directed at Israel. In 2006, the Council created a fact-finding mission on Beit Hanoun. In 2009, it established the UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, better known as the Goldstone Mission, which became one of the most damaging UN reports ever issued against Israel. In 2010, it created a fact-finding mission on the Gaza flotilla. In 2012, it established a mission focused on Israeli settlements. In 2014, it created another Commission of Inquiry on the Gaza conflict during Operation Protective Edge, and in 2018 it created a Commission of Inquiry on Israel's response to the Gaza border riots. These mechanisms show a clear pattern: when conflict involves Israel, the HRC repeatedly creates investigatory bodies primarily framed around Israeli wrongdoing, while giving far less attention to Hamas, Palestinian armed groups, incitement, terrorism, and the broader regional forces driving the conflict.¹⁰²

The HRC went further in 2021, when it established the ongoing Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, an open-ended mechanism with an unusually broad mandate. It has also repeatedly empowered commissions, investigators, and mandate-holders whose work reflects a pattern of bias, discrimination and even blunt antisemitism. The following section addresses the Commission of Inquiry in detail.¹⁰³

The same problem appears in the Special Procedures system. The Council maintains a dedicated Special Rapporteur mandate on the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, and a series of other mandate-holders have used UN human-rights platforms to advance sweeping legal and political accusations against Israel. This issue is addressed separately in the section on the Special Rapporteur.¹⁰⁴

The Council's membership deepens the problem. States with dismal human-rights records are not occasional embarrassments at the HRC; they are recurring participants in the body charged with policing human rights. China and Cuba were reelected for 2024-2026. Russia was elected for 2021-2023, only to be suspended in 2022 after reports of gross and systematic violations in Ukraine. Other recent members have included Burundi, Sudan, Venezuela, and Egypt. Iran was even appointed to chair the HRC's 2023 Social Forum.¹⁰⁵

The consequences are not theoretical. In October 2022, after the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that China's abuses in Xinjiang could constitute

¹⁰² United Nations Office at Geneva Library and Archives, "International Commissions of Inquiry, Fact-Finding Missions and Other Investigations," <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/factfinding>.

¹⁰³ United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution S-30/1, "Ensuring Respect for International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in Israel," May 27, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/RES/S-30/1>.

¹⁰⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine>.

¹⁰⁵ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution ES-11/3, "Suspension of the Rights of Membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council," April 7, 2022, <https://docs.un.org/A/RES/ES-11/3>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "2023 Social Forum," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/forums/2023/2023-social-forum>.



crimes against humanity, the HRC voted down a proposal merely to hold a debate on the issue. China, Cuba, Eritrea, Pakistan, Qatar, Venezuela, and others voted no. In other words, the Council could create a permanent agenda item for Israel, but could not even agree to discuss one of the gravest human-rights crises in the world. Far too often, authoritarian and anti-Western blocs use the HRC not to uphold universal human rights, but to shield themselves and their allies, reshape human-rights language, and weaponize that language against democracies. Nowhere are these distortions and double standards seen more clearly than in the HRC's treatment of Israel.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Human Rights Council Adopts 21 Texts and Rejects One Draft Decision, Extends Mandates on Ethiopia, Burundi, Venezuela, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Somalia," October 6, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/meeting-summaries/2022/10/human-rights-council-adopts-21-texts-and-rejects-one-draft-decision>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China," August 31, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ohchr-assessment-human-rights-concerns-xinjiang-uyghur-autonomous-region>.



11. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel

Organizational Status: The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (COI) is an ongoing independent international commission of inquiry established by the HRC through resolution S-30/1. Unlike the overwhelming majority of UN commissions of inquiry, which are created to investigate a defined episode and expire after presenting their findings, the COI has no end date and no requirement for periodic renewal by the HRC.¹⁰⁷

Core Mandate: Investigates, in “the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel,” all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law leading up to and since April 13, 2021. Its mandate also includes examining the “underlying root causes” of recurrent tensions, instability, and conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial, or religious identity. The COI is authorized to collect, preserve, and analyze evidence; identify, where possible, those responsible for violations and crimes; recommend accountability measures; and report annually to the HRC and the UNGA.¹⁰⁸

Financial Framework and Funding Model: Resolution S-30/1 directs the Secretary-General to allocate the resources necessary to implement the mandate and directs the OHCHR to provide the logistical and technical support necessary for the COI’s functioning.

The COI is supported through the United Nations regular budget within the human-rights framework and is serviced by OHCHR. Its costs include Commission and support-staff personnel, travel and field work, evidence collection and preservation, documentation, reporting,

¹⁰⁷ United Nations Human Rights Council, “Ensuring Respect for International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in Israel,” A/HRC/RES/S-30/1, May 27, 2021, para. 1, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ensuring-respect-for-international-human-rights-law-and-international-humanitarian-law-in-opt-and-israel-human-rights-council-30th-special-session-resolution-a-hrc-res-s-30-1/>; U.S. Department of State, “Outcomes of the 50th Session of the UN Human Rights Council,” July 8, 2022, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/outcomes-of-the-50th-session-of-the-un-human-rights-council/>.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations Human Rights Council, “Ensuring Respect for International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in Israel,” A/HRC/RES/S-30/1, May 27, 2021, paras. 1–3, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ensuring-respect-for-international-human-rights-law-and-international-humanitarian-law-in-opt-and-israel-human-rights-council-30th-special-session-resolution-a-hrc-res-s-30-1/>; Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, “Terms of Reference,” January 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/TORs-UN-Independent_ICI_Occupied_Palestinian_Territories.pdf.



translation, publication, and logistical support. As an ongoing mandate, its staffing and operating costs recur annually.¹⁰⁹

Governance and Membership Selection: The COI's members are appointed by the President of the HRC. Its reports are submitted to the HRC and the UNGA.¹¹⁰

The standing Commission of Inquiry is one of the most egregious mechanisms in the UN system because it is ongoing, open-ended, and structurally directed at Israel. A normal commission of inquiry examines a defined conflict, event, or period. This Commission investigates Israel indefinitely. Its mandate reaches back before its creation, extends into the future without limit, and is broad enough to encompass not only specific military operations but Israel's history, ideology, laws, security arrangements, demographics, political system, and relations with other states.

The phrase “underlying root causes” gives the COI an extraordinarily broad mandate extending far beyond specific incidents or military operations. The COI's own Terms of Reference state that it has “no temporal restrictions” and may investigate the underlying causes of the conflict as well as events before and after its creation. Original Commission member Miloon Kothari made clear how expansively the COI understood this authority. He said the mandate allowed it to take a “historical perspective” and examine the “history of settler colonialism.” Because its geographical mandate includes Israel as well as the territories, he explained, “essentially, we are looking at the human rights situation from the river to the sea.” Kothari later said that even an “apartheid” framework was insufficient because the COI needed to examine settler colonialism, occupation, discrimination and other purported root causes through a “much deeper and a much more comprehensive review.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/RES/S-30/1, May 27, 2021, para. 6, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ensuring-respect-for-international-human-rights-law-and-international-humanitarian-law-in-opt-and-israel-human-rights-council-30th-special-session-resolution-a-hrc-res-s-30-1/>; United Nations General Assembly, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, “Revised Estimates Resulting from Resolutions and Decisions Adopted by the Human Rights Council,” A/76/7/Add.30, December 15, 2021, paras. 33–36, <https://docs.un.org/A/76/7/Add.30>. The budget document proposed a dedicated secretariat for resolution S-30/1, including investigative, factual-analysis, information/evidence/translation, and legal-analysis/accountability functions.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Human Rights Council, “President of Human Rights Council Appoints Members of Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel,” July 22, 2021, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/president-of-human-rights-council-appoints-members-of-commission-of-inquiry-on-the-opt-and-israel-press-release/>; United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/RES/S-30/1, May 27, 2021, paras. 1–2, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ensuring-respect-for-international-human-rights-law-and-international-humanitarian-law-in-opt-and-israel-human-rights-council-30th-special-session-resolution-a-hrc-res-s-30-1/>.

¹¹¹ Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, “Terms of Reference,” January 2022, 4, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/TORs-UN-Independent_ICI_Occupied_Palestinian_Territories.pdf; David Kattenburg, “‘Apartheid’ Is Not Sufficient: An Interview with UN Human Rights Commissioner Miloon Kothari,” Mondoweiss, July 25, 2022,



The COI's history confirms that it was never impartial. Kothari stated in a 2022 interview that Israel's membership in the United Nations should itself be questioned. In the same interview, he complained that social media was controlled "largely" by "the Jewish lobby" and by NGOs seeking to discredit the COI. Following an outpouring of condemnation and pressure, Kothari later apologized for the statement, but the HRC did not remove him from the COI.¹¹²

Kothari was not an isolated aberration. Navi Pillay, the COI's inaugural chair, had publicly accused Israel of apartheid and signed a call to sanction Israel before her appointment to investigate it.¹¹³ Under her leadership, the COI repeatedly escalated its accusations. It alleged that Israel had committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, extermination, persecution, collective punishment, starvation as a method of warfare, and systematic sexual and gender-based violence. In March 2025, it charged that Israel's conduct in Gaza included "genocidal acts," including through alleged attacks on reproductive capacity. In September 2025, it went still further, declaring that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza and asserting that senior Israeli political and military leaders had incited genocide.¹¹⁴

These accusations are especially consequential because the COI is not simply another advocacy organization issuing political statements. It is a UN-created investigative mechanism designed to collect and preserve material for possible use in international legal proceedings. Its findings can be cited by the International Criminal Court (ICC), the ICJ, foreign governments, national courts, parliaments, NGOs, universities, sanctions advocates, and companies considering divestment or

<https://mondoweiss.net/2022/07/apartheid-is-not-sufficient-an-interview-with-un-human-rights-commissioner-miloon-kothari/>.

¹¹² David Kattenburg, "'Apartheid' Is Not Sufficient: An Interview with UN Human Rights Commissioner Miloon Kothari," Mondoweiss, July 25, 2022, <https://mondoweiss.net/2022/07/apartheid-is-not-sufficient-an-interview-with-un-human-rights-commissioner-miloon-kothari/>; Madeline Fixler, "UN Investigator Apologizes for 'Jewish Lobby' Remark and Other Comments Deemed Antisemitic," Jewish Telegraphic Agency, August 5, 2022, <https://www.jta.org/2022/08/05/israel/un-investigator-apologizes-for-jewish-lobby-remark-and-other-comments-deemed-antisemitic>; United Nations General Assembly, "Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel," A/77/328, September 14, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/coiopt/2022-10-19/Report-COI-OPT-14Sept2022-EN.pdf>. The September 2022 report continued to identify Kothari as a Commission member after his August apology.

¹¹³ "UN Watch Lobby Group Demands Israel-Palestinian Investigator Resign for Prejudice," Times of Israel, February 14, 2022, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-watch-lobby-group-demands-israel-palestinian-investigator-resign-for-prejudice/>; United Nations Human Rights Council, "President of Human Rights Council Appoints Members of Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel," July 22, 2021, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/president-of-human-rights-council-appoints-members-of-commission-of-inquiry-on-the-opt-and-israel-press-release/>. The Times of Israel report, based in part on an AFP report and a UN Watch recusal submission, documents Pillay's pre-appointment statements comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa and her signature on a 2020 petition titled "Sanction Apartheid Israel!"

¹¹⁴ Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, A/HRC/56/26, June 14, 2024, paras. 80–85; Independent International Commission of Inquiry, "More than a Human Can Bear": Israel's Systematic Use of Sexual, Reproductive and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence since 7 October 2023, A/HRC/58/CRP.6, March 13, 2025, paras. 214–26; Independent International Commission of Inquiry, Legal Analysis of the Conduct of Israel in Gaza Pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, A/HRC/60/CRP.3, September 16, 2025.



restrictions on business with Israel. The COI gives the appearance of legal authority to allegations that are then recycled throughout the broader campaign of diplomatic, legal, economic, and reputational warfare against Israel.¹¹⁵

Resolution 55/28 further expanded the COI's role in the arms-embargo campaign against Israel. The resolution called on states to cease the sale, transfer, and diversion of arms, munitions, and military equipment to Israel, and instructed the COI to report on the direct and indirect transfer or sale of such items. This has turned the COI into more than an investigative body. It is now a vehicle for pressuring governments, defense companies, investors, insurers, suppliers, and transport networks connected to Israel's ability to defend itself.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, "Terms of Reference," January 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/TORs-UN-Independent_ICI_Occupied_Palestinian_Territories.pdf; Jim Zanotti, "Israel: Background and U.S. Relations in Brief," Congressional Research Service, R44245, December 2, 2021, 9, https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/R/PDF/R44245/R44245.101.pdf.

¹¹⁶ United Nations Human Rights Council, "Human Rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Obligation to Ensure Accountability and Justice," A/HRC/RES/55/28, April 5, 2024, paras. 14, 43–44, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/hrc-resolution-55-28-5apr24/>.



12. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 and Other Special Procedures

Organizational Status: Country-specific independent-expert mandate within the HRC's Special Procedures system, supported administratively, substantively, and logistically by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.¹¹⁷

Core Mandate: Examines and reports on the human-rights situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. The mandate was established by the former Commission on Human Rights in 1993 and continues “until the end of the occupation,” rather than requiring periodic renewal like most country-specific mandates. The mandate-holder submits reports to the HRC and UNGA, sends communications to governments and private actors, conducts advocacy, issues public statements, and participates in UN and external events.¹¹⁸

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The mandate-holder receives no UN salary. However, OHCHR provides the institutional and financial infrastructure that helps make the mandate influential. OHCHR provides research and staff assistance, administrative support, official travel and daily subsistence allowances, document preparation, translation, publication, communications support, conference services, website hosting, and arrangements for appearances before the HRC and UNGA. These costs are borne principally through the UN regular budget allocated to OHCHR and the Special Procedures system, together with the UN's broader conference and communications infrastructure. No transparent standalone budget is published for the Palestinian-territories mandate, making it difficult to determine its total cost.¹¹⁹

Governance and Membership Selection: Special Procedures mandate-holders serve in their personal capacities and are formally required to act independently, objectively, and impartially. Candidates are considered by a Consultative Group made up of representatives of the HRC's regional blocs. The President of the Council selects a nominee, whose appointment is then approved by the Council. The states that create the mandate and determine its political scope

¹¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures-human-rights-council>.

¹¹⁸ United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Resolution 1993/2 A, “Question of the Violation of Human Rights in the Occupied Arab Territories, Including Palestine,” February 19, 1993, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-180615/>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine>.

¹¹⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures-human-rights-council>; United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part VI, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Section 24, Human Rights, A/80/6* (Sect. 24), [https://docs.un.org/A/80/6\(Sect.24\)](https://docs.un.org/A/80/6(Sect.24)).



therefore also control the appointment process. The mandate-holder may serve two three-year terms.¹²⁰

The Special Rapporteur mandate is structurally biased by design. It is not a neutral mandate to investigate human-rights violations arising from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, nor does it examine the conduct of all parties according to a common standard. Its subject is Israeli rule and Israeli conduct. Israel is therefore designated in advance as the party to be investigated, while Palestinians are structurally positioned as the victims whose rights have been violated.

The asymmetry is clear. Palestinian terrorism, rocket fire, hostage-taking, attacks on Israeli civilians, antisemitic incitement, the recruitment and exploitation of children, the embedding of military infrastructure in civilian areas, and repression by the PA or Hamas are not independent or parallel subjects of investigation under the mandate, even when they receive occasional mention.

The mandate's indefinite duration reinforces this institutional discrimination. Most country-specific Special Rapporteur mandates must be periodically renewed and justified by the HRC. This mandate instead remains in force until the political condition of the "end of the Israeli occupation" is achieved. Its continued existence therefore does not depend on a periodic determination that exceptional scrutiny remains warranted; it is institutionally guaranteed for as long as the underlying political dispute remains unresolved.¹²¹

The result is a permanent investigative mechanism directed at one side of a conflict, with its lifespan tied to a predetermined political outcome. No other democratic state is subjected to an equivalent UN investigator whose mandate presumes its responsibility, excludes the opposing side's abuses from equal scrutiny, and remains in place until the political dispute itself is resolved.

Francesca Albanese: Activism Before and During Her UN Mandate

Francesca Albanese has held the position of Special Rapporteur since May 2022. Her record demonstrates how readily this structurally biased mandate can be converted into a platform for political attacks, economic coercion, and legal warfare. Yet her views did not suddenly emerge after her appointment in 2022. Her public record before becoming Special Rapporteur already

¹²⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Nomination, Selection and Appointment of Mandate Holders," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/nominations>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Basic Information on the Selection and Appointment of Independent Experts," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/basic-information-selection-independent-experts>.

¹²¹ United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Resolution 1993/2 A, "Question of the Violation of Human Rights in the Occupied Arab Territories, Including Palestine," February 19, 1993, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-180615/>.



contained antisemitic conspiracy language, hostility toward Israel, and sympathy for Hamas's political rehabilitation.¹²²

In 2014, while fundraising for UNRWA, Albanese wrote that the United States was “subjugated by the Jewish lobby,” while Europe was constrained by guilt over the Holocaust. In another post addressed to the BBC, she claimed that the “Israeli lobby is clearly inside your veins and system” and referred to an Orwellian nightmare caused by “Israel’s greed.” She also celebrated a European court decision temporarily removing Hamas from the European Union’s terrorist list, asking whether she was “dreaming.” These statements were public before she was selected to serve as an ostensibly impartial UN expert.¹²³

Her conduct since October 7 has been even more revealing. As Hamas’s massacre was still unfolding, Albanese insisted that the violence had to be “put in context.” She later rejected President Emmanuel Macron’s description of October 7 as the century’s worst antisemitic massacre, declaring that the victims had not been killed because they were Jews but “in response to Israel’s oppression.” France’s Foreign Ministry publicly condemned the statement as both erroneous and shameful.¹²⁴

Albanese subsequently went further. In a 2026 appearance, she argued that the motives for October 7 were not antisemitic and described Israeli civilians living in southern Israeli communities attacked by Hamas as “occupiers.” This was an effort by Albanese to place responsibility for a terrorist massacre on its victims and to transform civilians inside internationally recognized Israel into legitimate objects of “resistance.”¹²⁵

She has also endorsed Holocaust inversion. In 2024, Albanese responded approvingly to an image comparing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Adolf Hitler. In February 2026, the French foreign minister cited her comparisons between Israel and the Third Reich, her references to a “Jewish lobby,” and her attempts to justify October 7 in formally calling for her resignation.¹²⁶

¹²² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Francesca Albanese,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine/francesca-albanese>; Anti-Defamation League, “Francesca Albanese, in Her Own Words,” <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/francesca-albanese-her-own-words>.

¹²³ Anti-Defamation League, “Francesca Albanese, in Her Own Words,” <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/francesca-albanese-her-own-words>.

¹²⁴ Anti-Defamation League, “Francesca Albanese, in Her Own Words,” <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/francesca-albanese-her-own-words>; “France Slams UN Rapporteur’s Comments on October 7 Massacre,” *Jerusalem Post*, February 12, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-786255>.

¹²⁵ UN Watch, “Francesca Albanese Excuses October 7 Atrocities: Israeli Civilians in Kibbutzim Are ‘Occupiers’ on ‘Stolen Land,’ Deserving ‘Reminders,’” <https://unwatch.org/francesca-albanese-excuses-october-7-atrocities-israeli-civilians-in-kibbutzim-are-occupiers-on-stolen-land-deserving-reminders/>.

¹²⁶ Anti-Defamation League, “Francesca Albanese, in Her Own Words,” <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/francesca-albanese-her-own-words>; “France Calls Francesca Albanese, UN Rapporteur for the Palestinian Territories, to Resign,” *Le Monde*, February 12, 2026,



Her official reports reflect the same ideological framework. Their titles include: “Anatomy of a Genocide”, “Genocide as Colonial Erasure”, “From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide”, “Gaza Genocide: A Collective Crime”, and “Torture and Genocide”.¹²⁷

The UN’s dedicated Palestinian-focused portal presents these reports together. Their progression is significant. The mandate no longer focuses primarily on allegations arising from particular Israeli policies or military operations. It portrays Israel as a settler-colonial state engaged in genocide and systematic torture, sustained by a global network of corporate, financial, academic, and governmental complicity.¹²⁸

Albanese’s reporting became a blueprint for economic and legal pressure against private actors throughout the democratic world. For example, the 2025 report “From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide” moved the mandate far beyond monitoring Israeli government conduct. It named and mapped corporations, banks, technology companies, pension funds, investment firms, universities, weapons manufacturers, heavy-equipment producers, and other private institutions allegedly connected to Israel.¹²⁹

Her wider campaign and that of aligned mandate-holders have called for governments to: impose a full arms embargo on Israel, cancel or suspend economic, trade, and academic relationships deemed to contribute to Israel’s alleged “apartheid regime”, impose sanctions and asset freezes on Israeli individuals, businesses, corporations, and financial institutions involved in those activities, as well as foreign entities alleged to enable them, investigate or prosecute dual nationals allegedly involved in “Israeli crimes”, repeal laws and policies that penalize support for the BDS movement, ensure educational systems reflect the ICJ’s findings concerning the status of the territories and the alleged illegality of Israel’s presence, and submit information to the International Criminal Court concerning alleged crimes addressed in the ICJ advisory opinion. These recommendations appeared in an official OHCHR statement issued on September 18, 2024, and signed by Albanese and a broad coalition of Special Procedures mandate-holders and working-group members.¹³⁰

https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2026/02/12/france-calls-francesca-albanese-un-rapporteur-for-the-palestinian-territories-to-resign_6750432_4.html.

¹²⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “A/HRC/55/73: *Anatomy of a Genocide*,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5573-report-special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-palestinian>; United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, “Genocide as Colonial Erasure,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/genocide-as-colonial-erasure-report-francesca-albanese-01oct24/>; United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, “Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document-source/special-rapporteur-on-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-the-palestinian-territories-occupied-since-1967/>.

¹²⁸ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, “Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967,” <https://www.un.org/unispal/document-source/special-rapporteur-on-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-the-palestinian-territories-occupied-since-1967/>.

¹²⁹ Francesca Albanese, *From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide*, A/HRC/59/23, June 30, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/59/23>.

¹³⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “UN Experts Warn International Order on a Knife’s Edge, Urge States to Comply with ICJ Advisory Opinion,” September 18, 2024,



In July 2025, the United States sanctioned Albanese under authorities related to the ICC. The State Department accused her of engaging directly with the ICC in efforts to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute American and Israeli nationals without the consent of their countries and described her activities as a campaign of political and economic warfare against the United States and Israel. The Treasury Department subsequently placed her on its sanctions list.¹³¹

Richard Falk and the Record of Previous Mandate-Holders

The mandate's politicization did not begin with Albanese. Numerous previous mandate-holders demonstrated extreme bias against Israel, and even blatant antisemitism. John Dugard used the mandate to establish and popularize the claim that Israel was practicing a form of apartheid. Michael Lynk made that allegation the centerpiece of his final report, formally concluding in 2022 that Israel had imposed an "apartheid reality" in the territories and urging the international community to adopt that determination.¹³²

The most notorious predecessor was Richard Falk, who held the position from 2008 to 2014. Falk's tenure showed that even clear antisemitism and the promotion of conspiracy theories were insufficient to disqualify a mandate-holder or bring the mandate into disrepute within the HRC.

In 2011, Falk published a cartoon depicting a dog wearing a kippah marked with a Star of David and a garment labeled "USA." The dog was shown devouring a bloody human body and urinating on Lady Justice. The image drew upon longstanding antisemitic themes portraying Jews as bloodthirsty, subhuman, and secretly controlling American power. Then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, formally described the image as antisemitic and condemned it. Yet Falk remained in office for nearly three additional years.¹³³

Falk also helped promote 9/11 conspiracy theories. In 2004, he wrote the foreword to David Ray Griffin's *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions About the Bush Administration and 9/11*, a foundational text of the 9/11 Truth movement that questioned whether a hijacked airliner struck the Pentagon, attributed the World Trade Center collapses to explosives, and strongly implied Bush-administration foreknowledge or complicity. Falk called it an "extraordinary book" and

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/09/un-experts-warn-international-order-knives-edge-urge-states-comply>.

¹³¹ U.S. Department of State, "Sanctioning Lawfare That Targets U.S. and Israeli Persons," July 9, 2025, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/07/sanctioning-lawfare-that-targets-u-s-and-israeli-persons>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, "International Criminal Court-related Designation," July 9, 2025, https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20250709_33.

¹³² John Dugard, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967*, A/HRC/4/17, January 29, 2007, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/4/17>; Michael Lynk, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967*, A/HRC/49/87, March 21, 2022, <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/49/87>.

¹³³ U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, "U.S. Urges UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to Condemn Richard Falk's Anti-Semitic Cartoon," July 8, 2011, <https://geneva.usmission.gov/2011/07/08/u-s-urges-un-high-commissioner-for-human-rights-to-condemn-richard-falks-anti-semitic-cartoon/>; Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "Pillay Scores Anti-Semitic Cartoon on Falk's Blog," July 15, 2011, <https://www.jta.org/2011/07/15/global/pillay-scores-anti-semitic-cartoon-on-falks-blog>.



praised Griffin for assembling allegations of official complicity into what he described as a coherent account.¹³⁴

This pattern is produced by the mandate. Its structure selects for experts who accept its founding premise: Israel is the permanent violator, the Palestinians are the permanent victims, and the role of the mandate-holder is to develop increasingly forceful legal and political formulations of that conclusion.

Other Special Procedures and the Multiplication of Pressure

The problem extends beyond the country-specific rapporteur. Numerous thematic Special Rapporteurs have joined Albanese's campaigns against Israel, including mandate-holders responsible for housing, health, education, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, racism, minority issues, disability rights, cultural rights, business and human rights, sanctions, counterterrorism, food, slavery, and the international order.¹³⁵

This produces a multiplication effect. A claim originating in the Palestinian-territories mandate can be endorsed by a dozen or more nominally separate UN experts. OHCHR then publishes the collective statement, giving the impression that experts across unrelated disciplines have independently reached the same conclusion.

The funding disclosures documented in UN Watch's 2026 report make this ecosystem still more troubling. Among the experts who have joined Israel-focused campaigns are mandate-holders whose offices reportedly received funding connected to China, Qatar, or Russia. For example: The office of Alena Douhan, the Special Rapporteur opposing unilateral sanctions, reportedly received approximately \$1.3 million from China, Russia, and Qatar. Counterterrorism Rapporteur Ben Saul's activities reportedly received \$150,000 from China, while China also provided \$100,000 in earmarked funding to the mandate of George Katrougalos, the Independent Expert charged with promoting a "democratic and equitable international order," a mandate directly concerned with global governance and the structure of the international system.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Richard Falk, "Foreword," in David Ray Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2004), https://www.oldsite.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2004/Falk_GriffinForeword.html; David Ray Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2004), https://www.cia.gov/library/abbottabad-compound/1D/1D070EA544FE7928BEEF09659C079ACC_David_Ray_Griffin_-_The_New_Pearl_Harbour.pdf.

¹³⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "UN Experts Warn International Order on a Knife's Edge, Urge States to Comply with ICJ Advisory Opinion," September 18, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/09/un-experts-warn-international-order-knives-edge-urge-states-comply>.

¹³⁶ UN Watch, *From Watchdogs to Ideologues: How Autocratic Funding Is Corrupting UN Human Rights Experts* (Geneva: UN Watch, 2026), discussed in "UN Watch Exposes Systemic Corruption at UN Human Rights Council," May 26, 2026, <https://unwatch.org/un-watch-exposes-systemic-corruption-at-un-human-rights-council/>.



These experts subsequently issued statements or reports attacking Western sanctions, U.S. policies, democratic governments, or Israel while displaying far less urgency regarding the conduct of the governments or ideological networks associated with their funding. UN Watch also calculated that between October 7, 2023, and March 2026, Special Procedures mandate-holders issued 148 statements targeting Israel, more than twice the number concerning Russia's war against Ukraine and approximately six times the number concerning Sudan's civil war.¹³⁷

The Palestinian-territories mandate illustrates how structural bias can become institutionalized within the UN human-rights system. Its terms establish Israel as the permanent object of investigation, exclude Palestinian abuses from equivalent scrutiny, and ensure that the mandate continues until a predetermined political outcome is achieved. The records of successive mandate-holders show that this structure has repeatedly provided a UN platform not simply for monitoring alleged violations, but for advancing increasingly sweeping political, legal, and economic campaigns against Israel. The broader Special Procedures system compounds the problem: thematic mandate-holders can reinforce and multiply these claims, while external funding and weak accountability mechanisms raise additional questions about their independence and priorities. What emerges is not a neutral system occasionally distorted by individual personalities, but an institutional framework that enables sustained, one-sided pressure against Israel while conferring on that pressure the authority and legitimacy of the United Nations.

¹³⁷ UN Watch, *From Watchdogs to Ideologues: How Autocratic Funding Is Corrupting UN Human Rights Experts* (Geneva: UN Watch, 2026), discussed in "UN Watch Exposes Systemic Corruption at UN Human Rights Council," May 26, 2026, <https://unwatch.org/un-watch-exposes-systemic-corruption-at-un-human-rights-council/>.



13. Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Organizational Status: Standing subsidiary committee of the UNGA. Its reports are transmitted by the Secretary-General and considered by the UNGA's Special Political and Decolonization Committee, known as the Fourth Committee.¹³⁸

Core Mandate: Investigates Israeli policies and practices affecting the human rights of Palestinians and other Arabs in the territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan. Established by UNGA Resolution 2443 in 1968, the Committee is mandated to continue operating pending the “complete termination” of Israeli occupation. Its own reports expressly acknowledge that it “is not mandated to investigate human rights violations committed by other duty bearers” in those territories. Hamas, PIJ, the PA, and other Palestinian actors therefore fall outside its central investigative mandate.¹³⁹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The Committee is financed through the UN regular budget and supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN's conference, travel, translation, documentation, communications, and publication infrastructure. No comprehensive standalone budget is publicly identified. Its costs are embedded within broader Secretariat and human-rights program allocations, preventing taxpayers from determining the mechanism's full annual cost. UNGA resolutions repeatedly renew the Committee and direct the Secretary-General to provide the staff, facilities, travel, documentation, publicity, and other resources required for its work. It is therefore a permanent regular-budget mechanism, not a temporary inquiry established and funded for a defined crisis.¹⁴⁰

Governance and Membership Selection: The Committee consists of representatives of three Member States, Malaysia, Senegal, and Sri Lanka, with Sri Lanka traditionally serving as chair. Its members are government representatives, not independent judges or professional investigators. Malaysia does not recognize Israel and has maintained an openly hostile policy toward the Jewish state. Nevertheless, it participates in a standing committee empowered to

¹³⁸ United Nations University, “Special Committee: Occupied Palestinian Territory (1968)”; United Nations General Assembly, Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, A/RES/78/76, December 7, 2023, para. 5.

¹³⁹ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 2443 (XXIII), “Respect for and Implementation of Human Rights in Occupied Territories,” December 19, 1968, [https://docs.un.org/A/RES/2443\(XXIII\)](https://docs.un.org/A/RES/2443(XXIII)); United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories*, A/78/553, October 25, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/report-of-the-special-committee-to-investigate-israeli-practices-affecting-the-human-rights-of-the-palestinian-people-and-other-arabs-of-the-occupied-territories-a-78-553/>.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, A/RES/78/76, December 7, 2023, paras. 5–7; United Nations, Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part VI, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Section 24, Human Rights, A/80/6 (Sect. 24).



investigate Israel and place accusations against it before the UNGA. The same three-state structure has endured for decades.¹⁴¹

The Special Committee is structurally one-sided by design. Its mandate is not to investigate the conflict or violations by all parties. It investigates Israeli practices. Israel is the permanent defendant; Palestinians and other Arabs are the designated victims. Palestinian terrorism, hostage-taking, rocket attacks, incitement, internal repression, and the use of civilian infrastructure for military purposes are not parallel objects of investigation.¹⁴²

The Committee has operated continuously since 1968. It predates Hamas, PIJ, the PA, the Oslo Accords, Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, the Syrian civil war, and the Abraham Accords. Regional realities have repeatedly changed. The Committee's premise and institutional purpose have not.¹⁴³

The Committee, which has no access to Israel due to its biased mandate, relies on an institutional echo chamber. Palestinian officials, advocacy NGOs, and UN agencies provide allegations. The Committee incorporates them into an official report. The Secretary-General transmits that report to the UNGA. The Fourth Committee considers it as an authoritative UN document. UNGA resolutions, UN press releases, Special Procedures experts, NGOs, and legal campaigns then cite the resulting conclusions as independent findings.¹⁴⁴

The Committee's recent reports demonstrate how far the mechanism has moved from documenting specific allegations to advancing sweeping indictments of Israel and demands for international coercion.

Its September 2024 report, A/79/363, concluded that Israeli policies and military operations were "consistent with the characteristics of genocide." It accused Israel of deliberately imposing life-threatening conditions, indiscriminately killing Palestinian civilians "en masse," operating an

¹⁴¹ United Nations University, "Special Committee: Occupied Palestinian Territory (1968)," <https://assemblyforpeace.unu.edu/cases/opt-special-committee/>; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, "Statement at the UNSC Open Debate on the Situation in the Middle East, Including the Palestinian Question," January 23, 2024, https://www.kln.gov.my/web/usa_un-new-york/post/statement-unsco-open-debate-on-the-situation-in-the-middle-east-including-the-palestinian-question-23-january-2024.

¹⁴² United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 2443 (XXIII), "Respect for and Implementation of Human Rights in Occupied Territories," December 19, 1968, [https://docs.un.org/A/RES/2443\(XXIII\)](https://docs.un.org/A/RES/2443(XXIII)); United Nations, A/78/553.

¹⁴³ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 2443 (XXIII), December 19, 1968; United Nations University, "Special Committee: Occupied Palestinian Territory (1968)."

¹⁴⁴ United Nations, Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, A/79/363, September 20, 2024; United Nations General Assembly, Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, A/RES/78/76, December 7, 2023, paras. 5–7.



“apartheid system of injustice,” and threatening the international rules-based order.¹⁴⁵ The accompanying UN press release sharpened the accusation. It declared that Israel’s warfare methods were “consistent with genocide” and that the alleged restriction of food, water, fuel, and humanitarian assistance demonstrated an Israeli intent to use necessities of life for political and military purposes.¹⁴⁶ The Committee called on governments and private actors to: halt all offensive arms transfers to Israel, hold their nationals, including dual Israeli citizens, accountable for involvement in settler violence or alleged violations in Gaza, review policies permitting religious and charitable organizations to finance activities in Israel that the Committee alleges sustain an “apartheid system”, hold businesses accountable for alleged complicity through the supply of arms, digital products and services, technology transfers, artificial intelligence, or algorithmic systems, require businesses to divest from operations that allegedly help maintain Israel’s presence in the territories and urge investors to ensure that their investments do not prolong the occupation, increase political and financial support for UNRWA, including through the UN regular budget, and cooperate fully with the ICC.¹⁴⁷

These recommendations turn a one-sided UNGA committee into a platform for arms restrictions, legal action against nationals, scrutiny of charitable transfers, corporate pressure, divestment, increased UNRWA funding, and ICC activity directed at Israel and those connected to it.

In May 2025, the Committee warned that Israeli actions “could very well be another Nakba.” It accused Israel of “mass and indiscriminate murder,” enforced disappearances, ethnic cleansing, total subjugation, apartheid, and the systematic use of torture and sexual violence.¹⁴⁸ Its September 2025 report, A/80/365, abandoned even the limited qualification used the previous year. The report’s summary presented the “ongoing genocide of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip” as an established fact. It stated that the Committee was “ever more convinced” that genocide was taking place and accused Israel of territorial expansion connected to a supposed “Greater Israel project” extending into Syria and Lebanon.¹⁴⁹

The Committee thus moved in one reporting cycle from raising the “possibility” of genocide, to declaring Israeli conduct “consistent with” genocide, to treating an “ongoing genocide” as the report’s starting premise. This escalation did not result from a judicial proceeding, an adversarial

¹⁴⁵ United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories*, A/79/363, September 20, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/report-of-the-special-committee-to-investigate-israeli-practices-20sep24/>.

¹⁴⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “UN Special Committee Finds Israel’s Warfare Methods in Gaza Consistent with Genocide, Including Use of Starvation as Weapon of War,” November 14, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/un-special-committee-press-release-14nov24/>.

¹⁴⁷ United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories*, A/79/363, September 20, 2024, paras. 71–73, especially paras. 71(c)–(j) and 73(a)–(b).

¹⁴⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “UN Special Committee on Israeli Practices in Occupied Territories Warns of ‘Second Nakba,’” May 9, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/un-special-committee-israeli-practices-occupied-territories-warns-second>.

¹⁴⁹ United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories*, A/80/365, September 5, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a80365-report-special-committee-investigate-israeli-practices-affecting>.



evidentiary process, or an investigation conducted inside Israel or Gaza. It came from a standing political committee composed of three governments and operating under a mandate that excludes investigation of other perpetrators.

October 7 did not alter the Committee's structure or priorities. Hamas's massacre and hostage-taking could appear as background, but Hamas could not become the principal subject of investigation because the Committee is expressly unauthorized to investigate violations by other actors. The mechanism therefore returned immediately to its permanent model: Israel as the investigated party, Palestinian suffering as the central subject, and Hamas's conduct as secondary context.¹⁵⁰

The Committee's reports are not isolated documents. They feed directly into the UNGA's annual anti-Israel process.

The 2024 report, A/79/363, was formally placed before the Fourth Committee under the agenda item "Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories." The Committee's Sri Lankan chair presented its findings during the Fourth Committee debate. That report was considered alongside draft resolutions on the Syrian Golan and Israeli settlements, which were then forwarded to the UNGA.¹⁵¹

UNGA Resolution 79/90 on the Syrian Golan explicitly states that the Assembly had "considered the report of the Special Committee" and cites A/79/363 in its first footnote. The resolution then repeats the Committee's core framing, calls on Israel to end its control of the Golan, and renews the issue for the following UNGA session.¹⁵²

The same Fourth Committee process produced Resolution 79/91 on Israeli settlements. That resolution calls on states not to recognize or assist situations it defines as unlawful, directs UN bodies to pursue business-related accountability concerning Israeli settlements, requests another Secretary-General report, and preserves the issue as a standing agenda item for the next session.¹⁵³

Committee testimony and selected submissions are incorporated into the Special Committee's report, which the Secretary-General transmits to the UNGA. The report is then considered by the Fourth Committee, informs related draft resolutions, and helps supply the factual and legal

¹⁵⁰ United Nations, A/78/553; United Nations, A/79/363.

¹⁵¹ United Nations General Assembly, Fourth Committee, "Summary Record of the 28th Meeting," A/C.4/79/SR.28, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/summary-record-of-the-28th-meeting-of-the-special-political-and-decolonization-committee-fourth-committee-discussion-on-israeli-practices-and-settlement-activities-a-c-4-79-sr-28/>.

¹⁵² United Nations General Assembly, The Occupied Syrian Golan, A/RES/79/90, December 4, 2024.

¹⁵³ United Nations General Assembly, Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and the Occupied Syrian Golan, A/RES/79/91, December 4, 2024.



framing later adopted by the UNGA. Those resolutions, in turn, generate additional reporting requirements, Secretariat activity, and follow-up across the UN system.¹⁵⁴

The reports also enter the UN's public communications machinery. The Committee's 2024 genocide accusation was republished as an official UN press release and distributed through UNISPAL, the UN's permanent digital platform on the Palestinian question. Its findings were categorized and circulated under subjects including genocide, apartheid, starvation, torture, children, women, settlements, and the Golan Heights.¹⁵⁵

This multiplies their political value. A claim gathered through one-sided consultations is converted into an official Committee conclusion; the conclusion becomes a Secretary-General-transmitted UNGA document; the document is presented in the Fourth Committee; related language enters resolutions; and the accusation is then redistributed through UN websites, press releases, databases, diplomatic debates, and NGO campaigns.

The inclusion of the Syrian Golan broadens the same accusatory machinery beyond the Palestinian arena. Israeli control of the Golan is examined without serious institutional attention to the territory's strategic context: decades of Syrian hostility, the Syrian regime's mass atrocities, the civil war, Iranian and Hezbollah entrenchment, and jihadist activity near Israel's border. The framework remains fixed on Israeli conduct.

The Special Committee is a recurring production line: one-sided allegations become UN reports, punitive recommendations, and new UNGA action. Its bias is embedded in its name, mandate, membership, methods, and permanence. A committee authorized to investigate only Israeli practices will continue to produce reports in which only Israel stands permanently accused.

¹⁵⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Fourth Committee, Summary Record of the 28th Meeting, A/C.4/79/SR.28; United Nations General Assembly, The Occupied Syrian Golan, A/RES/79/90, December 4, 2024; United Nations General Assembly, Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and the Occupied Syrian Golan, A/RES/79/91, December 4, 2024.

¹⁵⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "UN Special Committee Finds Israel's Warfare Methods in Gaza Consistent with Genocide, Including Use of Starvation as Weapon of War," November 14, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/un-special-committee-press-release-14nov24/>.



14. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Organizational Status: UN Secretariat office headed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.¹⁵⁶

Core Mandate: Exercises principal responsibility for promoting and protecting human rights across the UN system. OHCHR supports the HRC, treaty bodies, Special Procedures, commissions of inquiry, fact-finding missions, field presences, investigations, technical-assistance programs, advocacy, and human-rights reporting.¹⁵⁷

Financial Framework and Funding Model: OHCHR is financed through the UN regular budget and voluntary contributions from governments and other donors. The Secretary-General's initial 2026 budget proposal requested approximately \$249.4 million for the UN human-rights program, but the UNGA ultimately approved \$224.3 million after subsequent budget revisions. OHCHR reported total income of approximately \$438.9 million in 2024, comprising \$169.5 million in regular-budget income and \$269.4 million in voluntary contributions.¹⁵⁸

Neither OHCHR's annual reports nor the UN program budget provides a single consolidated total for all Israel-related activities. Relevant costs are distributed among program lines covering the HRC, commissions of inquiry, Special Procedures, field operations, documentation, communications, conference services, and administrative support. Although some individual mandates have identifiable budget estimates, the absence of an aggregate figure makes the full cost of the Israel-focused machinery difficult to determine.¹⁵⁹

Governance and Leadership Selection: OHCHR is led by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who is appointed by the Secretary-General and approved by the UNGA. The High Commissioner serves a four-year term that may be renewed once. OHCHR staff are recruited

¹⁵⁶ United Nations General Assembly, "High Commissioner for the Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights," Resolution 48/141, December 20, 1993, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/48/141>.

¹⁵⁷ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026: Part VI, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs; Section 24, Human Rights; Programme 20, Human Rights*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24), April 29, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/80/6%28Sect.24%29>.

¹⁵⁸ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24), April 29, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/80/6%28Sect.24%29>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "UN Human Rights Office Launches USD 400 Million Appeal to Address Global Human Rights Needs," February 5, 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/02/un-human-rights-office-launches-usd-400-million-appeal-address-global-human>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *UN Human Rights Report 2024* (Geneva: United Nations, 2025), 80, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/annual-report/ohchr-report-2024>.

¹⁵⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *UN Human Rights Report 2024*, 78–80; United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24).



through the UN Secretariat and provide the legal, investigative, administrative, communications, and logistical support required by the HRC and its mandates.¹⁶⁰

OHCHR is the institutional backbone of the UN's human-rights campaign against Israel. The HRC creates mandates, appoints mandate-holders, and adopts political resolutions; OHCHR gives those decisions operational reach. It supplies staff and research support, organizes investigations, supports evidence collection and management, coordinates travel and meetings, prepares and distributes reports, maintains websites, and publicizes findings through official UN channels.¹⁶¹

This role gives OHCHR influence extending far beyond any individual resolution. Once an allegation is processed through an OHCHR-supported mechanism, it appears in an official report with legal terminology, investigators, citations, document numbers, press materials, and worldwide distribution. Governments, courts, prosecutors, NGOs, universities, companies, investors, journalists, and other international organizations can then cite it as a UN finding.

OHCHR services the HRC's permanent Israel-focused machinery, including the open-ended Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel; the Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967; permanent Agenda Item 7; Special Procedures communications and statements; Israel-specific reports mandated by HRC resolutions; and the database of businesses involved in designated activities connected to Israeli settlements. It also publishes and distributes country and thematic reporting used to support allegations of apartheid, genocide, collective punishment, torture, forcible transfer, and corporate complicity.¹⁶²

Commissions of inquiry and Special Rapporteurs are formally independent, and responsibility for their substantive conclusions rests with them rather than OHCHR. Their institutional influence, however, depends heavily on OHCHR personnel, research assistance, logistics,

¹⁶⁰ United Nations General Assembly, "High Commissioner for the Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights," paras. 2, 4; United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24).

¹⁶¹ United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24), paras. 24.81–24.83 and the substantive-deliverables tables for subprogrammes 3 and 4.

¹⁶² United Nations Human Rights Council, "Ensuring Respect for International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in Israel," Resolution S-30/1, May 27, 2021, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/RES/S-30/1>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine>; United Nations Human Rights Council, "Institution-Building of the United Nations Human Rights Council," Resolution 5/1, June 18, 2007, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/RES/5/1>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises Involved in the Activities Detailed in Paragraph 96 of the Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission to Investigate the Implications of the Israeli Settlements on the Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the Palestinian People throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem*, A/HRC/60/19, September 26, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/60/19>.



document systems, communications channels, conference access, and official websites. The HRC confers the mandate and status of a UN expert or investigative body; OHCHR supplies much of the infrastructure that gives its work international visibility and authority.¹⁶³

This division allows OHCHR to publish and promote allegations under the UN emblem while maintaining that an independent expert or commission reached the conclusion. The institutional distinction is real, but it rarely survives public transmission: governments, media outlets, NGOs, and campaigners commonly describe the resulting material simply as a UN finding.

The clearest example is OHCHR's database of businesses involved in designated activities connected to Israeli settlements. The HRC ordered its creation through Resolution 31/36 in 2016. OHCHR published the first list in 2020, naming 112 companies, and reduced it to 97 in a 2023 update. In September 2025, OHCHR expanded the database to 158 businesses from 11 countries, adding 68 companies and removing seven.¹⁶⁴

Following a public call for submissions, OHCHR received allegations concerning 596 businesses. Because of resource constraints, it prioritized 215 for review, including all 97 businesses already listed, and found reasonable grounds to include 158. The remaining 381 businesses were not assessed in the completed review, preserving a substantial pool of potential subjects for later examination.¹⁶⁵

The database covers activities involving construction, real estate, tourism, transportation, quarrying and natural resources, security and surveillance, technology, and financial services. It includes Israeli businesses and international companies such as Airbnb, Booking.com, Expedia, TripAdvisor, and Heidelberg Materials. Israel has condemned the mechanism as a blacklist targeting businesses operating lawfully in disputed territory. Some named companies have disputed the factual basis for their inclusion or stated that they had ceased the relevant activity.¹⁶⁶

The occupied Palestinian territory is the only country situation for which the HRC has directed OHCHR to maintain a standing public database of this kind. OHCHR operates no comparable mechanism identifying companies connected to northern Cyprus, Xinjiang, Russian-occupied Ukrainian territory, Iranian repression, the Syrian regime, North Korean forced labor, Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, or atrocities in Sudan.

¹⁶³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council," <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures-human-rights-council>; United Nations, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 24), paras. 24.81–24.83.

¹⁶⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises*, A/HRC/60/19, paras. 1–9, 27–30.

¹⁶⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises*, paras. 19–30.

¹⁶⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises*, annex I; Olivia Le Poidevin, "More than 150 Companies Have Ties to Israeli Settlements, UN Database Shows," Reuters, September 26, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/more-than-150-companies-have-ties-israeli-settlements-un-database-finds-2025-09-26/>.



The database has no judicial authority and does not itself establish civil or criminal liability. Its practical effect is nevertheless to provide boycott and divestment campaigns with a UN-produced target list. Campaigners can use it in approaches to investors, banks, universities, procurement authorities, pension funds, and corporate boards, presenting the named businesses as companies officially identified by the UN human-rights system. Formal legal authority is not required for the database to produce reputational, investment, and commercial pressure.

The mechanism also transforms the globally framed UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights into a uniquely country-specific listing process. Rather than applying a consistent public corporate-accountability system across occupations, conflicts, authoritarian regimes, and disputed territories, OHCHR maintains a dedicated database focused on commercial relationships alleged to support or profit from Israeli settlements.¹⁶⁷

The precedent can extend beyond settlement-related activity. The same logic may be directed at banks, technology companies, universities, pension funds, tourism businesses, infrastructure suppliers, insurers, research partners, and other entities connected to the broader Israeli economy. Francesca Albanese's 2025 report, "From economy of occupation to economy of genocide," demonstrates that expansion by targeting international businesses, financial institutions, technology companies, weapons manufacturers, universities, and other organizations allegedly connected to Israel's economy and military operations. OHCHR's database established the institutional precedent; the Special Rapporteur widened the target.¹⁶⁸

OHCHR products feed into a self-reinforcing UN cycle: HRC mandates generate OHCHR-supported reports, which are then cited in subsequent debates, resolutions, investigations, databases, and follow-up. The same material circulates through the UNGA, Special Rapporteurs, UN communications offices, NGOs, courts, prosecutors, companies, and investors, allowing earlier UN findings to become the basis for further institutional and external action.¹⁶⁹

OHCHR also supplies an official platform for extreme allegations. Albanese's reports alleging genocide, colonial erasure, and an "economy of genocide," and the Commission of Inquiry's reports alleging genocide and other international crimes, have been published, distributed, publicized, and presented to governments through OHCHR and UN document systems. The conclusions formally remain those of the independent mandate-holder or commission, but OHCHR gives them the institutional form, visibility, and distribution of official UN material.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises*, paras. 31–39.

¹⁶⁸ Francesca Albanese, *From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide*, A/HRC/59/23, June 30, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session59/advance-version/a-hrc-59-23-aev.pdf>.

¹⁶⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Database of All Business Enterprises*, paras. 1–9.

¹⁷⁰ Francesca Albanese, *Anatomy of a Genocide*, A/HRC/55/73, March 25, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5573-report-special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-palestinian>; Francesca Albanese, *Genocide as Colonial Erasure*, A/79/384, October 1, 2024,



OHCHR's significance therefore lies not merely in issuing statements or administering individual mandates. It converts recurring political decisions into durable institutional activity and ensures that allegations developed within Israel-focused mechanisms circulate through the wider UN system as professional human-rights reporting. That process gives politically contested claims a level of authority and reach that no individual activist, academic, resolution, or speech could achieve alone.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/a79384-report-special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-palestinian>; Albanese, *From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide*; Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and Israel, *Legal Analysis of the Conduct of Israel in Gaza Pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, A/HRC/60/CRP.3, September 16, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session60/advance-version/a-hrc-60-crp-3.pdf>.



15. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Organizational Status: The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is a UN Secretariat office responsible for coordinating humanitarian response, mobilizing assistance, producing humanitarian data and analysis, managing appeals and pooled funds, and advocating for humanitarian access and protection.¹⁷¹

Core Mandate: OCHA coordinates humanitarian actors, supports emergency planning and access, develops policy, manages information, mobilizes funding, and conducts public and private advocacy. Its situation reports, casualty and displacement statistics, maps, dashboards, appeals, and needs assessments are used by governments, donors, UN bodies, NGOs, journalists, and international legal mechanisms. OCHA identifies five core functions: coordination, advocacy, policy, information management, and humanitarian financing.¹⁷²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: OCHA is financed through UN regular-budget resources and voluntary contributions. A public 2026 funding snapshot for its dedicated occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) office listed \$12.29 million in requirements and approximately \$3.22 million in paid earmarked contributions, about 26 percent of the requirement. These comprised approximately \$1.14 million from the European Commission, \$856,000 from Germany, \$571,000 from Canada, \$411,000 from Sweden, and \$234,000 from Ireland. The European Commission had pledged an additional approximately \$280,000. OCHA also receives global unearmarked contributions, but its public figures do not identify how much of that funding ultimately supports the oPt office.¹⁷³

These figures cover OCHA's coordination office, not the humanitarian programs it helps plan and finance. The 2026 Flash Appeal for the Palestinian territories seeks approximately \$4.06 billion to assist about three million people. Nearly 92 percent of the requested funding is intended for Gaza. The appeal involves 201 UN agencies, international and Palestinian NGOs, and Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations; it is not OCHA's operating budget.¹⁷⁴

The appeal seeks approximately \$1,353 for each intended beneficiary. OCHA's prioritized 2026 global plan seeks \$23 billion for 87 million people. After subtracting the Palestinian appeal and its intended beneficiaries, the remainder represents approximately \$225 per targeted person

¹⁷¹ United Nations, "OCHA," *United Nations*, <https://www.un.org/en/ccoi/ocha-united-nations-office-coordination-humanitarian-affairs>.

¹⁷² United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA's Strategic Plan 2023–2026: Transforming Humanitarian Coordination* (2023), <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/ochas-strategic-plan-2023-2026-transforming-humanitarian-coordination>.

¹⁷³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "How We Are Funded," *OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory*, <https://www.ochaopt.org/about-us/how-we-are-funded>.

¹⁷⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Occupied Palestinian Territory: Flash Appeal 2026* (December 2025), 2–3, 14, https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/OPT_Flash_Appeal_2026_EN_FINAL.pdf.



elsewhere, making the Palestinian request roughly six times larger per intended beneficiary. The Palestinian territories account for about 3.4 percent of the people targeted under the prioritized global plan but approximately 17.7 percent of requested funding, making the appeal its largest single geographic component. This is a comparison of requested funding, not actual expenditure, and does not control for differences in needs, operating costs, or assistance packages across crises.¹⁷⁵

OCHA also manages the oPt Humanitarian Fund on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator. This voluntary multi-donor pooled fund is distinct from both OCHA's institutional budget and the Flash Appeal. The Humanitarian Coordinator sets its strategic direction and approves allocations, while OCHA administers the funding process with the sectoral clusters. In June 2026, the fund was managing 97 active projects worth \$69.8 million, with 91 percent directed to Gaza and 9 percent to the West Bank.¹⁷⁶

Governance and Leadership Selection: OCHA is headed globally by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, appointed by the Secretary-General. In the Palestinian arena, the Humanitarian Coordinator is not an OCHA official solely by virtue of that title. The Humanitarian Coordinator leads the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), while OCHA supplies its principal coordination, planning, information-management, advocacy, and financing support. OCHA also chairs the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group, through which agencies, NGOs, and sectoral leads coordinate assessments, data, strategy, standards, monitoring, reporting, and advocacy.¹⁷⁷

OCHA's contribution to the UN's anti-Israel machinery lies in its ability to shape the humanitarian evidence base and organize much of the wider humanitarian system around it. Its influence is less overtly legal than that of the HRC or OHCHR but frequently more consequential. OCHA helps determine what is systematically counted, which sources enter the common record, how incidents are classified, what explanations accompany the data, and which issues become collective humanitarian priorities.

An HRC accusation may be recognized as political. An OCHA infographic, map, or casualty table is more likely to be treated as neutral technical evidence. Yet the categories, assumptions,

¹⁷⁵ Author's calculations based on OCHA, *Occupied Palestinian Territory: Flash Appeal 2026*, 2–3; and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2026* (December 8, 2025), <https://humanitarianaction.info/document/global-humanitarian-overview-2026>.

¹⁷⁶ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Governance, Policy and Guidance," *OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory*, <https://www.ochaopt.org/page/opt-humanitarian-fund/governance-policy-and-guidance>; OCHA, "oPt Humanitarian Fund (oPt HF)—Monthly Update," June 2026, <https://www.ochaopt.org/page/opt-humanitarian-fund/monthly-update>.

¹⁷⁷ United Nations, "Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs," *Global Leadership*, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/global-leadership/entity/secretariat-and-regional-commissions/office-for-the-coordination-of-humanitarian-affairs>; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Coordination Structure," *OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory*, <https://www.ochaopt.org/coordination/coordination-structure>.



source choices, and omissions behind those products can embed a political conclusion before the data reach the public.

OCHA supplies much of the infrastructure through which the humanitarian network develops common plans, statistics, funding requests, and advocacy positions. The HCT is led by the Humanitarian Coordinator, while the cluster system brings together UN entities, international and Palestinian NGOs, local authorities, and other humanitarian partners. It coordinates needs assessments, information management, strategic planning, technical standards, monitoring, contingency planning, reporting, and advocacy.¹⁷⁸

This coordination frequently moves beyond operational logistics. A December 2025 HCT statement published by OCHA urged the international community to take “immediate and concrete actions” to press Israel to remove restrictions on humanitarian access and international NGOs. It also stated that international NGOs, working with UN and Palestinian organizations, collectively delivered approximately \$1 billion in assistance annually.¹⁷⁹

The structure can become self-reinforcing. UN agencies, Palestinian institutions, and advocacy NGOs contribute information through coordination forums. OCHA organizes it into common assessments and plans. Many of the same organizations endorse collective statements based on those assessments, seek funding under the resulting plans, and later cite the UN-coordinated material as independent evidence.

OCHA’s handling of Gaza casualty figures illustrates the risks created by this authority. Its reports reproduce totals and demographic breakdowns supplied by the Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health and Government Media Office. OCHA generally identifies the original source and notes when figures have not been independently verified by the UN. Once the numbers appear in a UN graphic or situation report, however, governments, journalists, NGOs, and other UN bodies frequently describe them simply as “UN figures.”¹⁸⁰

The May 2024 casualty-data controversy demonstrated the problem. OCHA had circulated Government Media Office estimates claiming that approximately 14,500 children and 9,500 women had been killed. It later displayed a Ministry of Health breakdown limited to fatalities the ministry said it had fully identified, listing 7,797 children and 4,959 women among 24,686 identified deaths as of April 30. The UN explained that the figures represented different datasets

¹⁷⁸ OCHA, “Coordination Structure.”

¹⁷⁹ Humanitarian Country Team of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “UN Agencies and NGOs Call for Immediate Lifting of Impediments to Humanitarian Access and NGO Operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,” United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, December 17, 2025, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/un-agencies-and-ngos-call-immediate-lifting-impediments-humanitarian-access-and-ngo-operations-occupied>.

¹⁸⁰ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel: Reported Humanitarian Impact*, May 6, 2024, https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/Gaza_casualties_info-graphic_6_May_2024.pdf.



rather than a reduction in the overall reported death toll and clarified that the earlier demographic estimates came from the Government Media Office.¹⁸¹

Despite the distinction, the larger demographic estimates had already circulated globally as evidence that women and children constituted an overwhelming majority of those killed. OCHA gave figures from Hamas-controlled authorities the design, reach, and institutional authority of a UN humanitarian product before all the underlying identities had been established.

OCHA's casualty products also lack the distinction most important for evaluating an urban war: combatant status. Gaza authorities do not systematically identify members of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other armed groups in their public totals. OCHA consequently presents overall fatalities and selected age-and-sex categories without a parallel combatant category. This allows combatants to remain within the undifferentiated total and leaves deaths caused by Palestinian fire, internal violence, or other Palestinian actors unattributed unless separately identified.¹⁸²

OCHA's Gaza reporting places Israeli actions at the center of the causal narrative. Its products systematically track Israeli strikes, evacuation orders, crossing procedures, inspections, movement restrictions, infrastructure damage, demolitions, and alleged obstacles to humanitarian access.¹⁸³

OCHA does not maintain comparably prominent cumulative products on Hamas command centers and tunnels in civilian areas, weapons stored in protected sites, rockets launched from populated areas, the seizure or resale of aid, armed control over distribution routes, hostages held in civilian buildings, Palestinian rockets falling inside Gaza, or Hamas's responsibility for initiating and prolonging the war. Individual reports sometimes mention Palestinian rocket fire, armed activity, or interference with aid, but such conduct does not receive the sustained dashboards, databases, or causal emphasis applied to Israeli measures. Israel's response becomes the principal documented humanitarian driver, while the military system that produced it becomes secondary context.

The same imbalance appears in the West Bank. OCHA systematically tracks Israeli operations, movement restrictions, demolitions, settler-related incidents, and Palestinian displacement, while Palestinian terrorist networks, armed cells, weapons laboratories, attacks against Israelis, and the security rationale for Israeli operations receive far less structured treatment. Its data architecture

¹⁸¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel: Reported Humanitarian Impact*, May 13, 2024, https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/Gaza_casualties_information_13_May_2024.pdf; Michelle Nichols, "UN Says Gaza Death Toll Still over 35,000 but Not All Bodies Identified," *Reuters*, May 13, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-says-gaza-death-toll-still-over-35000-not-all-bodies-identified-2024-05-13/>.

¹⁸² OCHA, *Reported Humanitarian Impact*, May 13, 2024; Isabel Debre, Sarah El Deeb, and Lee Keath, "How AP Analyzed Gaza Health Ministry's Death Toll Data," *Associated Press*, June 7, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/360c6aabc03421c718d4a8452cec2c67>.

¹⁸³ OCHA, *Occupied Palestinian Territory: Flash Appeal 2026*, 5–15.



documents the consequences of Israeli security measures more comprehensively than the threats that produced them.

OCHA's "settler violence" statistics are among its most politically influential and methodologically vulnerable products. They are routinely cited as counts of physical attacks by Israeli civilians against Palestinians, although OCHA's underlying category is substantially broader.

OCHA's current dashboard includes incidents involving violence, intimidation, or trespass by or against settlers and other Israeli civilians. It can include incidents causing neither casualties nor property damage, cases in which an alleged participant's identity as a settler is presumed from the circumstances, and incidents in which Israeli security forces intervening in a settler-related confrontation caused the reported harm. OCHA states that incidents targeting Palestinians are validated through at least two sources, but its process remains "humanitarian monitoring" rather than an independent criminal investigation or judicial determination.¹⁸⁴

OCHA draws information from additional questionable sources. Earlier public materials identified Palestinian advocacy groups including Addameer, Al-Haq, Defense for Children International–Palestine, B'Tselem, Al Mezan, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights among the relevant sources. Israel designated Addameer, Al-Haq, and Defense for Children International–Palestine in 2021 over alleged links to the PFLP; the organizations deny those allegations.¹⁸⁵

A Regavim reanalysis later summarized by the Kohelet Policy Forum examined OCHA-supplied records covering January 2016 through April 2023 and reported more than 8,000 entries. According to that review, 1,361 of 1,704 East Jerusalem entries involved Jewish visits to the Temple Mount or related confrontations, while another 1,613 West Bank entries involved hiking, touring, or entry onto land Palestinians claimed Israelis should not enter. These are findings of the outside review, not OCHA's own characterization of the data. They concern a broader underlying dataset and should not be equated automatically with current OCHA headline counts, which commonly emphasize incidents causing casualties or property damage.¹⁸⁶

The same review identified cases in which the classification allegedly obscured who initiated the violence. It argued that a March 17, 2023 entry describing a Palestinian injured in an attack by a settler apparently corresponded to the terrorist shooting near Huwara in which the Palestinian

¹⁸⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Settler-related Violence," *OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory*, <https://www.ochaopt.org/page/settler-related-violence>.

¹⁸⁵ Kohelet Policy Forum, *Settler Violence FAQ* (June 2026), 1–2, https://www.kohelet.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/260609-Settler-Violence-FAQ_web.pdf; "Nine EU States Reject Israeli 'Terrorist' Designation for Palestinian NGOs," *Reuters*, July 12, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/nine-eu-states-reject-israeli-terrorist-designation-palestinian-ngos-2022-07-12/>.

¹⁸⁶ Kohelet Policy Forum, *Settler Violence FAQ*, 2–3.



attacker severely wounded Israeli-American David Stern, who returned fire. If that match is correct, the OCHA entry materially mischaracterized the roles of attacker and victim.¹⁸⁷

The review also argued that OCHA's pre-October 7 total of eight Palestinians killed by Israeli settlers in 2023 included at least three people killed while carrying out attacks: an assailant armed with knives and explosives attempting to enter a farm, a man attempting to stab an Israeli resident, and a participant in the shooting near Eli that murdered four Israelis.¹⁸⁸

The distortion arises when broad or mixed humanitarian categories are publicized as counts of verified criminal attacks without explaining that the underlying records may include intimidation, trespass, access disputes, confrontations involving security forces, self-defense, or violence initiated by Palestinians. Governments, journalists, and other UN bodies can then repeat the headline figure without examining what OCHA counted.

OCHA's reports extend far beyond humanitarian coordination. OHCHR, Special Rapporteurs, commissions of inquiry, Secretary-General reports, UNGA debates, governments, NGOs, courts, and media outlets cite its casualty figures, displacement estimates, access assessments, maps, and settler-incident data.¹⁸⁹ This gives underlying claims successive layers of institutional authority: information from Hamas-controlled bodies, Palestinian authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs is incorporated into OCHA products, then cited elsewhere as corroborated UN evidence.

By establishing common data, classifications, and source frameworks across UN agencies and hundreds of NGOs, OCHA also shapes needs assessments, advocacy, funding appeals, HRC reports, legal submissions, and diplomatic pressure on Israel. Its influence therefore lies not only in what it reports, but in what is counted, how it is classified, which sources receive institutional authority, and how the resulting figures are framed.

¹⁸⁷ Kohelet Policy Forum, *Settler Violence FAQ*, 2.

¹⁸⁸ Kohelet Policy Forum, *Settler Violence FAQ*, 2.

¹⁸⁹ For representative examples, see Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, "More than a Human Can Bear: Israel's Systematic Use of Sexual, Reproductive and Other Forms of Gender-based Violence since 7 October 2023," A/HRC/58/CRP.6, March 13, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/coiopt/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>; and International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, Order of 28 March 2024, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240328-ord-01-00-en.pdf>.



16. Department of Peace Operations and United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Organizational Status: The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) is a UN Secretariat department responsible for planning, managing, and supporting UN peacekeeping operations. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is a UNSC-mandated peacekeeping mission operating in southern Lebanon.¹⁹⁰

Core Mandate: DPO oversees UN peacekeeping operations worldwide. UNIFIL was established in 1978 under UNSC Resolutions 425 and 426. Following the 2006 Lebanon War, Resolution 1701 substantially expanded its role. UNIFIL was tasked with monitoring the cessation of hostilities, supporting the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), assisting the Lebanese Government in extending its authority throughout the south, and helping establish an area between the Blue Line and the Litani River free of armed personnel, weapons, and military assets other than those of the Lebanese state and UNIFIL.¹⁹¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UN peacekeeping is financed primarily through compulsory assessments imposed on Member States. The UNGA approved approximately \$5.1 billion for peacekeeping operations in the 2026–2027 fiscal year. It appropriated approximately \$446.4 million for UNIFIL for July 2026 through June 2027, down from approximately \$552.8 million in the preceding fiscal year. These costs are paid through the peacekeeping assessment system rather than voluntary donor choice.¹⁹²

As of August 19, 2026, UNIFIL's force consisted of 7,462 peacekeepers from 46 troop-contributing countries, in addition to international and Lebanese civilian personnel. It is therefore not a small observer group but a military and civilian operation costing hundreds of millions of dollars annually that has remained in Lebanon for nearly five decades.¹⁹³

Governance and Leadership Selection: DPO is headed by an Under-Secretary-General appointed under the Secretary-General's authority. UNIFIL is led by a Head of Mission and

¹⁹⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping, "Department of Peace Operations," May 15, 2026, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/departments-of-peace-operations>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Mandate," February 4, 2026, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/unifil-mandate>.

¹⁹¹ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Mandate."

¹⁹² United Nations Peacekeeping, "How We Are Funded," July 10, 2026, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>; United Nations, "Fifth Committee Approves Landmark Decision to Ease UN's Chronic Liquidity Crisis, \$5.1 Billion Peacekeeping Budget for 2026–2027, Concluding Resumed Session," June 30, 2026, <https://press.un.org/en/2026/gaab4513.doc.htm>; United Nations, "General Assembly Endorses New Methodology for Unspent Assessed Contributions, Adopts Other Fifth Committee Recommendations," June 30, 2026, <https://press.un.org/en/2026/ga12766.doc.htm>; Security Council Report, "Lebanon, August 2025 Monthly Forecast," July 30, 2025, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2025-08/lebanon-34.php>.

¹⁹³ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Troop-Contributing Countries," August 19, 2026, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/unifil-troop-contributing-countries>.



Force Commander appointed by the Secretary-General. The UNSC defines the mission's mandate, the UNGA approves its budget, and Member States contribute military contingents.¹⁹⁴

UNIFIL represents the operational side of the UN's failure toward Israel. While other UN bodies devote extensive resources to investigating and constraining Israeli military action, UNIFIL did not prevent Hezbollah from constructing the military infrastructure that ultimately drove large-scale Israeli operations in Lebanon.

Resolution 1701 envisioned southern Lebanon under Lebanese state authority and free of unauthorized armed groups. Hezbollah instead transformed the area into a forward base for an Iranian-backed terrorist army. It constructed tunnels, bunkers, observation posts, weapons depots, launch sites, command facilities, and fortified positions, embedded them in civilian communities, and prepared forces to fire on and raid Israeli territory. UNIFIL remained deployed throughout this buildup.¹⁹⁵

Hezbollah and associated local actors repeatedly restricted UNIFIL's movement and access. Peacekeepers encountered roadblocks, hostile crowds, armed individuals, interference with patrols, and denials of entry to locations of interest. UNIFIL reported these incidents and referred relevant findings to the Lebanese authorities, but Hezbollah's military system continued to expand.¹⁹⁶

This created an illusion of international supervision. Governments could point to thousands of peacekeepers and claim that southern Lebanon was being monitored. In practice, UNIFIL could inspect only locations it could reach, depended on the LAF to act on its findings, and operated within a political system in which Hezbollah exercised substantial military and political power.

Resolution 2790, adopted in 2025, urged UNIFIL to make full use of its existing rules of engagement, specifically in operational activities aimed at discovering tunnels and weapons caches, and called on Lebanon to provide prompt and full access to requested sites. Although the

¹⁹⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping, "Department of Peace Operations"; United Nations, "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon," *Global Leadership*, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/global-leadership/entity/field-operations/united-nations-interim-force-lebanon>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Mandate"; United Nations Peacekeeping, "How We Are Funded"; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Troop-Contributing Countries."

¹⁹⁵ United Nations Secretary-General, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon," S/2006/560, July 21, 2006, paras. 22, 28–29, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2006/560>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement on the Discovery of Tunnels Along the Blue Line," December 17, 2018, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-discovery-tunnels-along-blue-line>; Israel Defense Forces, "Hezbollah Terrorist Training Center Found 200 Meters Away from UNIFIL Post," November 8, 2024, <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/the-northern-front/hezbollah-terrorist-training-center-found-200-meters-away-from-unifil-post/>.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations Secretary-General, Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006) during the Period from 21 February to 20 June 2025, S/2025/460, July 11, 2025, para. 54 and annex I, paras. 4 and 7–52.



resolution did not formally declare that UNIFIL had failed, these instructions underscored longstanding deficiencies in access and operational effectiveness.¹⁹⁷

In November 2024, the IDF reported discovering a Hezbollah training and weapons-storage compound approximately 200 meters from a UNIFIL position. The compound contained weapons, tunnel shafts, operational documents, maps of Israel, instructional materials, and launchers prepared to fire at Israeli communities.¹⁹⁸

The problem was not new. Secretary-General reports issued before and during the 2006 war recorded Hezbollah construction and positions in close proximity to UN facilities, restrictions on UNIFIL access, and repeated objections by the Force Commander to the Lebanese authorities. A July 2006 report specifically stated that Hezbollah positions remained close to UN positions, particularly near Hula, creating security risks for UN personnel and equipment.¹⁹⁹

These reports establish that Hezbollah's activity near peacekeeping positions was known before Resolution 1701 was adopted. Yet Hezbollah continued expanding its military presence throughout much of the following eighteen years.²⁰⁰

After the November 2024 cessation-of-hostilities arrangement, UNIFIL intensified its patrols and gained access to locations that had previously been inaccessible. A 2025 Secretary-General report recorded the discovery of 67 tunnels or underground structures. During the year following the ceasefire, UNIFIL reported finding more than 360 illegal weapons and ammunition caches and other military infrastructure, most likely associated with non-state actors. UNIFIL stated that the sites appeared to predate the ceasefire and referred its findings to the LAF.²⁰¹

The postwar discoveries exposed the scale of the prewar failure. Hezbollah's infrastructure was not confined to a few isolated hiding places. It included hundreds of caches, fortified tunnels, launch positions, weapons depots, and logistical sites distributed throughout UNIFIL's area of operations. A mission that uncovered this infrastructure only after war transformed the security environment had not provided effective monitoring beforehand, whether because it lacked

¹⁹⁷ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2790 (2025), S/RES/2790, August 28, 2025, paras. 11–13, [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2790\(2025\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2790(2025)).

¹⁹⁸ Israel Defense Forces, "Hezbollah Terrorist Training Center Found 200 Meters Away from UNIFIL Post."

¹⁹⁹ United Nations Secretary-General, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon," paras. 22, 28–29.

²⁰⁰ United Nations Secretary-General, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon," paras. 28–29; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement on the Discovery of Tunnels Along the Blue Line"; Israel Defense Forces, "Hezbollah Terrorist Training Center Found 200 Meters Away from UNIFIL Post."

²⁰¹ United Nations Secretary-General, "Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006) during the Period from 21 February to 20 June 2025," S/2025/460, July 11, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2025/460>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "One Year since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement," December 9, 2025, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/news/one-year-cessation-hostilities-agreement>.



access, failed to identify the sites, reported them without sufficient urgency, or operated through a system incapable of producing enforcement.

Hezbollah and other non-state actors repeatedly demonstrated that UNIFIL could not operate freely within its designated area. In November 2024, a UNIFIL patrol found an ammunition cache near a road and notified the LAF. Shortly afterward, unidentified gunmen fired approximately thirty shots toward the patrol. Days later, another patrol was blocked by a group that included an armed individual and was subsequently fired upon approximately forty times. UNIFIL attributed the second incident to likely non-state actors but did not conclusively identify the perpetrators.²⁰²

Fire attributed to Hezbollah or affiliated groups also struck UNIFIL installations. In October 2024, a rocket likely fired by Hezbollah or an affiliated group hit UNIFIL's Naqoura headquarters and injured eight Austrian peacekeepers. In November, two rockets likely fired by Hezbollah or an affiliated group struck UNIFIL's Sector West headquarters, injuring four Italian peacekeepers.²⁰³

In May 2026, several presumed Hezbollah drones detonated near UNIFIL's Naqoura headquarters, including one that exploded inside the compound and damaged buildings. A separate unarmed drone that crashed at the headquarters was preliminarily assessed as Iranian-manufactured, supporting the conclusion that it came from Hezbollah or another Iranian-backed actor.²⁰⁴

On October 8, 2023, Hezbollah opened a northern front against Israel. UNIFIL's first statement that morning recorded rockets fired from southeastern Lebanon toward Israeli-held territory, followed by Israeli return fire. Hezbollah subsequently fired thousands of rockets, missiles, anti-tank weapons, and drones into Israel. Israeli civilians and soldiers were killed, homes and infrastructure were damaged, and approximately 60,000 residents were evacuated or displaced from northern communities.²⁰⁵

²⁰² United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement (14 November 2024)," November 14, 2024, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-14-november-2024>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement (17 November 2024)," November 17, 2024, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-17-november-2024>.

²⁰³ Reuters, "Austria Says Eight of Its UNIFIL Troops in Lebanon Injured in Rocket Attack," October 29, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/austria-says-eight-its-unifil-troops-lebanon-injured-rocket-attack-2024-10-29/>; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "Rockets Strike UNIFIL Sector West Headquarters, Injuring 4 Peacekeepers," November 22, 2024, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-rockets-strike-unifil-sector-west-headquarters-injuring-4>.

²⁰⁴ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement (13 May 2026)," May 13, 2026, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-13-may-2026>.

²⁰⁵ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement on Rocket and Return Fire (8 October 2023)," October 8, 2023, <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en/press-releases/unifil-statement-rocket-and-return-fire-8-october-2023>; United Nations Secretary-General, "Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006)," S/2024/548, July 12, 2024, https://unifil.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/s_2024_548-en.pdf; Reuters, "Austria Says Eight of Its UNIFIL Troops in Lebanon Injured in Rocket Attack."



UNIFIL did not prevent southern Lebanon from being used as a launch area, did not achieve the weapons-free zone contemplated by Resolution 1701, and could not enable the Lebanese state to impose exclusive military authority or allow displaced Israelis to return safely to their homes.²⁰⁶

When Israel acted against Hezbollah's entrenched military network, UNIFIL's public reporting generally placed violations by "both sides" within the same diplomatic framework. That formulation recorded conduct by both parties but obscured the central chronology: Hezbollah illegally built a military system inside southern Lebanon, initiated sustained attacks on Israel on October 8, and operated from an area that was supposed to contain no armed forces other than the LAF and UNIFIL.

UNIFIL generally records and refers weapons, tunnels, and unauthorized infrastructure to the LAF. Because it operates with the Lebanese Government's consent and under a Chapter VI peacekeeping framework, it does not independently conduct a campaign to dismantle Hezbollah's military organization.²⁰⁷

That procedure depended on Lebanese institutions that, for most of the period after 2006, were unable or unwilling to confront Hezbollah. Hezbollah maintained an independent military force, received weapons and financing from Iran, exercised extensive political influence, and rejected the Lebanese state's exclusive authority over armed force.²⁰⁸

The structure substituted liaison and reporting for enforcement. It allowed the international community to maintain a large peacekeeping presence without resolving the fundamental problem: the Lebanese state had neither disarmed Hezbollah nor established exclusive sovereignty in the south.

UNIFIL has conducted liaison, mine clearance, humanitarian assistance, infrastructure support, Blue Line monitoring, and coordination with the LAF. These activities did not achieve the mission's central strategic objective concerning unauthorized weapons and armed personnel south of the Litani.²⁰⁹

The record is stark. Hezbollah built an extensive military network south of the Litani, maintained facilities near UNIFIL positions, obstructed and intimidated peacekeepers, concealed hundreds

²⁰⁶ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Mandate"; United Nations Secretary-General, "Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006)," S/2024/548.

²⁰⁷ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL FAQs"; United Nations Peacekeeping, "UN Peacekeeping Mandate in Lebanon Faces Scrutiny Ahead of Security Council Vote," August 28, 2025, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/news/un-peacekeeping-mandate-in-lebanon-faces-scrutiny-ahead-of-security-council-vote>.

²⁰⁸ Congressional Research Service, "Iran-Supported Groups in the Middle East and U.S. Policy," IF12587, February 7, 2024, <https://www.everysreport.com/reports/IF12587.html>; Reuters, "Hezbollah Says Lebanon Cabinet Decision to Limit Arms to State Is 'Grave Sin,'" August 6, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hezbollah-says-lebanon-cabinet-decision-limit-arms-state-is-grave-sin-2025-08-06/>.

²⁰⁹ United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL FAQs"; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "One Year since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement."



of caches and tunnels, opened a sustained front against Israel, and displaced Israeli civilians while the Lebanese state failed to establish exclusive military control.²¹⁰

In August 2025, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2790, extending UNIFIL's mandate for what the resolution designated as a final period through December 31, 2026. Under the resolution currently in force, UNIFIL must then cease normal operations and complete an orderly and safe drawdown and withdrawal within one year, in consultation with Lebanon.²¹¹

The decision brings toward an end an “interim” force established in 1978. It reflects the failure of a model that monitored, liaised, and reported but could not prevent an Iranian-backed terrorist organization from constructing an extensive military system inside the mission's area of operations.

²¹⁰ United Nations Secretary-General, “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon,” paras. 28–29; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, “UNIFIL Statement on the Discovery of Tunnels Along the Blue Line”; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, “One Year since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement”; United Nations Secretary-General, “Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006),” S/2024/548; Reuters, “Austria Says Eight of Its UNIFIL Troops in Lebanon Injured in Rocket Attack.”

²¹¹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2790 (2025), paras. 1, 5.



17. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Organizational Status: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a subsidiary organ of the UNGA created specifically for Palestine refugees. It operates in Gaza, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Its mandate was most recently renewed in December 2025 for three years, through June 30, 2029.²¹²

Core Mandate: UNRWA provides education, primary health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, emergency assistance, microfinance, and protection-related activities. It does not govern or administer refugee camps, which remain under the authority of the relevant host government or governing authority.²¹³

UNRWA defines a Palestine refugee as a person whose normal residence was Palestine between June 1, 1946, and May 15, 1948, and who lost both home and livelihood because of the 1948 conflict. Male-line descendants of registered refugees, including legally adopted children, may also register. Approximately 750,000 refugees were served when UNRWA began operations in 1950. Its current files include approximately 5.9 million registered Palestine refugees and more than 685,000 other persons eligible under additional categories.²¹⁴

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNRWA is financed principally through voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, private donors, and UN partners. The UN regular budget covers a limited portion of international-staff and administrative costs, while most program and emergency spending depends on voluntary contributions.²¹⁵

UNRWA reported \$2.7 billion in budgetary needs for 2024 and secured approximately \$1.4 billion across its program budget, emergency appeals, and other funding channels. Institutional government donors provided approximately \$1.14 billion, private partners \$141 million, and UN partners, including the UN regular budget, \$114.7 million. The Agency began and ended the year with approximately \$35 million in carried liabilities. In 2025, requirements rose to approximately \$3.3 billion. UNRWA reported \$887 million in confirmed pledges and \$829 million received,

²¹² United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 80/78, “Assistance to Palestine Refugees,” A/RES/80/78, December 5, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/assistance-to-palestine-refugees-a-res-80-78-ga-res-5dec25/>; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), “Who We Are,” <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>.

²¹³ UNRWA, “Frequently Asked Questions,” <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions>.

²¹⁴ UNRWA, *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions*, <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/strategy-policy/consolidated-eligibility-and-registration-instructions>; UNRWA, *Annual Operational Report 2024* (Amman: UNRWA, 2025), <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/annual-operational-report-2024>.

²¹⁵ UNRWA, “How We Are Funded,” <https://www.unrwa.org/how-you-can-help/how-we-are-funded>.



including \$76 million from the UN regular budget, and stated that available income covered approximately 27 percent of its requirements.²¹⁶

These figures reflect more than an emergency-relief operation. UNRWA is a billion-dollar education, health, welfare, registration, employment, infrastructure, and advocacy institution maintained for one population for more than seventy-five years.

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNRWA is headed by a Commissioner-General appointed by the Secretary-General. Its Advisory Commission, composed of host authorities, major donors, and other governments, advises and assists the Commissioner-General but does not exercise executive control. The UNGA determines and periodically renews the mandate through Member-State voting; Israel has no special formal role in that process despite being directly affected by the Agency's activities and the political claims attached to its registration system.²¹⁷

UNRWA is a structural exception within international refugee governance. It is the only UN agency created for a single refugee population, and its registration system permits eligibility to pass through the male line without descendants having personally experienced displacement in 1948. UNHCR can also recognize derivative status for family members and descendants in some circumstances, but it does so within a global refugee-law system rather than through a dedicated multigenerational registry for one population.²¹⁸

UNHCR pursues durable solutions through voluntary repatriation, local integration, resettlement, and the restoration of national protection. UNRWA has no comparable mandate to negotiate or implement a durable political solution, resettle refugees, or end registration through integration. It continues providing services pending what the UN describes as a just and lasting solution, including to descendants who hold Jordanian citizenship or have lived their entire lives outside Israel and the Palestinian territories.²¹⁹

The result has been institutional expansion rather than resolution. A population of approximately 750,000 originally served in 1950 has become nearly 5.9 million registered refugees. Registration itself does not determine legal refugee status under the 1951 Refugee Convention or

²¹⁶ UNRWA, *Annual Operational Report 2024*; UNRWA, "How We Are Funded."

²¹⁷ United Nations Secretariat, "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: Organization and Functions," ST/SGB/2019/2, March 11, 2019, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-183997/>; UNRWA, "Advisory Commission," <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/advisory-commission>; United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 80/78.

²¹⁸ UNRWA, *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions*; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "UNHCR RSD Procedural Standards: Processing Claims Based on the Right to Family Unity," 2016, <https://www.refworld.org/policy/legalguidance/unhcr/2016/110833>.

²¹⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Solutions for Refugees," <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/sites/uk/files/legacy-pdf/50a4c17f9.pdf>; UNRWA, "Frequently Asked Questions."



create a legal right of return, but it preserves and enlarges the administrative population to which Palestinian political claims of return are attached.²²⁰

This structure is inseparable from the demand that registered refugees and their descendants be permitted to “return” to locations inside Israel. The entry of millions of descendants into Israel, rather than into a future Palestinian state, would threaten Israel’s continued existence as the nation-state of the Jewish people. UNRWA’s registration files, schools, services, and camp infrastructure help preserve a distinct national-political category centered on unresolved displacement and eventual return.

The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services investigated allegations against nineteen UNRWA employees concerning the October 7 attack. It concluded that in one case no evidence was obtained, that evidence in nine cases was insufficient, and that evidence concerning nine other employees could indicate involvement. UNRWA separated those nine employees. OIOS was unable independently to authenticate some information retained by Israeli authorities, and its conclusions were administrative findings rather than criminal convictions.²²¹

The OIOS inquiry addressed only the nineteen employees initially referred to the UN. A subsequent investigation by the independent USAID Office of Inspector General produced much broader findings. On June 5, 2026, USAID OIG reported referring 101 current or former UNRWA employees for suspension or debarment consideration from United States-funded programs based on evidence of participation in the October 7 attack, affiliation with Hamas’s military wing, or both. The referrals included principals, deputy principals, teachers, security personnel, attendants, psychosocial counsellors, and medical professionals.²²²

The cases included a deputy school principal allegedly serving as a deputy company commander in a Hamas infantry battalion and another allegedly serving as a Hamas squad leader. Earlier OIG cases included UNRWA teachers and a social worker accused of participating in terrorist activity on October 7 or helping hold Israeli civilian hostages.²²³

Israel’s broader review produced still larger figures. Israeli authorities reported that cross-referencing UNRWA’s 12,521 Gaza employees against Hamas, PIJ, and other terrorist-organization records identified at least 1,462 matches, including 1,157 education employees and

²²⁰ UNRWA, *Annual Operational Report 2024*; UNRWA, “Frequently Asked Questions.”

²²¹ United Nations Secretary-General, “Note to Correspondents: The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) Investigation of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,” August 5, 2024, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/notes-correspondents/2024-08-05/note-correspondents-the-un-office-of-internal-oversight-services-%28oios%29-investigation-of-the-un-relief-and-works-agency-for-palestine-refugees-the-near-east>.

²²² U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Inspector General, “USAID Inspector General’s Continuing Investigation Leads to Referral of Over 100 Current and Former UNRWA Staff Linked to Hamas for Suspension/Debarment,” investigative summary, June 5, 2026, <https://oig.usaid.gov/node/8155>.

²²³ U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Inspector General, “Referral of Over 100 Current and Former UNRWA Staff”; U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Inspector General, “USAID OIG’s Ongoing Investigation Leads to Referral of Four Additional Former UNRWA Staffers Linked to Hamas for Suspension/Debarment,” investigative summary, April 30, 2026, <https://oig.usaid.gov/node/8114>.



80 school principals or deputy principals. Israel states that the matches were based on identity numbers, personnel records, recruitment documents, training lists, and other captured organizational material.²²⁴

The institutional implications are severe. UNRWA employed a predominantly local workforce in territory governed by Hamas while lacking an independent intelligence-vetting capacity capable of identifying covert membership in terrorist organizations. Employees exercised authority over schools, students, facilities, logistics, health care, social services, and security while some allegedly held simultaneous positions within Hamas's military structure.

The evidence concerning Hamas's exploitation of UNRWA's operating environment extends beyond personnel. Israeli forces have documented tunnels beneath or adjacent to UNRWA schools and other facilities, weapons in educational compounds, rocket launches near UN sites, and what Israel identified as a Hamas intelligence and data center in a tunnel beneath UNRWA's Gaza City headquarters. Journalists were shown the underground complex, while Israel stated that electrical and communications infrastructure connected it to the compound above.²²⁵

The recurring use of UNRWA facilities or their immediate surroundings for tunnels, weapons, launches, and other military activity nevertheless demonstrates a serious institutional failure. An organization responsible for extensive compounds, schools, warehouses, vehicles, staff networks, and infrastructure in Hamas-controlled territory repeatedly failed to prevent parts of its operating environment from being incorporated into Hamas's military system.

The independent review led by Catherine Colonna found continuing neutrality problems and recommended substantial reforms involving governance, management, oversight, staff conduct, investigations, educational material, installations, staff unions, donor engagement, and cooperation with other UN bodies.²²⁶

The review identified political expression by employees, neutrality risks involving staff unions, problematic material in host-authority textbooks, insufficient neutrality and investigative capacity, inconsistent disciplinary procedures, and weaknesses in staff screening and installation management. It recommended stronger vetting, additional international oversight, clearer disciplinary standards, improved textbook review, and a dedicated neutrality-investigation capacity. The review did not investigate the specific October 7 allegations, which were handled separately by OIOS.²²⁷

²²⁴ Israel Defense Forces, "UNRWA Workers Exposed: UNRWA–Hamas Connection," <https://www.idf.il/en/minisites/unrwa-hamas-connection/>.

²²⁵ Israel Defense Forces, "UNRWA Workers Exposed"; Reuters, "Hamas Had Command Tunnel under U.N. Gaza HQ, Israeli Military Says," February 10, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hamas-had-command-tunnel-under-un-gaza-hq-israeli-military-says-2024-02-10/>.

²²⁶ Independent Review Group on UNRWA, *Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures to Ensure Adherence by UNRWA to the Humanitarian Principle of Neutrality*, April 20, 2024, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2024/04/unrwa_independent_review_on_neutrality.pdf.

²²⁷ Independent Review Group on UNRWA, *Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures*.



Education is central to UNRWA's political and institutional impact. Under its regular program budget, the Agency reported providing education to 241,785 children during the 2023–2024 academic year despite the closure of its Gaza schools during the war. Its wider education system ordinarily serves hundreds of thousands of students across its five fields of operation.²²⁸

UNRWA generally uses host-authority curricula. In Gaza and the West Bank, this means Palestinian Authority educational materials supplemented by UNRWA-produced content. The Colonna Review found that assessments of those textbooks presented a mixed picture but acknowledged problematic content and concluded that UNRWA's procedures for ensuring educational neutrality required strengthening.²²⁹

UNRWA schools operate within a system that defines students as refugees from locations inside Israel, preserves those connections through registration records, and does not direct the population toward permanent integration or resettlement. Education therefore reinforces an institutional narrative of unresolved displacement and eventual return.

Palestinians require food, medicine, education, shelter, and humanitarian assistance. Those needs do not require the permanent continuation of a separate agency that perpetuates multigenerational registration, has failed to exclude all personnel credibly linked to terrorist organizations, operates through compromised local systems, and sustains an institutional framework attached to maximalist claims against Israel.

Humanitarian functions could be transferred gradually to other UN agencies, international organizations, rigorously vetted NGOs, host governments, and reformed Palestinian institutions. Registration and political advocacy need not accompany health care and food distribution. Education need not be administered by an agency that defines succeeding generations as refugees from another sovereign state. Any transfer would require careful sequencing, independent oversight, anti-terror vetting, and safeguards against interruptions in essential services.

UNRWA does not administer the refugee camps, but it provides services within them, registers the population, educates descendants, employs tens of thousands of local staff, and reinforces the political claim of return. It has transformed a refugee problem created by the 1948 war into a permanent institution whose registered population, budgetary needs, and political significance expand across generations.

UNRWA is therefore not merely another component of the UN's anti-Israel machinery. It is one of its foundations. The policy conclusion is clear: humanitarian assistance to Palestinians should continue, but UNRWA's conflict-perpetuating institutional model should not.

²²⁸ UNRWA, *Annual Operational Report 2024*.

²²⁹ Independent Review Group on UNRWA, *Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures*.



18. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Organizational Status: The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is a subsidiary organ of the UNGA. Resolution 319 A (IV) of December 3, 1949, established the Office effective January 1, 1951; Resolution 428 (V) of December 14, 1950, adopted its Statute. The High Commissioner acts under the authority of the UNGA and reports annually through ECOSOC.²³⁰

Core Mandate: UNHCR provides international protection and assistance to refugees and pursues durable solutions through voluntary repatriation, local integration, and third-country resettlement. Its work also covers asylum-seekers, stateless persons, returnees and, where authorized or requested, internally displaced people and other populations affected by forced displacement.²³¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNHCR is financed overwhelmingly through voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental institutions, pooled funds, and private donors. The UN regular budget covers only a small portion of its administrative expenditure.²³²

UNHCR's initial needs-based budget for 2026 was approximately \$8.5 billion for planned operations in 128 countries and territories. Its planning assumed that the worldwide population of forcibly displaced and stateless people could reach approximately 136 million by the end of 2026. That figure represents the projected population of concern underlying UNHCR's planning, not the number expected to receive direct financial or material assistance. The budget likewise represents assessed needs rather than funding received and is frequently underfunded because contributions are voluntary.²³³

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNHCR's Executive Committee reviews and approves the Office's programs and budget and advises the High Commissioner on international-protection policy. The High Commissioner is elected by the UNGA following nomination by the Secretary-General.²³⁴

²³⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 319 A (IV), "Refugees and Stateless Persons," December 3, 1949, [https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/319\(IV\)](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/319(IV)); United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, General Assembly Resolution 428 (V), December 14, 1950, paras. 1, 11, and 13, <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/statute-office-united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees>.

²³¹ UNHCR, *Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees*, October 2013, <https://www.unhcr.org/us/sites/en-us/files/legacy-pdf/526a22cb6.pdf>.

²³² UNHCR, "Update on Budgets and Funding (2025 and 2026)," March 3, 2026, <https://www.unhcr.org/system/files/protected-files/2026-03/crp-7-budgets-funding-95-sc-e.pdf>.

²³³ UNHCR, *Global Appeal 2026* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2025), <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/global-appeal-2026>.

²³⁴ UNHCR, "Executive Committee," <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/governance-and-oversight/executive-committee>; UNHCR, *Statute of the Office*, para. 13.



UNHCR has no permanent Israel-specific mandate comparable to the machinery examined elsewhere in this report. Its relevance is comparative: it exposes the differences between the general international refugee system and the separate institutional regime maintained for Palestine refugees.²³⁵

UNHCR's mandate combines international protection with the pursuit of durable solutions. Voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement are intended to restore effective national protection and end displacement where circumstances permit. Millions nevertheless remain in protracted refugee situations, and UNHCR recognizes derivative status for family members, including children born after their parents' displacement. Recognition of descendants is therefore not unique to UNRWA.²³⁶

The significant difference is institutional. Palestine refugees receiving UNRWA assistance belong to a separate system with its own registration rules, schools, health services, welfare programs, infrastructure, employment structure, and emergency operations. UNRWA permits registration through the male line across generations, including for descendants who possess citizenship, most notably in Jordan. UNRWA registration is an administrative determination of eligibility for Agency services rather than an individual determination of refugee status under the Refugee Convention. The Agency also lacks a mandate to pursue integration, resettlement, or another durable solution.²³⁷

Article 1D of the 1951 Refugee Convention reinforces this separate legal framework but does not create an unconditional or permanent exclusion from Convention protection. Its first paragraph excludes persons currently receiving protection or assistance from a UN organ or agency other than UNHCR. Its second provides that, when such protection or assistance ceases without the person's position having been definitively settled, the person becomes entitled to the Convention's benefits, subject to its other provisions. Application of Article 1D depends on the person's circumstances and access to UNRWA protection or assistance.²³⁸

UNHCR may therefore protect Palestinians outside UNRWA's five fields of operation under the Convention's ordinary criteria and Palestinians for whom UNRWA protection or assistance has ceased within the meaning of Article 1D. Neither UNRWA registration nor residence outside an

²³⁵ UNHCR, *Statute of the Office*, paras. 1 and 7; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), "The 1951 Convention," <https://www.unrwa.org/content/1951-convention>.

²³⁶ UNHCR, "Solutions for Refugees," <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/sites/uk/files/legacy-pdf/50a4c17f9.pdf>; UNHCR, "UNHCR RSD Procedural Standards: Processing Claims Based on the Right to Family Unity," 2016, <https://www.refworld.org/policy/legalguidance/unhcr/2016/110833>.

²³⁷ UNRWA, *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions*, <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/strategy-policy/consolidated-eligibility-and-registration-instructions>; UNRWA, "Frequently Asked Questions," <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions>.

²³⁸ UNHCR, *Guidelines on International Protection No. 13: Applicability of Article 1D of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees to Palestinian Refugees*, HCR/GIP/17/13, December 2017, <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/5ddfca844.pdf>.



UNRWA field, standing alone, conclusively determines whether a person falls within UNHCR's mandate.²³⁹

UNHCR's durable-solutions mandate does not mean that refugee status automatically ends through the passage of time, long-term residence, or an offer of citizenship. Cessation is a separate legal determination. Status may end when a refugee voluntarily re-establishes effective national protection, acquires and enjoys the protection of a new nationality, or when the circumstances supporting recognition have fundamentally and durably changed.²⁴⁰ UNRWA registration follows a different operational regime. It may continue across generations and does not necessarily end when a registered person acquires citizenship. Decisions concerning citizenship and local integration belong to host governments, while repatriation and other final-status arrangements require political agreement.²⁴¹

The registered Palestine-refugee population has consequently grown from approximately 750,000 people originally served in 1950 to about 5.9 million. This growth reflects natural population increase and descendant registration; it does not mean that 5.9 million living people were personally displaced in 1948. It does, however, mean that the separate UNRWA system preserves and expands across generations the population institutionally connected to claims of return to Israel.²⁴²

The existence of UNHCR demonstrates that the UN already possesses a global refugee organization. UNHCR could not immediately absorb UNRWA without UNGA action, host-state cooperation, substantial financing, and a planned transfer of personnel, infrastructure, and services. Operational difficulty, however, does not justify preserving the present structure indefinitely. Humanitarian services can be maintained while registration, education, and assistance are gradually transferred to institutions that do not perpetuate a separate political refugee identity.²⁴³

The decisive distinction is therefore not simply that UNRWA recognizes descendants, since derivative status exists elsewhere. It is that UNRWA combines continuing descendant registration with a dedicated education, health, welfare, employment, and infrastructure system lacking any durable-solutions mandate. That structure institutionalizes the refugee question and preserves the associated claim of mass return to Israel across generations. UNHCR is relevant

²³⁹ UNHCR, *Guidelines on International Protection No. 13*.

²⁴⁰ United Nations, *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, July 28, 1951, art. 1C, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-relating-status-refugees>.

²⁴¹ UNRWA, *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions*.

²⁴² UNRWA, *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions*; UNRWA, *Annual Operational Report 2024* (Amman: UNRWA, 2025), <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/annual-operational-report-2024>.

²⁴³ Because UNHCR and UNRWA derive their mandates from separate General Assembly instruments, transferring UNRWA's functions to UNHCR would require new intergovernmental authorization and operational arrangements. See UNHCR, *Statute of the Office*; United Nations Secretariat, "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: Organization and Functions," ST/SGB/2019/2, March 11, 2019, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-183997/>.



because the comparison exposes the Palestinian regime not as an unavoidable feature of refugee protection, but as a political and institutional exception maintained by the UN.



19. United Nations Development Programme and Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

Organizational Status: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's principal development program. The Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP) is its dedicated framework for Palestinian development and institutional support.²⁴⁴

Core Mandate: UNDP works on poverty reduction, governance, resilience, crisis response, infrastructure, sustainable development, institutional capacity, climate, energy, economic development, and recovery. PAPP derives its mandate from UNGA Resolution 33/147 of December 20, 1978, which requested UNDP to improve Palestinian economic and social conditions by identifying needs and establishing concrete projects. Its work concentrates on Gaza, East Jerusalem, Area C, Palestinian institutions, governance, economic empowerment, infrastructure, energy, water, sanitation, housing, education, health, and early recovery.²⁴⁵

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNDP is financed principally through voluntary core and earmarked contributions, trust funds, government financing, and cost-sharing arrangements. Its audited 2024 financial statements reported approximately \$5.33 billion in revenue and \$5.34 billion in expenses. PAPP uses UNDP's global procurement, staffing, financial-management, communications, and project-delivery systems.²⁴⁶

PAPP does not receive a single standalone annual appropriation. Its financing is dispersed across UNDP resources and donor-supported projects funded by governments, the European Union, UN pooled funds, foundations, and other partners. UNDP states that PAPP has delivered more than \$1.7 billion in development assistance since its establishment.²⁴⁷

In April 2026, Japan provided \$9.1 million for a new Gaza debris- and waste-management project after a previous UNDP project collected 112,000 tons of debris. In June 2026, UNDP/PAPP and three Palestinian ministries launched the Gaza Income and Market Activation for Recovery program, known as IMAR, to support enterprise recovery, employment, markets, industry, agriculture, access to finance, and private-sector-led recovery.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "About Us," <https://www.undp.org/about-us>; UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), "About Us," <https://www.undp.org/papp/about-us>.

²⁴⁵ UNDP PAPP, "About Us."

²⁴⁶ UNDP, *Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 and Report of the Board of Auditors*, 2025, https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/sites/default/files/2026-03/260317%202024%20Financial%20Statements_UNDP%20%281%29.pdf.

²⁴⁷ UNDP, "Funding," <https://www.undp.org/funding>; UNDP PAPP, "About Us."

²⁴⁸ UNDP, "Japan and UNDP Scale Up Debris and Waste Management in Gaza with Fresh Contribution of USD 9.1 Million," April 16, 2026, <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/press-releases/japan-and-undp-scale-debris-and-waste-management-gaza-fresh-contribution-usd-91-million>; UNDP PAPP, "UNDP and the Ministries of National Economy, Industry and Labor Launch the Gaza Income and Market Activation for Recovery (IMAR) Programme," June 15, 2026, <https://www.undp.org/papp/press-releases/undp-and-ministries-national-economy-industry-and-labor-launch-gaza-income-and-market-activation-recovery-imar-programme>.



Governance and Leadership Selection: UNDP is governed by the joint Executive Board of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services. Its 36 members are elected by ECOSOC. The UNDP Administrator is appointed by the Secretary-General and confirmed by the UNGA. PAPP operates within UNDP while aligning its work with Palestinian governmental plans, institutions, municipalities, civil-society organizations, and donor priorities.²⁴⁹

UNDP/PAPP contributes to the UN's anti-Israel machinery by converting political claims into the technical language of poverty, employment, infrastructure, environmental damage, governance, resilience, and development reversal. The terminology appears neutral; its political effect depends on which causes are measured and which are omitted.

PAPP was established in 1978 and has continued for nearly five decades. UNDP describes its goal as helping the Palestinian people establish a viable state capable of realizing the right to development and strengthening socioeconomic resilience. Its governance work is expressly aligned with Palestinian national priorities.²⁵⁰

This gives the Palestinian national project a permanent institutional platform inside one of the UN's largest operational bodies. Palestinian ministries and organizations receive project financing, procurement services, technical assistance, institutional training, public-sector and rule-of-law programming, access to international donors, and the authority of the UN development system.²⁵¹

PAPP provides no equivalent institutional platform for systematically examining how Palestinian terrorism, corruption, political repression, incitement, rejectionism, or misgovernment obstruct development. Its public framework instead identifies occupation, territorial fragmentation, Israeli restrictions, and limited Palestinian control over resources as the principal structural obstacles.

After October 7, UNDP/PAPP expanded its emergency and early-recovery activities in Gaza, including water access, emergency employment, medical supplies, waste removal, temporary

²⁴⁹ UNDP, "Information Note on the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS," <https://www.undp.org/executive-board/information-note-executive-board>; UNDP, "Alexander De Croo Named as New Administrator of United Nations Development Programme," November 17, 2025, <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/alexander-de-croo-named-new-administrator-united-nations-development-programme>; UNDP PAPP, "About Us."

²⁵⁰ UNDP PAPP, "About Us."

²⁵¹ UNDP PAPP, "About Us."



shelter, support for businesses and civil-society organizations, and preparations for reconstruction. The strategic question is what political and security system they will rebuild.²⁵²

Hamas governed Gaza for more than sixteen years before October 7. It invested heavily in tunnels, rockets, weapons, military facilities, internal repression, and preparations for war. It embedded military infrastructure in civilian areas, carried out the October 7 massacre, seized hostages, and conducted war from within Gaza's urban environment.²⁵³

A development analysis that treats Hamas rule as secondary cannot adequately explain why repeated international investment failed to produce sustainable development. Gaza was governed by a terrorist organization that subordinated civilian development to its military campaign against Israel.

UNDP's public socioeconomic assessments give little systematic attention to the resources diverted into tunnels and weapons, the economic footprint of Hamas's military infrastructure, coercive taxation and appropriation, the effect of terrorism on border access and investment, the cost of hostage-taking and repeated war, the military use of civilian sites, or the development losses caused by Hamas's rejection of demilitarization.

Excluding those variables does more than leave the analysis incomplete. It assigns causation in a manner consistent with the wider UN narrative: Israel becomes the central cause of Palestinian deprivation, while Palestinian leaders and armed organizations are stripped of meaningful responsibility for the economic consequences of their decisions.

In October 2024, UNDP and ESCWA projected that Gaza's Human Development Index could fall to 0.408 by the end of that year, a level they estimated corresponded to 1955. They therefore reported that the war could erase more than 69 years of development. The same assessment projected that poverty across the Palestinian territories would reach 74.3 percent, affecting 4.1 million people, including 2.61 million newly impoverished people.²⁵⁴

The "69 years" figure became a powerful global headline. It was not based on observed Gaza development data extending to 1955. UNDP acknowledged that HDI calculations for the Palestinian territories began in 2004 and that the 1955 comparison was produced through linear

²⁵² UNDP PAPP, "October Update: UNDP/PAPP's Support to Gaza Emergency Response and Early Recovery Planning," November 1, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/papp/publications/october-update-undp/papps-support-gaza-emergency-response-and-early-recovery-planning>.

²⁵³ Jim Zanotti, *Hamas: Background, Current Status, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service, June 14, 2024, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/IF12549.pdf>; U.S. Department of State, "2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Israel, West Bank and Gaza—West Bank and Gaza," <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/israel-west-bank-and-gaza/west-bank-and-gaza/>.

²⁵⁴ UNDP, "New UN Report: Impacts of War Have Set Back Development in Gaza by as Much as 69 Years," October 22, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/new-un-report-impacts-war-have-set-back-development-gaza-much-69-years>.



backward extrapolation. A modeled index comparison was thus transformed into the much more dramatic claim that Gaza had been returned to the development conditions of the 1950s.²⁵⁵

The assessment's recovery scenarios emphasized humanitarian aid, reconstruction investment, restored clearance revenues, renewed access to employment, and the removal of economic restrictions. They did not give comparable prominence to Hamas's removal from power, demilitarization, hostage release, destruction of terrorist infrastructure, prevention of aid diversion, or reform of the governance and education systems that enabled repeated conflict.²⁵⁶

The resulting framework implied that development could be restored principally through financing, reconstruction, and freer economic activity. Gaza's experience demonstrates the danger of that assumption. Infrastructure rebuilt under Hamas can be exploited again: concrete can become tunnels, civilian buildings can conceal military facilities, roads can support weapons networks, communications systems can serve command structures, and commercial activity can be taxed or controlled by the governing terrorist organization.

Gaza's reconstruction will require tens of billions of dollars for housing, hospitals, schools, roads, water and sewage networks, energy infrastructure, communications, rubble clearance, industry, and public administration. UNDP/PAPP is positioning itself as a central operational actor through programs covering debris management, market activation, emergency employment, municipal services, governance, justice, civil society, water, energy, and infrastructure.²⁵⁷

Each of these sectors can be exploited if reconstruction is not conditioned on Hamas's removal from governing and military power, comprehensive demilitarization, independent inspection of underground and dual-use infrastructure, anti-diversion and counterterrorism-financing controls, verified contractors and partners, exclusion of terrorist-linked personnel and organizations, financial transparency, education reform, accountable post-Hamas government, and permanent mechanisms preventing the reconstruction of tunnels and weapons systems.

Development agencies often treat these requirements as external political or security conditions. In Gaza, they are prerequisites for sustainable development. No project is durable if the governing authority can seize it, militarize it, or use it to initiate another war.

The Palestinian Authority has held no presidential election since 2005 and no legislative election since 2006, faces persistent corruption and legitimacy problems, and has failed to establish accountable government in Gaza. Although President Mahmoud Abbas formally replaced the PA's prisoner-payment system in February 2025, subsequent U.S. reporting concluded that

²⁵⁵ UNDP, "New UN Report."

²⁵⁶ UNDP, "New UN Report."

²⁵⁷ World Bank, European Union, and United Nations, *Gaza and West Bank Interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment*, February 2025, <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/133c3304e29086819c1119fe8e85366b-0280012025/original/Gaza-RDNA-final-med.pdf>; UNDP PAPP, "About Us."



payments and benefits to terrorists and their families continued during 2025. Hamas, meanwhile, remains committed to Israel's destruction.²⁵⁸

A development program aligned with Palestinian priorities must therefore examine the quality and purpose of those priorities. Institutional capacity-building is not inherently beneficial; its value depends on the institutions being strengthened, their accountability, their governing principles, and their relationship to terrorism and political violence.

Supporting public administration without political reform can strengthen unaccountable government. Financing civil society without rigorous vetting can support organizations engaged in partisan advocacy or connected to extremist networks. Restoring infrastructure without security oversight can rebuild dual-use capabilities.

UNDP assessments feed into ESCWA and OCHA publications, UNGA and ECOSOC proceedings, humanitarian appeals, donor conferences, media reporting, NGO advocacy, and reconstruction planning. Development models give statistical and economic authority to political claims generated elsewhere in the UN system.²⁵⁹

The process is self-reinforcing. UN agencies and Palestinian institutions supply data. UNDP and ESCWA model socioeconomic effects. Their reports present poverty, unemployment, infrastructure damage, and development reversal primarily through Israeli military operations, occupation, and restrictions. Other UN bodies then cite those findings as independent technical evidence.

The vocabulary changes, but the attribution remains the same. Human-rights bodies describe Israel as a violator of international law. Humanitarian bodies describe it as the cause of civilian suffering. Development bodies describe it as the cause of poverty, underdevelopment, and institutional collapse. UNDP/PAPP embeds that framework in projections, projects, budgets, donor priorities, reconstruction plans, and Palestinian institutional support.

Palestinian development should not be abandoned. It should be conditioned on security, accountable governance, anti-terror safeguards, transparency, and demilitarization. Without those

²⁵⁸ Freedom House, "West Bank: Freedom in the World 2024 Country Report," 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/west-bank/freedom-world/2024>; U.S. Department of State, "Report to Congress on Palestinian Payments for Acts of Terrorism and Limitation on Assistance to the West Bank and Gaza," April 29, 2026, <https://www.state.gov/releases/bureau-of-near-eastern-affairs/2026/04/report-to-congress-on-palestinian-payments-for-acts-of-terrorism-and-limitation-on-assistance-to-the-west-bank-and-gaza>; Council on Foreign Relations, "What Is Hamas?," October 6, 2025, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/what-hamas>.

²⁵⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and UNDP, *Gaza War: Expected Socio-Economic Impacts on the State of Palestine—Recovery Scenarios*, October 2024, <https://www.undp.org/papp/publications/gaza-war-expected-socio-economic-impacts-state-palestine-october-2024>; UNDP, "New UN Report."



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requirements, international reconstruction risks financing another cycle of rebuilding, rearmament, war, destruction, and renewed pressure on Israel.



20. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Organizational Status: The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is one of the UN's five regional commissions and operates under ECOSOC authority. Based in Beirut, it comprises 21 Arab Member States, including the State of Palestine. Israel belongs to the UN Economic Commission for Europe and has no membership role in ESCWA.²⁶⁰

Core Mandate: ESCWA promotes economic and social development, regional integration, policy coordination, data analysis, technical cooperation, and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab region. Its work includes a dedicated focus on Palestine, Israeli occupation, and socioeconomic conditions in the Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan.²⁶¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: ESCWA is financed principally through the UN regular budget, supplemented by voluntary and extrabudgetary resources. The Secretary-General's original proposed 2026 allocation for Section 22, "Economic and social development in Western Asia," was approximately \$50 million. This covers ESCWA's entire program; the UN does not publish a consolidated total for its Israel-focused activities.²⁶² Through assessed contributions, democratic states are required to help finance the commission and its permanent occupation-related workstream. Voluntary contributions support additional projects, research, and technical cooperation.²⁶³

Governance and Leadership Selection: ESCWA's Member States determine its policy direction and work program within broader ECOSOC and UNGA mandates. Its Executive Secretary is appointed by the Secretary-General at the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The commission also coordinates with the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, UN agencies, and member governments.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), "Our Member States," <https://www.unescwa.org/about/member-states>; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), "Geographical Scope," <https://unece.org/geographical-scope>.

²⁶¹ ESCWA, "Vision, Mission and History," <https://www.unescwa.org/about/mission>; United Nations, Question of Palestine, "Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)," <https://www.un.org/unispal/document-source/economic-and-social-commission-for-western-asia-escwa/>.

²⁶² United Nations General Assembly, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part V, Regional Cooperation for Development, Section 22, Economic and Social Development in Western Asia*, A/80/6 (Sect. 22), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4080925>.

²⁶³ United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services, "Finance and Budget (OPPBA)," <https://oios.un.org/en/content/finance-and-budget-oppba>; United Nations General Assembly, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, A/80/6 (Sect. 22).

²⁶⁴ United Nations in Egypt, "Secretary-General Appoints Ms. Rania A. Al-Mashat of Egypt as Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia," April 21, 2026, <https://egypt.un.org/en/314182-secretary-general-appoints-ms-rania-al-mashat-egypt-executive-secretary-economic-and-social>; ESCWA, "Vision, Mission and History."



ESCWA's structural bias begins with this governance arrangement: Arab governments set the priorities of a UN commission that repeatedly examines Israeli conduct, while Israel has no membership vote over its program or research agenda.²⁶⁵ The commission gives those governments an institutional means of advancing their positions through economic reports, development models, statistics, and policy recommendations bearing the UN emblem.

Its recurring work on “Palestine and Israeli occupation” frames Palestinian poverty, unemployment, restricted movement, infrastructure loss, and development failures principally as repercussions of Israeli occupation.²⁶⁶ That framing directs scrutiny toward Israeli responsibility without subjecting Hamas rule, Palestinian Authority corruption, military spending by Palestinian armed groups, or internal political repression to equivalent examination. The central weakness is causal: measuring losses associated with occupation does not establish how much responsibility belongs to each actor or explain the political decisions that perpetuate conflict.

This approach is embedded in a recurring reporting process. ESCWA prepares the Secretary-General's report on the Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation, issued in 2025 as A/79/975–E/2025/82.²⁶⁷ The report goes to ECOSOC and the UNGA, where it informs debate and resolutions. In July 2025, ECOSOC adopted Resolution 2025/33 under the same title, condemning Israeli policies and military operations and requesting continued reporting.²⁶⁸ The process renews itself: the mandate produces a report, the report supports a resolution, and the resolution requests another report within the same framework.²⁶⁹

ESCWA draws extensively on OCHA, OHCHR, UNRWA, UNDP, WHO, ILO, UNICEF, and other UN bodies.²⁷⁰ Combining their material gives its reports the breadth of a system-wide assessment, but the resulting citations should not be mistaken for independent corroboration. Where agencies rely on overlapping information or repeat one another's findings, a claim can gain institutional authority through circulation without receiving additional verification.

The joint ESCWA–UNDP assessments following October 7 illustrate the reach of this work. Beginning in November 2023, the agencies published projections of the war's effects on Palestinian poverty, employment, GDP, and human development.²⁷¹ In October 2024, they

²⁶⁵ ESCWA, “Our Member States”; UNECE, “Geographical Scope.”

²⁶⁶ United Nations, Question of Palestine, “Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).”

²⁶⁷ United Nations Secretary-General, Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab Population in the Occupied Syrian Golan, A/79/975–E/2025/82, July 21, 2025.

²⁶⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Council, Resolution 2025/33, “Economic and Social Repercussions of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab Population in the Occupied Syrian Golan,” July 30, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/economic-and-social-repercussions-ecosoc-resolution-30jul25/>.

²⁶⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council and General Assembly, *Economic and Social Repercussions*, A/79/975–E/2025/82; United Nations Economic and Social Council, Resolution 2025/33.

²⁷⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Council and General Assembly, *Economic and Social Repercussions*, A/79/975–E/2025/82.

²⁷¹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), “Poverty in State of Palestine Set to Soar by More Than a Third if War Continues,” November 9, 2023, <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/poverty-state-palestine-set-soar-more-third-if-war-continues>; UNDP, “New UN Report: Impacts of War Have Set Back Development in Gaza by as



projected that poverty across the Palestinian territories would reach 74.3 percent, affecting 4.1 million people, including 2.61 million newly impoverished people. They also stated that Gaza's human-development level could be set back by more than 69 years.²⁷²

The “69 years” figure requires particular scrutiny. It was not derived from observed Gaza development data extending to the 1950s. Because the relevant Palestinian Human Development Index series began in 2004, the agencies used linear backward extrapolation to associate a projected 2024 Gaza index of 0.408 with an estimated 1955 level.²⁷³ A modeled comparison thus became the headline claim that the war had set back development by almost seven decades.²⁷⁴

Such projections quantify destruction and deprivation, but their explanatory value depends on what they include. An assessment centered on Israeli operations and restrictions gives an incomplete account if it does not adequately examine Hamas's initiation of the war, hostage-taking, military infrastructure, resource allocation, and continued armed control. These factors matter both to the causes of the losses and to whether reconstruction can produce lasting development.

The same emphasis predates the current war. ESCWA's 2022 flagship study, *Palestine Under Occupation III*, mapped Israeli policies and practices across Palestinian resources, economic activity, governance, movement, and development.²⁷⁵ Its breadth illustrates how the occupation framework extends across virtually every aspect of Palestinian socioeconomic life. Maps, models, and indicators can document specific conditions; they do not, by themselves, establish that the framework adequately accounts for competing causes.

ESCWA's most notorious intervention came in March 2017, when it published *Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid*, written by Richard Falk and Virginia Tilley.²⁷⁶ The report asserted that the evidence established “beyond a reasonable doubt” that Israel maintained an apartheid regime dominating the Palestinian people as a whole. It treated Arab citizens of Israel, Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the territories, and Palestinian refugees abroad as components of a single system of racial domination.²⁷⁷

Secretary-General António Guterres directed that the report be removed from ESCWA's website because it had been published under the UN name and emblem without the required

Much as 69 Years,” October 22, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/new-un-report-impacts-war-have-set-back-development-gaza-much-69-years>.

²⁷² UNDP, “New UN Report.”

²⁷³ UNDP, “New UN Report.”

²⁷⁴ UNDP, “New UN Report.”

²⁷⁵ ESCWA, *Palestine Under Occupation III: Mapping Israel's Policies and Practices and Their Economic Repercussions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, E/ESCWA/CL6.GCP/2021/3, June 24, 2022, <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/mapping-israel-policies-economic-repercussions-occupied-palestinian-territory>.

²⁷⁶ Richard Falk and Virginia Tilley, *Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid*, E/ESCWA/ECRI/2017/1, March 2017, https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ps_pubs/9/.

²⁷⁷ Falk and Tilley, *Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid*.



consultations and authorization. His spokesman said it did not reflect the Secretary-General's views. Executive Secretary Rima Khalaf refused to withdraw it and resigned after he insisted.²⁷⁸ The episode exposed the ability of a regional commission to publish a sweeping political and legal accusation with UN branding before the organization's leadership intervened.

ESCWA's distinctive contribution to the wider anti-Israel infrastructure is the economic and social authority it lends to a politically determined agenda. Its reports carry that agenda into Secretary-General documents, ECOSOC and UNGA proceedings, and joint UN assessments.²⁷⁹ The central concern is not whether Palestinian hardship warrants study. It is whether a commission governed exclusively by Arab states can credibly present a framework centered on Israeli responsibility as a comprehensive explanation of Palestinian development failure.

²⁷⁸ Ruth Eglash, "U.N. Agency Head Quits over Report Calling Israel an 'Apartheid Regime,'" *Washington Post*, March 17, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-agency-head-quits-over-report-calling-israel-an-apartheid-regime/2017/03/17/bb591e98-0b3b-11e7-8884-96e6a6713f4b_story.html.

²⁷⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council and General Assembly, *Economic and Social Repercussions*, A/79/975-E/2025/82; UNDP, "New UN Report."



21. United Nations Environment Programme

Organizational Status: The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the UN's principal environmental authority. It coordinates international environmental policy, scientific assessment, cooperation, and assistance to states confronting environmental challenges.²⁸⁰

Core Mandate: Provides scientific analysis and policy guidance on climate change, pollution, biodiversity, waste, water, environmental governance, and the environmental consequences of disasters and armed conflicts.²⁸¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNEP is financed through the UN regular budget, its voluntary Environment Fund, earmarked contributions, and multilateral environmental funds. Its audited 2024 financial statements reported approximately \$832.1 million in total expenses. The Environment Fund is supported principally by voluntary government contributions, while earmarked programs receive additional financing from governments, the European Union, foundations, international funds, companies, and other UN entities.²⁸²

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNEP is governed by the United Nations Environment Assembly, in which all 193 UN Member States participate. The UNGA elects UNEP's Executive Director following nomination by the Secretary-General.²⁸³

UNEP extends the UN's anti-Israel architecture into environmental policy. Its reports translate political claims into apparently neutral findings about water contamination, vegetation loss, sewage, rubble, hazardous waste, air pollution, and ecological damage. Israeli actions are documented as the organizing force, while Hamas's long-term militarization of Gaza's physical environment receives far less systematic attention.

UNEP's political framing of Israel predates October 7. Its 2020 *State of Environment and Outlook Report for the Occupied Palestinian Territory* examined biodiversity, water, land

²⁸⁰ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), "About the United Nations Environment Programme," <https://www.unep.org/who-we-are/about-us>.

²⁸¹ UNEP, "About the United Nations Environment Programme"; UNEP, "Disasters and Conflicts," <https://www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts>.

²⁸² United Nations General Assembly, *Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme: Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 and Report of the Board of Auditors*, A/80/5/Add.7, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/80/5/Add.7>; UNEP, "How Is UNEP Funded?," April 10, 2025, <https://www.unep.org/about-un-environment/funding-and-partnerships/funding-facts>.

²⁸³ UNEP, "About the United Nations Environment Programme"; United Nations, "Secretary-General Appoints Inger Andersen of Denmark Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme, Following Election by General Assembly," February 21, 2019, <https://press.un.org/en/2019/sga1862.doc.htm>.



degradation, natural-resource depletion, urbanization, pollution, waste management, and environmental governance through a specifically Palestinian institutional framework.²⁸⁴

The report treated Israeli occupation, settlements, security infrastructure, control over land and water, permit restrictions, and limits on Palestinian access to materials as major structural causes of environmental degradation. It alleged that Israeli settlements and industrial activities contributed to soil, air, and water pollution and that Israeli roads, military zones, the security barrier, and tree clearance damaged ecosystems and obstructed Palestinian environmental management.²⁸⁵

The report also identified population growth, poorly planned urbanization, groundwater over-extraction, untreated sewage, pesticide use, informal industry, weak waste systems, Palestinian governance failures, and the political division between the PA and Hamas. These factors, however, were placed within an overarching framework in which Israeli control remained the defining structural explanation.²⁸⁶

UNEP has maintained Palestine-focused environmental work since at least its 2003 desk study of the Palestinian environment. It has trained Palestinian officials, supported institutional capacity, assessed environmental conditions in Gaza and the West Bank, and treated Palestinian governmental bodies as institutional partners. This continuing workstream converts Palestinian political claims concerning territory, resources, settlements, and sovereignty into environmental assessments carrying the authority of UN science.²⁸⁷

In June 2024, UNEP published *Environmental Impact of the Conflict in Gaza: Preliminary Assessment of Environmental Impacts*. The assessment was prepared following an official request from the “State of Palestine” and examined damage to buildings, waste-management systems, energy infrastructure, soil, water, air quality, and marine and terrestrial ecosystems.²⁸⁸

UNEP personnel did not enter Gaza. The assessment relied on satellite and remote-sensing analysis, scientific literature, multilateral damage assessments, information from Palestinian technical bodies, and observations and materials supplied by other UN personnel. UNEP acknowledged that access restrictions prevented environmental sampling and that several conclusions concerning soil, water, and aquifer contamination required future field investigation.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁴ UNEP, *State of Environment and Outlook Report for the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2020*, August 28, 2020, <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/state-environment-and-outlook-report-occupied-palestinian-territory-2020>.

²⁸⁵ UNEP, *State of Environment and Outlook Report for the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2020*.

²⁸⁶ UNEP, *State of Environment and Outlook Report for the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2020*.

²⁸⁷ UNEP, *Desk Study on the Environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2003), <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/7854>; UNEP, “State of Palestine,” <https://www.unep.org/state-palestine>.

²⁸⁸ UNEP, *Environmental Impact of the Conflict in Gaza: Preliminary Assessment of Environmental Impacts*, June 18, 2024, <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/environmental-impact-conflict-gaza-preliminary-assessment-environmental-impacts>.

²⁸⁹ UNEP, *Environmental Impact of the Conflict in Gaza*.



The accompanying UNEP statement described the environmental effects as “unprecedented,” said critical infrastructure was being “decimated,” and called for an immediate ceasefire. This language helped transform a preliminary remote assessment, containing significant acknowledged uncertainties, into a powerful international indictment of Israel’s conduct.²⁹⁰

In September 2025, UNEP issued a second assessment, *Environmental Impact of the Escalation of Conflict in the Gaza Strip*, again following a request from the “State of Palestine” and pursuant to UN Environment Assembly Resolution 6/12 on environmental assistance and recovery in areas affected by armed conflict. Security conditions again prevented UNEP personnel from entering Gaza, requiring continued reliance on satellite analysis and observations collected by other UN agencies.²⁹¹

The assessments subsequently entered UNEP’s wider international advocacy. In a November 2025 UNSC briefing on climate and security, UNEP’s Executive Director cited Gaza’s loss of vegetation, contamination of freshwater and marine ecosystems, and more than 61 million metric tons of debris as a leading example of conflict-related environmental destruction. A Palestinian-requested assessment had thus become part of UNEP’s global messaging on conflict, climate, health, water, and security.²⁹²

The report nevertheless did not treat Hamas’s transformation of Gaza for war as a central environmental system. Its tunnel analysis concentrated substantially on the environmental risks associated with Israeli destruction and flooding of underground infrastructure. UNEP did not systematically assess the enormous quantities of soil and construction material used to build the network; the diversion of cement, machinery, fuel, and electricity to military purposes; weapons and rocket production; storage of explosives and hazardous materials in populated areas; rocket launches from the urban environment; or the integration of military facilities into civilian infrastructure.²⁹³

Hamas reshaped Gaza’s land use, infrastructure, energy consumption, construction sector, underground environment, and urban geography for military purposes. It built tunnels beneath neighborhoods, roads, institutions, and public infrastructure; stored weapons in populated areas; and used civilian surroundings as operational cover. That system affected Gaza’s environment before Israel began its military campaign and influenced where and how the subsequent fighting occurred.

²⁹⁰ UNEP, “Damage to Gaza Causing New Risks to Human Health and Long-Term Recovery—New UNEP Assessment,” June 18, 2024, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/damage-gaza-causing-new-risks-human-health-and-long-term-recovery>.

²⁹¹ UNEP, *Environmental Impact of the Escalation of Conflict in the Gaza Strip*, September 23, 2025, <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/environmental-impact-escalation-conflict-gaza-strip>.

²⁹² Inger Andersen, “UNEP Executive Director Statement to the United Nations Security Council Briefing: Climate and Security—Environmental Impact of Armed Conflict and Climate-Driven Security Risks,” November 6, 2025, <https://www.un.org/climatesecuritymechanism/en/news/unep-executive-director-statement-united-nations-security-council-briefing-climate-and>.

²⁹³ UNEP, *Environmental Impact of the Conflict in Gaza*.



UNEP documented the visible environmental consequences of Israeli operations in granular detail but did not devote comparable analytical attention to Hamas's environmental footprint or the relationship between military embedding and urban destruction. Israel therefore emerged as the principal environmental actor, while the organization that transformed civilian space into a battlefield remained secondary context.

This imbalance matters because UNEP's reports are not treated merely as inventories of rubble and pollution. They provide governments, donors, NGOs, academics, journalists, international institutions, and other UN bodies with an authoritative causal narrative. Environmental harm becomes another body of ostensibly technical evidence against Israel.

UNEP's assessments recommend debris removal and recycling, soil testing, waste disposal, restoration of water and sewage systems, ecosystem recovery, and safe handling of unexploded ordnance. UNEP has also worked with UNDP and other agencies on debris-management planning intended to restore access and basic services.²⁹⁴

Environmental recovery cannot be separated from the security order governing Gaza. Removing rubble while allowing tunnels to be rebuilt is not recovery. Restoring electricity without preventing diversion to military facilities is not sustainability. Reconstructing roads, water networks, industrial systems, and public infrastructure without dismantling Hamas's military apparatus would recreate the operating environment that produced the war.

A sustainable reconstruction program must therefore include comprehensive demilitarization, independent inspection of underground and dual-use infrastructure, controls on construction materials, prevention of fuel and electricity diversion, rigorous vetting of contractors and local partners, exclusion of terrorist-linked entities, and accountable post-Hamas governance. In Gaza, these are not external political conditions. They are the foundation of environmental recovery.

UNEP's problem is not that it measures environmental damage. It is that it measures the damage caused in fighting Hamas far more intensively than the environmental and military system Hamas built to wage war. By presenting that asymmetry through the language of environmental science, UNEP supplies the wider UN campaign against Israel with another form of purportedly neutral institutional authority.

²⁹⁴ UNEP, "Environmental Damage in Gaza Strip Harming Human Health, Threatening Long-Term Food and Water Security," September 23, 2025, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/environmental-damage-gaza-strip-harming-human-health-threatening>; UNEP, "Sustainable Debris Management in Gaza," October 15, 2025, <https://www.unep.org/topics/waste/sustainable-debris-management/sustainable-debris-management-gaza>.



22. United Nations Children's Fund

Organizational Status: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is a UNGA subsidiary organization dedicated to protecting children's rights, health, education, nutrition, welfare, and safety.²⁹⁵

Core Mandate: Supports child health, immunization, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, humanitarian assistance, child protection, and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.²⁹⁶

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNICEF is financed primarily through voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, foundations, companies, and private donors. Its audited financial statements reported approximately \$8.61 billion in revenue and \$8.51 billion in expenses in 2024, making it one of the UN system's largest operational organizations.²⁹⁷

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNICEF is governed by a 36-member Executive Board elected by ECOSOC. Its Executive Director is appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Board.²⁹⁸

UNICEF's contribution to the UN's anti-Israel machinery derives from the exceptional moral authority attached to children. Casualty figures, detention allegations, and incidents involving schools and hospitals acquire particular political force when presented under the UNICEF name. In the Israeli-Palestinian arena, UNICEF has developed a permanent reporting and advocacy system that documents Israeli conduct far more extensively than Palestinian terrorism, child militarization, incitement, or the use of civilian environments by armed groups.

UNICEF operates a dedicated "State of Palestine" office and publishes recurring humanitarian situation reports, funding appeals, child-protection assessments, and Children and Armed Conflict bulletins. Its online archive contains CAAC bulletins extending back at least to 2010.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, "United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund," Resolution 57 (I), December 11, 1946, A/RES/57(I), [https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/57\(I\)](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/57(I)).

²⁹⁶ UNICEF, "What We Do," <https://www.unicef.org/what-we-do>.

²⁹⁷ United Nations, *United Nations Children's Fund: Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 and Report of the Board of Auditors*, A/80/5/Add.3 (New York: United Nations, 2025), 15, 66, <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/35186/file/A-80-5-Add-3-Financial-report-UNBOA-2024-EN-ODS.pdf>.

²⁹⁸ UNICEF Executive Board, "About," <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/about>; United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 57 (I), para. 4, [https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/57\(I\)](https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/57(I)).

²⁹⁹ UNICEF State of Palestine, "CAAC Bulletin," <https://www.unicef.org/sop/reports/caac-bulletin>.



This apparatus gives Palestinian claims a permanent institutional platform. Palestinian children are the subject of a standing country office, continuous statistical monitoring, recurring reports, dedicated appeals, operational programs, and sustained international advocacy. Israeli children killed, abducted, wounded, displaced, or traumatized by terrorism generally appear in statements and reports issued during particular escalations.³⁰⁰

In 2013, UNICEF published *Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations*. It concluded that the alleged ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israel's military detention system appeared to be "widespread, systematic and institutionalized." UNICEF subsequently established an ongoing dialogue and reporting process concerning Palestinian minors detained for alleged security offenses.³⁰¹

The report reviewed more than 400 documented cases of alleged mistreatment collected since 2009, together with reports from lawyers, human-rights organizations, UN experts, and treaty bodies. That material could identify serious allegations and recurring practices, but it was not a statistically representative examination of the entire detention system. UNICEF nevertheless converted it into a sweeping institutional characterization encompassing the IDF, Israel Police, Israel Security Agency, and Israel Prison Service.³⁰²

The report acknowledged that the children entered the system for alleged security offenses, most commonly stone-throwing. Its headline finding and the international campaign that followed concentrated overwhelmingly on Israeli arrest, interrogation, detention, and prosecution practices. The organization, incitement, recruitment, and violence that led some minors to participate in dangerous confrontations or attacks received far less institutional attention.³⁰³

This established a recurring pattern: Israeli responses to violence were documented as child-rights violations, while the Palestinian institutions and armed organizations that involved minors in the conflict remained secondary.

UNICEF plays an important role in the UN's Children and Armed Conflict system. Its field offices help collect, review, and transmit information concerning six grave violations: killing and maiming, recruitment and use, rape and other sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. The Secretary-General, not UNICEF, makes the final decision on listing parties in the annual CAAC report, but that decision depends on the field-level reporting architecture in which UNICEF participates.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ UNICEF, "UNICEF's Role in Israel and the State of Palestine," <https://www.unicef.org/unicef-role-israel-state-of-palestine>.

³⁰¹ UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations* (Jerusalem: UNICEF, 2013), 1, <https://www.unicef.org/sop/media/1746/file/CAAC%20Bulletin%202013%2C.pdf>.

³⁰² UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, 2, 21.

³⁰³ UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, 8–9.

³⁰⁴ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for *Children and Armed Conflict*, "Monitoring and Reporting on Grave Violations," <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/en/tools-for-action/monitoring-and-reporting>.



In June 2024, the Secretary-General added the “Israeli armed and security forces” to the report’s annex for killing and maiming children and attacks on schools and hospitals. Hamas’s Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and PIJ’s Al-Quds Brigades were also listed for killing and maiming and for abduction.³⁰⁵

The report covering 2023 verified 8,009 grave violations against 4,360 children. It attributed 5,698 violations to Israeli armed and security forces, 116 to Hamas’s military wing, 21 to PIJ, and 51 to Israeli settlers. It also attributed 340 of 371 verified attacks on schools and hospitals to Israeli forces. Attribution remained pending for thousands of reported cases, including 2,051 verified killings of Palestinian children, so the actor totals were not a complete accounting of every verified violation.³⁰⁶

Israel remained listed in subsequent reports. The June 2026 report covering 2025 attributed 9,465 verified violations to Israeli armed and security forces and 326 to Israeli settlers, while attributing 2,806 collectively to Hamas, PIJ, and other Palestinian armed groups.³⁰⁷

These figures carry implications beyond what the methodology establishes. Classification as an “attack on a school or hospital” is not necessarily a finding that Israel intentionally targeted children, deliberately attacked a protected facility, or violated international law. The category can include direct or indiscriminate attacks causing damage, destruction, or disruption; attacks or threats against protected personnel; looting; and other conduct that impedes a facility’s operation or places children at risk. The CAAC report is a monitoring instrument, not a judicial determination of intent, proportionality, military necessity, or criminal responsibility.³⁰⁸

The mechanism can also record military use of protected facilities and conduct by Palestinian armed groups. The 2023 report referred to Hamas and PIJ military-themed camps involving children and verified one case in which Hamas used a health center for military purposes. These references, however, were minor compared with the statistical and narrative weight assigned to the consequences of Israeli operations.³⁰⁹

The system is structurally better equipped to record the visible effects of Israeli military action than Hamas’s concealed military activity. Israeli strikes, arrests, checkpoints, permits, and deployments leave identifiable records and physical evidence. Hamas’s tunnels, weapons stored

³⁰⁵ United Nations, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/78/842–S/2024/384, June 3, 2024, annex I, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2024/384>.

³⁰⁶ United Nations Secretary-General, *Children and Armed Conflict*, A/78/842–S/2024/384, June 3, 2024, paras. 95–97, 106, 109 and 111.

³⁰⁷ United Nations, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/80/723–S/2026/357, June 16, 2026, https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/A_80_723-S_2026_357-EN.pdf.

³⁰⁸ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for *Children and Armed Conflict*, “Attacks on Schools and Hospitals,” <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/en/six-grave-violations/attacks-against-schools>.

³⁰⁹ United Nations Secretary-General, *Children and Armed Conflict*, A/78/842–S/2024/384, June 3, 2024, paras. 107 and 111.



in civilian buildings, military use of schools and hospitals, teenage operatives, and command structures embedded in populated areas are deliberately concealed.

The result is a reporting system that counts the consequences of Israel's response more comprehensively than the military conduct that produced it. Those figures are then used to place the armed forces of a democratic state in the same UN annex as terrorist organizations that deliberately murder, abduct, and militarize children.

After October 7, UNICEF became a major international amplifier of casualty figures supplied by Gaza authorities operating under Hamas rule. Its reports generally describe Palestinian children as "reported killed" or injured and often identify the Gaza Ministry of Health as the source. Those qualifications frequently disappear when governments, media organizations, activists, and other UN bodies repeat the totals as UNICEF or UN figures.³¹⁰

The underlying figures do not provide a systematic combatant-status breakdown. UNICEF's public reporting therefore does not ordinarily distinguish civilian children from older teenagers participating in hostilities, or consistently identify deaths caused by failed Palestinian rockets and other Palestinian actors. The headline total travels internationally with UNICEF's authority while the source limitations and absence of combatant classification recede from view.³¹¹

The institutional asymmetry nevertheless remains. Israeli children are acknowledged in crisis statements and visits; Palestinian children are supported by a standing office, recurring appeals, a permanent reporting structure, extensive operational programs, and continuous international advocacy.³¹²

UNICEF systematically tracks Israeli strikes, military operations, detention, movement restrictions, demolitions, access policies, and their effects on Palestinian children. It does not maintain a comparably visible public reporting system focused on Hamas's abduction of Israeli children, Palestinian rocket attacks, military indoctrination and recruitment of minors, weapons and command facilities near schools, tunnels beneath residential areas, or the use of homes, hospitals, and educational facilities for military purposes.

This imbalance also shapes how Palestinian agency appears. A school damaged during an Israeli operation becomes a verified UN incident. The armed activity conducted from the facility or surrounding civilian environment may receive little comparable attention. A Palestinian teenager injured during a violent confrontation is recorded as a child casualty; whether he participated in hostilities may disappear from the public account.

³¹⁰ UNICEF, "UNICEF Reporting on Children in Armed Conflict," <https://www.unicef.org/reporting-children-armed-conflict>.

³¹¹ UNICEF State of Palestine, "UNICEF in the State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Update," February 5, 2026, <https://www.unicef.org/sop/reports/unicef-state-palestine-humanitarian-situation-update>.

³¹² UNICEF, "UNICEF's Role in Israel and the State of Palestine"; UNICEF State of Palestine, "CAAC Bulletin."



UNICEF's reporting travels far beyond child-welfare programming. Its casualty figures, detention allegations, school and hospital classifications, and verified-violation totals feed into Secretary-General reports, UNSC debates, HRC investigations, commissions of inquiry, humanitarian appeals, diplomatic demands, media reporting, and campaigns for sanctions and restrictions on Israel.³¹³

UNICEF therefore operates as both an aid provider and an evidence-producing institution within the UN's political and legal architecture. Its child-protection mandate gives its findings particular authority because allegations involving children are among the most powerful accusations that can be directed against a state.

That authority demands exceptional methodological discipline, context, and impartiality. UNICEF instead documents the visible consequences of Israeli action in far greater depth than Palestinian terrorism, child militarization, incitement, and the deliberate use of civilian environments for warfare.

UNICEF gives the wider UN campaign against Israel the language and moral authority of child protection. Casualty totals, detention allegations, and incidents affecting schools and hospitals are converted into evidence against Israel, while the terrorist system that placed both Palestinian and Israeli children in danger remains institutionally subordinate.

³¹³ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for *Children and Armed Conflict*, "Monitoring and Reporting on Grave Violations."



23. United Nations Population Fund

Organizational Status: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is a UN fund and the UN system's sexual and reproductive health agency.³¹⁴

Core Mandate: UNFPA supports maternal and newborn health, reproductive health care, family planning, population data, youth programs, and the prevention of and response to gender-based violence in development and humanitarian settings.³¹⁵

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNFPA describes itself as entirely supported by voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, foundations, and individuals. Its accounts also include other revenue and accounting adjustments. UNFPA's 2025 Annual Report presented provisional figures, subject to external audit, of \$1.5329 billion in revenue and \$1.4980 billion in expenses. Revenue comprised \$732.0 million in core resources and \$800.9 million in earmarked non-core resources. Core contributions totaled \$538.9 million, while gross non-core contributions totaled \$873.1 million; the differences between contributions and recognized revenue reflect other revenue, donor refunds, indirect costs, tax-reimbursement transfers, and allowances for doubtful receivables.³¹⁶

UNFPA recorded \$52.9 million in program expenses for the "State of Palestine" in 2025, more than for any other country or territory in its Arab States region. This exceeded spending for Yemen at \$37.0 million, Sudan at \$36.2 million, and Syria at \$33.3 million. Palestine accounted for approximately 22.5 percent of the region's total expenditure of \$234.8 million.³¹⁷

UNFPA's 2026 Humanitarian Response and Early Recovery Plan seeks \$110 million to reach 1.4 million people in Gaza and the West Bank through sexual and reproductive health, gender-based-violence, and youth-focused programs. This is an appeal rather than an approved institutional budget or a record of actual expenditure.³¹⁸

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNFPA is governed by the joint 36-member Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS. Board members are elected through ECOSOC, generally for three-year terms, and the Board approves programs, financial plans, and budgets. The UNFPA Executive Director is appointed by the Secretary-General.³¹⁹

³¹⁴ United Nations Population Fund, "About Us," <https://www.unfpa.org/about-us>.

³¹⁵ United Nations Population Fund, "What We Do," <https://www.unfpa.org/what-we-do>.

³¹⁶ United Nations Population Fund, *Annual Report 2025* (New York: UNFPA, 2026), 10–11, <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-ar2025-EN-v260608.pdf>.

³¹⁷ United Nations Population Fund, *Annual Report 2025*, 17.

³¹⁸ UNFPA State of Palestine, "Humanitarian Response and Early Recovery Plan 2026," February 25, 2026, <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/publications/humanitarian-response-and-early-recovery-plan-2entity26>.

³¹⁹ Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, "Information Note on the Executive Board," United Nations Development Programme, <https://www.undp.org/executive-board/information-note-executive-board>; United Nations



UNFPA contributes to the UN's anti-Israel machinery by translating the conflict into the specialized language of pregnancy, childbirth, maternal health, newborn care, and gender-based vulnerability. Its reporting consistently presents Israeli military operations and restrictions as the principal causes of Palestinian suffering while relegating Hamas rule, terrorism, hostage-taking, and the military exploitation of civilian and medical infrastructure to secondary context.

UNFPA's framing predates October 7. Its February 2023 Palestine Humanitarian Response Plan described the Palestinian territories as experiencing a protracted crisis characterized by "55 years of Israeli military occupation." Israeli control and military activity formed the plan's central causal framework, while Hamas rule, terrorism, rocket fire, Palestinian political repression, and the diversion of civilian resources to military purposes did not receive comparable structural treatment.³²⁰

The pattern treats Palestinian institutional failures and social problems principally through an external framework of Israeli control rather than as independent failures of Palestinian governance and society.

UNFPA published its first situation report on October 13, 2023, six days after the Hamas-led massacre. It briefly described Palestinian armed groups' launch of "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood" and the subsequent Israeli military operation before concentrating on Palestinian casualties, Israel's evacuation instructions and siege, health-care conditions, reported settler attacks, and a funding appeal. The report estimated that Gaza contained 540,000 women of reproductive age, including 50,000 pregnant women, with 5,522 expected to give birth during the following month.³²¹

The institutional asymmetry lay in the rapid transition from a cursory account of the October 7 attack to detailed reporting on the consequences of Israel's response, without comparable attention to murdered and abducted Israeli women or the continuing abuse of hostages in Gaza.

On January 20, 2024, UNFPA stated that "over 24,000 civilians" had been killed and that 70 percent were women and children. The aggregate death toll reported by the Gaza Ministry of Health, operating under Hamas rule, did not distinguish civilians from combatants. UNFPA

Secretary-General, "Appointments since 1 January 2017," <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments>.

³²⁰ UNFPA State of Palestine, *Humanitarian Response Plan 2023* (February 2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/unfpa-state-palestine-humanitarian-response-plan-2023>.

³²¹ UNFPA Palestine, *Crisis in Palestine: Situation Report 1*, October 13, 2023, 2–3, https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA-Situation-Report_Palestine_13Oct2023.pdf.



therefore converted an undifferentiated fatality total into a civilian-casualty claim that its underlying source did not establish.³²²

Four days later, UNFPA's fifth situation report attributed 25,490 reported deaths and 63,354 injuries to the Gaza Ministry of Health and repeated that 70 percent of the casualties were women and children. Its November 2024 situation report, published in December, again stated that more than 45,000 people had been killed and that women and children accounted for 70 percent.³²³

Age and sex categories do not establish combatant status, and the Gaza authorities' figures provided no systematic combatant category. UNFPA's presentation nevertheless encouraged the 70-percent figure to be understood as evidence of an overwhelmingly civilian death toll. Repetition through UNFPA reports and statements gave a contested claim from authorities operating under Hamas rule the appearance and distribution power of UN humanitarian data.

On September 15, 2025, UNFPA published a statement claiming that at least 15 women in Gaza were giving birth outside a hospital or health facility every day. UNFPA corrected the sentence that same day to say every week and added a correction notice acknowledging the original error. The initial statement therefore overstated the claimed frequency sevenfold.³²⁴ The error illustrates the political risks created when highly emotive statistics involving pregnant women, newborns, and hospitals are released without sufficient verification.

On November 11, 2023, UNFPA "vehemently" condemned reported attacks on or around Al-Shifa Hospital and declared that hospitals, health workers, and civilians must never be targets. The statement did not mention allegations that Hamas was using the hospital complex for military purposes.³²⁵

A subsequently declassified United States intelligence assessment found that Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad used Al-Shifa and sites beneath it to house command infrastructure, conduct command-and-control activity, store weapons, and hold at least some hostages. Israeli

³²² United Nations Population Fund, "UNFPA Calls for Scale-Up of Humanitarian Aid and Improved Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care for the Women and Girls of Gaza," January 20, 2024, <https://www.unfpa.org/press/unfpa-calls-scale-humanitarian-aid-and-improved-access-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care>.

³²³ UNFPA State of Palestine, *Crisis in Palestine: Situation Report 5*, January 24, 2024, <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/publications/crisis-palestine-situation-report-5>; UNFPA Palestine, *Palestine Situation Report 12—November 2024* (December 2024), <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/palestine-situation-report-12-november-2024>.

³²⁴ UNFPA Arab States, "Attacks on Gaza City Are Destroying Health and Protection Services for Pregnant Women and Survivors of Violence," September 15, 2025, <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/en/news/attacks-gaza-city-are-destroying-health-and-protection-services-pregnant-women-and-survivors>.

³²⁵ UNFPA Arab States, "UNFPA Statement on the Dire Situation of Hospitals in Gaza," November 11, 2023, <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/en/news/unfpa-statement-dire-situation-hospitals-gaza>.



forces also exposed tunnel infrastructure beneath the complex and released hospital security footage showing hostages being brought inside.³²⁶

Medical facilities remain protected under international humanitarian law, but their use by an armed organization is essential context when assessing military operations involving them. UNFPA subsequently called generally for all parties to respect international law, for the hostages to be released, and for allegations of sexual violence on October 7 to be investigated. Its Palestine reporting did not, however, give sustained attention to Hamas's use of hospitals, ambulances, tunnels beneath medical compounds, or other protected environments for military purposes.³²⁷

The resulting narrative presents hospitals primarily as passive civilian sites affected by Israel, while Hamas's exploitation of medical environments and its role in bringing military operations into or around them largely disappear.

The murder and abduction of Israeli women, sexual violence on October 7, abuse of female hostages, and the continuing trauma of Israeli victims did not receive a comparable UNFPA situation-report series, funding appeal, gender-based-violence coordination structure, or sustained institutional campaign.³²⁸

By contrast, UNFPA maintains a dedicated Palestine office, recurring situation reports, emergency appeals, maternal-health and gender-based-violence programs, and extensive public advocacy focused on Palestinian women and girls. This imbalance supplies the wider UN campaign with a specialized reproductive-health narrative in which Palestinian vulnerability is documented institutionally while Israeli female victims remain comparatively marginal.

A serious maternal-health analysis of Gaza must incorporate Hamas's initiation and conduct of the war, its military use of hospitals and civilian areas, its diversion of fuel and construction resources, its placement of tunnels and weapons in populated areas, and its holding of women and children as hostages. These factors directly affected the availability of health services and the location, duration, and intensity of combat.

UNFPA instead documents Israeli operations and restrictions in granular detail while addressing Hamas principally through brief references to "armed groups," generic calls on all parties, or demands for hostage release. It has presented an aggregate death toll as a civilian figure, repeatedly promoted the contested 70-percent women-and-children statistic, issued a maternal-

³²⁶ *Associated Press*, "US Intel Confident Militant Groups Used Largest Gaza Hospital in Campaign against Israel: AP Source," January 3, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/d0f782682a7a06ed5a3749ed92c4f821>; Israel Defense Forces, "The Shifa Hospital: Live Updates Regarding All Terrorist Infrastructure Located," November 20, 2023, <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/israel-at-war/all-articles/the-shifa-hospital-live-updates-regarding-all-terrorist-infrastructure-located/>.

³²⁷ United Nations Population Fund, "UNFPA Calls for Scale-Up of Humanitarian Aid."

³²⁸ UNFPA State of Palestine, "Publications," <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/publications>.



health claim that required a sevenfold correction, and condemned operations around hospitals without integrating Hamas's military use of those facilities into its causal analysis.³²⁹

UNFPA thus gives the wider UN campaign against Israel a specialized reproductive-health and gender-based-violence vocabulary. When that expertise closely documents Israeli actions while marginalizing Hamas's responsibility for creating and sustaining battlefield conditions, a one-sided political narrative acquires the appearance of neutral humanitarian authority.

³²⁹ United Nations Population Fund, "UNFPA Calls for Scale-Up of Humanitarian Aid"; UNFPA State of Palestine, *Crisis in Palestine: Situation Report 5*; UNFPA Palestine, *Palestine Situation Report 12*; UNFPA Arab States, "Attacks on Gaza City"; UNFPA Arab States, "Dire Situation of Hospitals in Gaza."



24. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Organizational Status: The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN Women, is a UN entity established by the UNGA in 2010 and operational since 2011. It consolidated four earlier UN bodies concerned with women's rights and gender equality.³³⁰

Core Mandate: UN Women promotes gender equality and women's empowerment through operational programs, support for international standards, coordination across the UN system, research, advocacy, and assistance to governments and civil-society organizations. Its principal areas of work include women's political and economic participation, protection from gender-based violence, humanitarian action, and women, peace, and security.³³¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UN Women receives limited funding from the UN regular budget but depends principally on voluntary contributions from governments, multilateral institutions, pooled funds, foundations, companies, and private donors. UN Women's 2025 Highlights states that donors provided \$530.4 million in contributions and that total expenditure reached approximately \$638.4 million. The accompanying resource table reports approximately \$142.0 million in regular resources, \$382.1 million in other resources, and \$7.2 million in regular-budget funding, which total approximately \$531.3 million. It also reports \$32.6 million in other revenue. The publication does not explain the approximately \$0.9 million difference between its narrative contribution total and the sum of the three contribution lines.³³²

Governance and Leadership Selection: UN Women is governed operationally by a 41-member Executive Board elected through ECOSOC. Its Executive Director is appointed by the Secretary-General. UN Women also serves as the substantive secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women, a 45-member intergovernmental body under ECOSOC, providing research, documentation, organizational support, inter-agency coordination, and assistance in implementing the Commission's decisions.³³³

³³⁰ United Nations General Assembly, "System-Wide Coherence," Resolution 64/289, July 21, 2010, paras. 49, 53, 83–88, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/64/289>.

³³¹ United Nations General Assembly, "System-Wide Coherence," paras. 51–54.

³³² UN Women, *UN Women Highlights 2025–2026* (New York: UN Women, 2026), financial highlights, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/annual-report/2026>; UN Women, *Annex I: Financial Results* (2026), https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2026-05/edar_2025_annex_i_financial_results.pdf.

³³³ United Nations General Assembly, "System-Wide Coherence," paras. 55–69; UN Women, *A Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women* (New York: UN Women, 2019), <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2019/A-short-history-of-the-CSW-en.pdf>.



UN Women contributes to the UN's anti-Israel machinery through selective moral urgency. It maintains a permanent institutional framework focused on Palestinian women, supports a recurring UN resolution that identifies Israel as the principal obstacle to their advancement, and rapidly mobilized assessments, programs, statistics, and advocacy concerning women in Gaza. Its response to Israeli women murdered, abducted, and subjected to sexual violence during the Hamas-led October 7 assault was markedly slower and less institutionally developed.

UN Women and its predecessor, UNIFEM, have supported Palestinian women since 1997. UN Women now maintains a dedicated Palestine country office whose programs address political participation, economic empowerment, humanitarian assistance, protection, and the effects of Israeli occupation and policies.³³⁴

This work is connected to the decades-old UN mechanism entitled “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women.” The Commission on the Status of Women repeatedly considers the issue and recommends a resolution for ECOSOC action. UN Women does not vote on the resolution, but, as the Commission's substantive secretariat, supports the reporting, documentation, coordination, and implementation framework surrounding it.³³⁵

The Palestinian-women resolution is exceptional within the Commission's work. While most Commission texts address global or thematic issues, it is the only recurring country-specific resolution devoted to women of a single national population. Its structure places primary responsibility for Palestinian women's circumstances on Israel.³³⁶

ECOSOC adopted the resolution again in July 2025 as Resolution 2025/34. It reaffirmed that Israeli occupation remained “a major obstacle” to the fulfilment of Palestinian women's rights, directed its principal demands at Israel, welcomed Palestinian governmental efforts, and requested continued UN reporting. It did not give comparable attention to Hamas rule, discriminatory Palestinian laws, political repression, terrorism, or the treatment of women by Palestinian institutions.³³⁷

The mechanism converts a Palestinian political narrative into a permanent women's-rights workstream. A dedicated report supports a recurring resolution, the resolution requests further reporting, and UN Women's country programming reinforces the same causal framework.

³³⁴ UN Women Palestine Country Office, “About Us: Palestine Country Office,” <https://palestine.unwomen.org/en/about-us/palestine-country-office>.

³³⁵ UN Women Palestine Country Office, “Approach,” <https://palestine.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-security-humanitarian-response/approach>; UN Women, “Commission on the Status of Women,” <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women>.

³³⁶ United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations, “Explanation of Vote against the Politicisation of the Commission on the Status of Women,” March 23, 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/our-vote-today-against-this-resolution-is-a-vote-against-the-politicization-of-the-commission-on-the-status-of-women>.

³³⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, “Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women,” Resolution 2025/34, July 30, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2025/34>.



On October 13, 2023, UN Women condemned attacks against civilians in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory and called for the immediate release of hostages. The statement did not name Hamas. UN Women did not issue a formal statement unequivocally condemning the October 7 attacks by Hamas and expressly acknowledging accounts of gender-based atrocities and sexual violence until December 1, nearly eight weeks after the massacre.³³⁸

The agency's hesitation was also evident in its handling of a late-November social-media post. UN Women briefly published a message condemning the October 7 attacks by Hamas and demanding the unconditional release of all hostages. It then deleted the post and replaced it with language that retained the demand for hostage release but removed the condemnation of Hamas. UN Women said the original post had been scheduled in advance and was deleted because it no longer reflected the message the organization wished to emphasize.³³⁹

UN Women simultaneously moved rapidly to establish a Palestinian-centered response. By October 19, it had published a rapid assessment and humanitarian response document focused on women in the occupied Palestinian territory. It subsequently established a six-month response framework covering humanitarian assistance, gender-responsive coordination, and increased Palestinian women's participation in decision-making. Palestinian women therefore generated an immediate assessment, program structure, and sustained advocacy campaign, while Israeli women received no comparable institutional response from UN Women.³⁴⁰

UN Women did not establish a dedicated Israel-focused assessment or continuing victim-support program comparable to its Palestine operation. Israeli survivors, released hostages, investigators, and rape-crisis organizations instead had to press UN bodies to recognize and publicize evidence of sexual violence committed during October 7 and against hostages in Gaza.³⁴¹

A mission led by the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict subsequently found reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, occurred in at least three locations during the October 7 attacks. It also found clear and convincing information that some hostages had been subjected to sexual violence, including

³³⁸ UN Women, "UN Women Statement on the Situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory," October 13, 2023, <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/statement/2023/10/un-women-statement-on-the-situation-in-israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory>; UN Women, "UN Women Statement on the Situation in Israel and Gaza," December 1, 2023, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/statement/2023/12/un-women-statement-on-the-situation-in-israel-and-gaza>.

³³⁹ Jackie Hajdenberg, "After Backlash over Silence, UN Women Tweets, Then Deletes Statement Condemning Hamas Attack in Israel," Jewish Telegraphic Agency, November 27, 2023, <https://www.jta.org/2023/11/27/israel/after-backlash-over-silence-un-women-tweets-then-deletes-statement-condemning-hamas-attack-in-israel>.

³⁴⁰ UN Women, *UN Women Rapid Assessment and Humanitarian Response in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, October 19, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/UN-WOMEN-RAPID-ASSESSMENT-AND-HUMANITARIAN-RESPONSE-IN-THE-OCCUPIED-PALESTINIAN-TERRITORY.pdf>; UN Women, *UN Women Palestine 6-Month Response Framework* (November 2023), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/11/brief-un-women-palestine-6-month-response-framework>.

³⁴¹ See Reuters, "'Where Are You?' Israeli Hostage Families Urge Women's Groups to Speak Up," November 14, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/where-are-you-israeli-hostage-families-urge-womens-groups-speak-up-2023-11-13/>.



rape, sexualized torture, and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, and reasonable grounds to believe that such violence continued against hostages in captivity.³⁴²

These findings demonstrated that the criticism of UN Women's initial response was not based merely on unsubstantiated allegations. Credible evidence existed of grave sexual crimes, yet the UN's principal women's agency did not accord Israeli victims the urgency, dedicated reporting, or institutional platform it routinely creates for other affected populations.

In January 2024, UN Women published a Gender Alert stating that 70 percent of Palestinians killed in Gaza were women or children and that two mothers were being killed every hour. Its Executive Director repeated the figures, and they became central elements of UN Women's advocacy and humanitarian messaging.³⁴³

The 70-percent figure was derived from data reported by Gaza authorities operating under Hamas rule and did not distinguish combatants from civilians. The "two mothers per hour" formulation was an estimate rather than a count of individually identified mothers. Later datasets used different levels of identification and verification and produced varying demographic proportions. UN Women nevertheless presented the headline figures with little public explanation of their methodology, uncertainty, or the absence of a combatant category.³⁴⁴

UN Women later reported that its Gaza gender data were widely used and helped shape its six-month humanitarian response plan. The episode illustrates how a politically powerful demographic estimate can move from Hamas-controlled authorities through a specialized UN agency and emerge as internationally cited UN evidence.³⁴⁵

Later UN Women publications continued to attribute Palestinian deaths and women's suffering principally to Israeli forces and restrictions while giving substantially less attention to Hamas's initiation and prolongation of the war, hostage-taking, military embedding in civilian areas, and

³⁴² Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, *Mission Report: Official Visit of the Office of the SRSG-SVC to Israel and the Occupied West Bank, 29 January–14 February 2024* (March 4, 2024), paras. 59, 64–65, <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/report/mission-report-official-visit-of-the-office-of-the-srsg-svc-to-israel-and-the-occupied-west-bank-29-january-14-february-2024/20240304-Israel-oWB-CRSV-report.pdf>.

³⁴³ UN Women, *Gender Alert: The Gendered Impact of the Crisis in Gaza* (January 2024), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/01/gender-alert-the-gendered-impact-of-the-crisis-in-gaza>; UN Women, "Two Mothers Are Killed in Gaza Every Hour as Fighting Exceeds 100 Days," January 19, 2024, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/01/press-release-two-mothers-are-killed-in-gaza-every-hour-as-fighting-exceeds-100-days>.

³⁴⁴ UN Women, *Gender Alert: The Gendered Impact of the Crisis in Gaza*, 4 and note 7.

³⁴⁵ UN Women, "Gender Data in Gaza Are Helping the Humanitarian Response Reach Women and Girls," January 15, 2025, <https://data.unwomen.org/features/gender-data-gaza-are-helping-humanitarian-response-reach-women-and-girls>.



exploitation of civilian infrastructure. The agency thereby supplied the broader UN campaign with a specialized gender framework for attributing Palestinian suffering to Israel.³⁴⁶

Concerns about institutional neutrality extended into UN Women's Peace and Security office. Sarah Douglas, then a deputy chief in that office, was reported by UN Watch to have endorsed 153 social-media posts expressing strongly partisan anti-Israel positions after October 7. The documented material included posts accusing Israel of genocide and celebrating demonstrations that shut down roads and bridges. Douglas's accounts prominently identified her UN Women position, and she deleted them after the endorsements became public.³⁴⁷

A spokesman for the Secretary-General subsequently acknowledged that Douglas had violated the UN Code of Conduct. UN Women stated that her social-media activity was incompatible with the standards required of UN personnel and that the matter was being addressed internally, but it did not disclose the result of the process. The number and characterization of the posts originated with UN Watch; the Code of Conduct violation and internal response were confirmed by the UN and UN Women.³⁴⁸

The episode was significant because Douglas held a senior position in the office responsible for applying women's-rights principles to armed conflict. While UN Women hesitated to recognize Israeli victims and build an institutional response to the sexual crimes of October 7, an official within its peace and security structure was publicly endorsing accusations of Israeli genocide and disruptive anti-Israel campaigns. Its treatment of Israel demonstrates that these universal principles are not applied with equal institutional energy.

Palestinian women receive a permanent country office, recurring reports, a country-specific resolution, emergency frameworks, funding programs, statistical products, and sustained advocacy. Israeli women received no comparable structure after the worst mass attack in Israel's history. UN Women delayed naming Hamas, deleted an explicit condemnation, created no equivalent assessment or continuing program for Israeli victims, and promoted Gaza demographic estimates without adequately explaining their limitations.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ UN Women, *Gender Alert: A Gender Analysis of the Impact of the War in Gaza on Vital Services Essential to Women's and Girls' Health, Safety, and Dignity* (April 2024), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/04/gender-alert-gender-analysis-of-the-impact-of-the-war-in-gaza-on-vital-services-essential-to-womens-and-girls-health-safety-and-dignity>.

³⁴⁷ UN Watch, "Exposed: UN Women Deputy Chief Endorsed 153 Tweets Attacking Israel and Zionism," December 18, 2023, <https://unwatch.org/exposed-un-women-deputy-chief-endorsed-153-tweets-attacking-israel-zionism/>.

³⁴⁸ Edith M. Lederer, "UN Agency Says It Is Handling Code of Conduct Violations by Staffer for Anti-Israel Posts Internally," *Associated Press*, January 6, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/fc333cb61f9132fad98f40078f1c4d2>.

³⁴⁹ UN Women Palestine Country Office, "About Us"; UN Women, "Statement on the Situation in Israel and Gaza"; Hajdenberg, "UN Women Tweets, Then Deletes"; UN Women, *Gender Alert: The Gendered Impact of the Crisis in Gaza*.



UN Women's role in the anti-Israel system is therefore not incidental. It translates the wider campaign into the language of gender equality, women's protection, and sexual vulnerability, giving a politically selective narrative the authority of specialized UN expertise.



25. Commission on the Status of Women

Organizational Status: The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a functional commission of ECOSOC and the UN's principal intergovernmental body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the empowerment of women.³⁵⁰

Core Mandate: CSW develops global standards and policy recommendations concerning women's rights, reviews implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and considers confidential communications to identify emerging patterns of injustice and discriminatory practices against women. Its session outcomes are submitted to ECOSOC for follow-up or formal action. The communications procedure is not a judicial process and does not determine individual complaints.³⁵¹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: CSW is not an independently funded agency and has no separately published institutional budget. UN Women serves as its substantive secretariat, while meetings, documentation, interpretation, conference services, and other administrative support are financed through broader UN Women and UN Secretariat appropriations.³⁵²

Governance and Membership Selection: CSW consists of 45 Member States elected by ECOSOC for four-year terms according to equitable geographical distribution. Member States negotiate and adopt agreed conclusions, resolutions, and decisions, while UN Women provides substantive support and the UN Secretariat supplies conference and documentation services.³⁵³

CSW gives anti-Israel politics a recurring institutional place within the UN's global women's-rights machinery. For more than three decades, CSW has repeatedly considered the "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women." The Commission recommends the text for ECOSOC action, and the resulting resolution generally requests the Secretary-General to continue reporting on the subject and providing assistance to Palestinian women.³⁵⁴

³⁵⁰ UN Women, "About the Commission on the Status of Women," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women/about-the-commission-on-the-status-of-women>.

³⁵¹ UN Women, "About the Commission on the Status of Women"; UN Women, "Communications Procedure," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/communications-procedure>.

³⁵² CSW does not publish a standalone institutional budget. UN Women identifies its role as providing substantive support to the Commission, while the Commission's official pages and UN budget documents do not disaggregate a complete CSW-specific total. See UN Women, "Commission on the Status of Women," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women>.

³⁵³ UN Women, "About the Commission on the Status of Women"; UN Women, "Commission on the Status of Women."

³⁵⁴ United Nations Secretary-General, *Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women*, E/CN.6/1994/6, February 28, 1994, <https://docs.un.org/en/E/CN.6/1994/6>; United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," Resolution 2025/34, July 30, 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2025/34>.



The resolution was renewed annually for many years through 2023. No Palestine-specific resolution appeared among CSW's adopted outcomes in 2024, but the Commission returned to the subject in 2025. ECOSOC subsequently adopted Resolution 2025/34 on July 30, 2025, marking the first adoption of the recurring text after October 7.³⁵⁵

In some sessions, including 2016, the Palestinian-women resolution was CSW's only country-specific resolution. CSW has occasionally addressed other country situations, including Afghanistan, but the Palestinian mechanism is distinguished by its longevity, recurrence, and sustained focus on conduct attributed to Israel.³⁵⁶

The recurring resolution identifies Israeli occupation as a major obstacle to Palestinian women's advancement, participation, self-reliance, and enjoyment of their rights. It condemns Israeli military operations, settlements, settler violence, movement restrictions, detention practices, and other policies while requesting international assistance and welcoming efforts by Palestinian institutions.³⁵⁷

The resolution acknowledges domestic violence and limitations affecting Palestinian institutions. It nevertheless gives little comparable causal or political weight to Hamas rule, discriminatory Palestinian laws, governance failures, political repression, incitement, armed-group activity, or the prolonged absence of national elections. Israeli responsibility remains the resolution's dominant organizing framework.³⁵⁸

The mechanism is institutionally self-renewing. A dedicated Secretary-General report informs the resolution, the resolution requests further reporting, and the subject returns to the Commission and ECOSOC. This converts a contested political interpretation into a recurring component of the UN's women's-rights agenda.³⁵⁹

During the Hamas-led attack of October 7, 2023, Israeli women were murdered and abducted. A subsequent UN mission found reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual

³⁵⁵ UN Women, "CSW68 Session Outcomes," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw68-2024/session-outcomes>; United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," Resolution 2025/34.

³⁵⁶ United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, *Report on the Sixtieth Session (20 March 2015 and 14–24 March 2016)*, E/2016/27–E/CN.6/2016/22, chap. I, <https://docs.un.org/en/E/2016/27>; United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan," Resolution 2003/43, July 22, 2003, <https://docs.un.org/en/E/RES/2003/43>.

³⁵⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," Resolution 2025/34, paras. 1–12.

³⁵⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," Resolution 2025/34, preamble and paras. 1–12.

³⁵⁹ United Nations Secretary-General, *Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women*; United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women," Resolution 2025/34, para. 13.



violence, including rape and gang rape, occurred during the attacks and clear and convincing information that some hostages were subjected to sexual violence in captivity.³⁶⁰

Palestinian women are the subject of a longstanding country-specific CSW and ECOSOC mechanism, while Israeli women affected by October 7 have no comparable permanent process. Palestinian victimhood and Israeli responsibility are institutionalized as recurring categories; Israeli victims are addressed through responses to particular events or broader thematic mechanisms.³⁶¹

CSW illustrates how the UN's focus on Israel is divided among specialized bodies. The HRC frames the conflict principally through international law and human rights, while CSW recasts it as a women's-rights issue in which Israel again remains the principal defendant.

³⁶⁰ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, *Mission Report: Official Visit of the Office of the SRSG-SVC to Israel and the Occupied West Bank, 29 January–14 February 2024* (March 4, 2024), paras. 59, 64–65, <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/report/mission-report-official-visit-of-the-office-of-the-srsg-svc-to-israel-and-the-occupied-west-bank-29-january-14-february-2024/20240304-Israel-oWB-CRSV-report.pdf>.

³⁶¹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, “Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women,” Resolution 2025/34; UN Women, “CSW69 Session Outcomes.” The comparison concerns permanent institutional mechanisms, not whether UN bodies addressed Israeli victims in individual statements or thematic reports.



26. World Health Organization

Organizational Status: The World Health Organization (WHO) is a United Nations specialized agency and the directing and coordinating authority on international health.³⁶²

Core Mandate: WHO directs and coordinates international health work, develops standards and technical guidance, supports national health systems, monitors diseases and health emergencies, coordinates emergency responses, and promotes the highest attainable standard of health.³⁶³

Financial Framework and Funding Model: WHO is financed through assessed contributions from Member States and voluntary contributions from governments, foundations, multilateral institutions, companies, and other donors. In recent years, voluntary contributions have accounted for more than three-quarters of WHO's financing, and most have been earmarked for specified purposes. WHO's approved 2026–2027 Programme Budget is \$6.2067 billion, comprising \$4.2671 billion for base programmes, \$1 billion for emergency operations and appeals, \$770.9 million for polio eradication, and \$168.7 million for special programmes. These amounts represent authorized budget requirements rather than guaranteed income.³⁶⁴

Governance and Leadership Selection: WHO is governed by the World Health Assembly (WHA), in which Member States participate. The Assembly elects the 34 Member States entitled to designate technically qualified members of the Executive Board. The Director-General is appointed by the Assembly following nomination by the Board.³⁶⁵

WHO's contribution to the UN's anti-Israel architecture lies in translating politically contested accusations into the language of public health. Hospitals, ambulances, patients, disease, malnutrition, maternal health, and medical access carry considerable moral and technical authority. WHO repeatedly applies that authority through mechanisms that place Israel under sustained scrutiny while giving far less institutional attention to the terrorist military activity that turned Gaza's medical environment into part of the battlefield.

For decades, the WHA has maintained two related recurring mechanisms focused on Israel: resolutions concerning "Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem" and separate decisions concerning the Palestinian territories and the "occupied Syrian Golan." These mechanisms produce Director-General reports, debates, resolutions, decisions,

³⁶² World Health Organization, "Constitution of the World Health Organization," <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution>.

³⁶³ World Health Organization, "Constitution of the World Health Organization."

³⁶⁴ World Health Organization, "How WHO Is Funded," <https://www.who.int/about/funding>; World Health Assembly, "Programme Budget 2026–2027," WHA78.2, May 27, 2025, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA78/A78_R2-en.pdf.

³⁶⁵ World Health Organization, "Governance," <https://www.who.int/about/governance>.



technical assistance, and continuing reporting requirements. They incorporate questions of occupation, settlements, movement restrictions, detention, territorial status, access to treatment, and Israeli legal obligations into the proceedings of a specialized health agency.³⁶⁶

WHO has taken country-specific action concerning other conflicts, notably Ukraine since Russia's 2022 invasion. The Palestine and Syrian Golan mechanism is nevertheless distinguished by its longevity, annual recurrence, and institutionalization as a standing WHA process focused primarily on one state.³⁶⁷

The continuing inclusion of the Syrian Golan is especially revealing. It subjects health conditions among residents served within the Israeli-administered health system to recurring international scrutiny, while the Assad regime's destruction of hospitals, use of chemical weapons, torture, and mass displacement did not produce an equivalent decades-long WHA mechanism directed at the Syrian government.³⁶⁸

At each of its 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions, the WHA adopted both a resolution concerning health conditions in the Palestinian territories and a separate decision continuing the Palestinian-territories-and-Syrian-Golan reporting mechanism. Resolution WHA77.16 and Decision WHA77(18) were adopted in 2024, Resolution WHA78.4 and Decision WHA78(16) in 2025, and Resolution WHA79.1 and Decision WHA79(9) in 2026. The 2026 measures require additional reporting to the 2027 Assembly.³⁶⁹

These texts emphasize civilian casualties, destruction affecting hospitals and ambulances, restrictions on fuel and humanitarian access, malnutrition, displacement, medical evacuations,

³⁶⁶ World Health Assembly, *Health Conditions of the Arab Population in the Occupied Arab Territories, Including Palestine*, Thirty-second World Health Assembly, 1979, <https://iris.who.int/items/3225f2e8-4341-4ae8-93dd-493a4d34d4d0>; World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem," WHA79.1, May 22, 2026, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA79/A79_R1-en.pdf; World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in the Occupied Syrian Golan," WHA79(9), May 22, 2026, [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA79/A79_\(9\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA79/A79_(9)-en.pdf).

³⁶⁷ World Health Assembly, "Health Emergency in Ukraine and Refugee-Receiving and -Hosting Countries, Stemming from the Russian Federation's Aggression," WHA77(17), June 1, 2024, [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_\(17\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_(17)-en.pdf); World Health Assembly, *Health Conditions of the Arab Population*, 1979; World Health Assembly, WHA79.1 and WHA79(9).

³⁶⁸ United Nations General Assembly, "Situation of Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic," A/RES/76/228, January 6, 2022, <https://www.un.org/pga/76/wp-content/uploads/sites/101/2022/02/Situation-of-human-rights-in-the-Syrian-Arab-Republic-A-RES-76-228.pdf>; World Health Assembly, *Health Conditions of the Arab Population*, 1979; World Health Assembly, WHA79(9).

³⁶⁹ World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem," WHA77.16, June 1, 2024, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_R16-en.pdf; World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in the Occupied Syrian Golan," WHA77(18), June 1, 2024, [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_\(18\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_(18)-en.pdf); World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem," WHA78.4, May 28, 2025, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA78/A78_R4-en.pdf; World Health Assembly, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and in the Occupied Syrian Golan," WHA78(16), May 27, 2025, [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA78/A78_\(16\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA78/A78_(16)-en.pdf); World Health Assembly, WHA79.1; World Health Assembly, WHA79(9).



Palestinian detainees, Israel's obligations as the "occupying power," donor financing, and reconstruction of the Palestinian health system. They direct WHO to continue documenting the consequences of Israeli operations and restrictions and convert that reporting into another cycle of Assembly action.³⁷⁰

In 2024, Resolution WHA77.15 also expanded Palestine's rights as a non-member observer State. Palestine may sit among Member States, submit and co-sponsor proposals and amendments, introduce procedural motions and agenda items, speak on behalf of groups, and hold certain Assembly offices. It does not have a vote or the right to present candidates for WHO organs.³⁷¹

The WHA texts have not been entirely silent regarding Hamas. The 2024 decision called for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and condemned armed groups' use of hospitals and ambulances. The 2025 decision again called for the release of hostages, while also demanding the release of Palestinians it described as arbitrarily detained. The 2026 decision omitted an equivalent demand concerning hostages and did not repeat the condemnation of armed groups' use of medical facilities; it instead called for the release of Palestinian civilians allegedly arbitrarily detained by Israel.³⁷²

These limited references do not alter the mechanism's central structure. The overwhelming weight of the reporting instructions, causal claims, legal language, funding requests, and operational demands concerns Israel. Hamas's initiation of the war, hostage-taking, tunnel network, diversion of resources, and military use of civilian and medical sites remain peripheral to the Assembly's institutional framework.

After October 7, WHO became one of the principal international sources describing the deterioration of Gaza's health system. It repeatedly publicized damage affecting hospitals, shortages of fuel and medicine, restrictions on medical evacuations, disease risks, and incidents involving medical personnel and ambulances.³⁷³

Hamas's use of the medical environment was not merely an Israeli allegation. A declassified U.S. intelligence assessment concluded that Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad used the Al-Shifa Hospital complex and sites beneath it to house command infrastructure, conduct command-

³⁷⁰ World Health Assembly, WHA79.1; World Health Assembly, WHA79(9).

³⁷¹ World Health Assembly, "Aligning the Participation of Palestine in the World Health Organization with Its Participation in the United Nations," WHA77.15, May 31, 2024, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_R15-en.pdf.

³⁷² World Health Assembly, WHA77(18); World Health Assembly, WHA78(16); World Health Assembly, WHA79(9).

³⁷³ Director-General of the World Health Organization, "Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem," A79/12, 2026, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA79/A79_12-en.pdf.



and-control activity, store weapons, and hold at least some hostages. Hospital surveillance footage released by Israel also showed hostages being brought into Al-Shifa on October 7.³⁷⁴

WHO nevertheless presented Al-Shifa primarily as a hospital besieged, attacked, and rendered inoperative by Israel. It did not establish a comparable sustained reporting track examining Hamas's use of Al-Shifa or other medical sites, command infrastructure beneath hospitals, weapons in medical compounds, tunnels connected to health facilities, or the use of medical environments to conceal fighters and hostages.³⁷⁵

The medical facility consequently appears as a passive civilian site attacked by Israel, while the organization operating within or beneath it largely disappears from the central narrative.

WHO's Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care uses a broad operational definition. An "attack" is any act of verbal or physical violence, obstruction, or threat of violence that interferes with the availability, access, or delivery of health services during emergencies. Incidents can range from heavy-weapons fire to obstruction, psychological threats, and intimidation.³⁷⁶

WHO does verify reports and assigns each incident a certainty level of rumour, possible, probable, or confirmed. Rumours are not published. However, the certainty rating applies only to whether the reported incident occurred, not to every detailed claim about it. The system does not by itself establish the perpetrator, legal responsibility, intent, proportionality, or whether a medical site was being used for military purposes.³⁷⁷

SSA totals are therefore incident-monitoring figures, not findings that Israel unlawfully attacked protected hospitals, ambulances, patients, or health workers. WHO and other UN bodies nevertheless frequently publicize the aggregate as hundreds of "attacks on health care." Without the methodology accompanying the headline figure, the term is readily understood as describing hundreds of deliberate or unlawful Israeli assaults, a conclusion the database does not establish.³⁷⁸ A broad surveillance category is thereby converted into a politically incriminating statistic.

³⁷⁴ *Associated Press*, "US Intel Confident Militant Groups Used Largest Gaza Hospital in Campaign against Israel," January 3, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/d0f782682a7a06ed5a3749ed92c4f821>; Israel Defense Forces, "Hamas Takes Hostages to Shifa Hospital after Abduction," November 20, 2023, <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/hamas-israel-war-24/all-articles/hamas-takes-hostages-to-shifa-hospital-after-abduction/>. The first source reports the declassified U.S. intelligence assessment; the second is the Israeli source that released the cited surveillance footage.

³⁷⁵ Director-General of the World Health Organization, A79/12.

³⁷⁶ World Health Organization, "Attacks on Health Care Initiative: Documenting the Problem," July 22, 2020, <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/attacks-on-healthcare-initiative-documenting-the-problem>.

³⁷⁷ World Health Organization, *Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA): Methodology, Version 1.0*, April 19, 2019, [https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/surveillance-system-for-attacks-on-health-care-\(-ssa\)](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/surveillance-system-for-attacks-on-health-care-(-ssa)); World Health Organization, "Attacks on Health Care Initiative."

³⁷⁸ World Health Organization, "Attacks on Health Care Initiative"; World Health Organization, *Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care*.



WHO relies heavily on Gaza's Ministry of Health for casualty totals, injury figures, patient numbers, hospital information, and assessments of health-system capacity. The ministry operates within a governmental system controlled by Hamas.³⁷⁹

Its publicly reported casualty totals do not systematically distinguish combatants from civilians or provide a comprehensive accounting of responsibility for individual deaths. WHO generally attributes the figures to the ministry, but once they enter WHO dashboards, statements, reports, and WHA documents, they are frequently repeated internationally as "WHO figures" or "UN data."³⁸⁰

The institutional authority remains attached to the number while its origin and limitations recede from view. A claim generated within Hamas-controlled Gaza enters a UN technical document and is subsequently cited by governments, journalists, NGOs, and legal bodies as though it constituted independent international corroboration.

The United States government announced that it completed its withdrawal from WHO on January 22, 2026, following the required year-long notice period. During that process, it terminated U.S. funding, recalled American personnel and contractors, ended official participation in WHO governance and technical bodies, and began transferring health activities toward direct cooperation with governments and other organizations.³⁸¹

The Trump administration cited WHO's handling of COVID-19, its alleged repetition of Chinese government claims, delays in recognizing transmission risks, failure to implement meaningful reforms, lack of transparency and accountability, political influence by Member States, bureaucratic inefficiency, and disproportionate financial demands on the United States. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. accused WHO of pursuing a "politicized, bureaucratic agenda driven by nations hostile to American interests." WHO rejected the administration's characterization and said the withdrawal raised procedural and financial issues for its governing bodies.³⁸²

The administration did not identify anti-Israel bias as a formal reason for withdrawing. WHO's treatment of Israel nevertheless exemplifies the wider politicization it described: a specialized

³⁷⁹ Director-General of the World Health Organization, A79/12. The report repeatedly attributes casualty, hospital, patient, medical-stock, and health-system figures to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

³⁸⁰ Director-General of the World Health Organization, A79/12.

³⁸¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "United States Completes WHO Withdrawal," January 22, 2026, <https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/united-states-completes-who-withdrawal.html>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "HHS Fact Sheet: U.S. Withdrawal from the World Health Organization," February 23, 2026, <https://www.cdc.gov/global-health/resources/us-withdrawal-who.html>.

³⁸² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "United States Completes WHO Withdrawal"; Marco Rubio and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., "Termination of U.S. Membership in the World Health Organization (WHO)," joint statement, January 22, 2026, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/01/termination-of-u-s-membership-in-the-world-health-organization-who-joint-statement-by-secretary-of-state-rubio-and-secretary-of-health-and-human-services-kennedy>; World Health Organization, "WHO Statement on Notification of Withdrawal of the United States," January 24, 2026, <https://www.who.int/news/item/24-01-2026-who-statement-on-notification-of-withdrawal-of-the-united-states>.



health agency maintains a decades-old Israel-specific mechanism, repeatedly adopts politically charged resolutions, expands Palestine's diplomatic privileges, incorporates data from Hamas-controlled authorities, and presents broadly defined health incidents in ways that intensify accusations against an American ally.

The withdrawal of WHO's historically largest financial contributor represented a profound loss of confidence in the organization's governance, independence, and ability to place public health above international politics.³⁸³

Hamas embedded military infrastructure within Gaza's civilian and medical environment. Israel acted against that infrastructure. WHO documented the resulting effects on hospitals, personnel, access, and services, while treating Hamas's militarization as secondary. Its surveillance system organized a broad range of incidents under the politically powerful label "attacks on health care," and figures originating with Hamas-controlled authorities entered WHO reports as international health evidence. The WHA then incorporated those products into resolutions, decisions, diplomatic pressure, funding demands, and new reporting mandates directed overwhelmingly at Israel.³⁸⁴

WHO thereby gives the UN campaign against Israel the authority of global medicine. Israel becomes the principal institutional defendant concerning hospitals, patients, health workers, disease, and medical access, while Hamas's responsibility for militarizing the medical environment receives no comparable sustained examination.

³⁸³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "HHS Fact Sheet."

³⁸⁴ World Health Assembly, WHA79.1; World Health Assembly, WHA79(9); Director-General of the World Health Organization, A79/12; World Health Organization, "Attacks on Health Care Initiative."



27. International Labour Organization

Organizational Status: The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations specialized agency responsible for international labor standards, employment policy, workers' rights, social protection, and social justice.³⁸⁵

Core Mandate: The ILO develops labor conventions and recommendations, supervises their implementation, promotes employment and decent work, and provides technical assistance through its tripartite structure of governments, employers, and workers.³⁸⁶

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The ILO is financed through assessed Member State contributions and voluntary resources. Voluntary funding includes non-earmarked contributions to the Regular Budget Supplementary Account and earmarked extrabudgetary contributions from governments, international financial institutions, UN entities, and private organizations. The adopted regular budget for 2026–2027 is \$930.5 million, equivalent to CHF 763.01 million at the budget exchange rate of CHF 0.82 per U.S. dollar. Voluntary supplementary and project funding is additional to that regular budget.³⁸⁷

Governance and Leadership Selection: The International Labour Conference adopts international labor standards and the budget. The Governing Body directs the organization and elects the Director-General. Governments, employers, and workers are formally represented within the ILO's tripartite structure.³⁸⁸

The ILO contributes to the UN's anti-Israel machinery by maintaining a longstanding institutional platform devoted to Palestinian and other Arab workers under Israeli control. Its reports and proceedings frame Palestinian unemployment and economic hardship principally through occupation, settlements, and Israeli restrictions, while Hamas rule, terrorism, Palestinian governance failures, and the destruction of economic cooperation receive substantially less institutional attention.

At its 66th Session in 1980, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution concerning the effects of Israeli settlements on Arab workers. That resolution became the mandate for an annual ILO mission and recurring Director-General's report entitled "The situation of workers of

³⁸⁵ International Labour Organization, "About the ILO," <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo>.

³⁸⁶ International Labour Organization, "How the ILO Works," <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo/how-ilo-works>.

³⁸⁷ International Labour Organization, "About the ILO," <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo>; International Labour Conference, Resolution concerning the Adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2026–27 and the Allocation of the Budget of Income among Member States, ILC.113/Resolution VI, June 9, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/ILC113-Resolution%20VI-%5BRELMEETINGS-250609-004%5D-EN.pdf>.

³⁸⁸ International Labour Organization, "How the ILO Works," <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo/how-ilo-works>; International Labour Organization, "About the ILO," <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo>.



the occupied Arab territories.” The mechanism remained active in 2026, when the ILO published another report covering Palestinian workers in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Syrian workers in the Golan.³⁸⁹

The reports examine occupation and settlements, movement and permit restrictions, unemployment, wage losses, economic fragmentation, access to employment in Israel, and alleged violations of workers’ rights. The Conference has also devoted special sittings to their consideration, providing governments, employers’ and workers’ representatives, unions, and political blocs with a recurring forum focused on Israeli policy.³⁹⁰

The mechanism differs from the ILO’s Article 33 proceedings concerning Belarus and Myanmar, which followed formal Commissions of Inquiry examining alleged violations of ratified labor conventions. The occupied-territories mechanism arose from a Conference resolution and continues as an annual territorial and socioeconomic inquiry without a comparable Commission of Inquiry finding against Israel. The mandate generates a mission, report, Conference debate, recommendations, and renewed reporting the following year.³⁹¹

The ILO’s 2024 report devoted the great majority of its analysis to the collapse of Palestinian employment, the suspension of access to Israeli jobs, wage losses, poverty, occupation,

³⁸⁹ International Labour Conference, Resolution concerning the Implications of Israeli Settlements in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories in Connection with the Situation of Arab Workers, 66th Session, 1980, listed in International Labour Organization, “Resolutions Adopted by the International Labour Conference,” <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/resolutions-adopted-international-labour-conference>; International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.112/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2024), 7, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/report-112th-session-ilc-june-2024-situation-workers-occupied-arab>; International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.114/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2026), 7–8, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/ilc/ilc114/situation-workers-occupied-arab-territories>.

³⁹⁰ International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.112/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2024), 7, 11–64, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/report-112th-session-ilc-june-2024-situation-workers-occupied-arab>; International Labour Organization, “Opening Address by the ILO Director-General at the Special Sitting on the Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories,” June 6, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/statement/ilc/112/opening-address-ilo-director-general-special-sitting-situation-workers>.

³⁹¹ International Labour Organization, “Practice on the Use of Article 33 of the ILO Constitution,” <https://guide-supervision.ilo.org/defending/practice-on-the-use-of-article-33-of-the-ilo-constitution/>; International Labour Conference, Resolution concerning the Measures Recommended by the Governing Body under Article 33 of the ILO Constitution on the Subject of Belarus, ILC.111/Resolution I, June 22, 2023, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/ilc/111/resolution-concerning-measures-recommended-governing-body-under-article-33>; International Labour Conference, Resolution concerning the Measures Recommended by the Governing Body under Article 33 of the ILO Constitution on the Subject of Myanmar, ILC.113/Resolution I, June 5, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/resolution-concerning-measures-recommended-governing-body-under-article-33>; International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.112/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2024), 7, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/report-112th-session-ilc-june-2024-situation-workers-occupied-arab>.



settlements, and Israeli restrictions.³⁹² That focus reflects the mechanism's narrow mandate, which covers workers in the occupied Arab territories rather than Israeli workers. The result, however, is an institutional asymmetry: the destruction of Israeli farms and workplaces, the displacement of workers from border communities, the effects of rocket and missile attacks, and the economic burden of reserve mobilization do not receive comparable treatment within the annual mechanism. The economic consequences following the Hamas attack are therefore examined principally as a Palestinian labor crisis for which Israeli policies become the central object of scrutiny.

Before October 2023, almost 200,000 Palestinians worked in Israel and Israeli settlements. According to the ILO's 2026 report, that number had fallen to approximately 44,000, only about 14,000 of whom held permits. Israel restricted access on security grounds, while the ILO emphasized the resulting unemployment, poverty, lost income, and deterioration of Palestinian labor rights.³⁹³

On September 27, 2024, ten international trade-union organizations filed a representation under Article 24 of the ILO Constitution alleging that Israel had violated the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95). The representation concerned alleged unpaid wages, benefits, and compensation affecting Palestinian workers who had been employed in Israel before access was restricted following October 7.³⁹⁴

In November 2024, the Governing Body declared the representation receivable and established a tripartite committee to examine it. A March 2026 ILO status report stated that the committee's members had been designated. Receivability means that the representation met the procedural requirements for examination; it does not constitute a finding that Israel violated the Convention.³⁹⁵

³⁹² International Labour Organization, *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.112/DG/APP* (Geneva: ILO, 2024), 3–4, 11–64,

<https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/report-112th-session-ilc-june-2024-situation-workers-occupied-arab>.

³⁹³ International Labour Organization, *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.114/DG/APP* (Geneva: ILO, 2026), 13, 20,

<https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/ilc/ilc114/situation-workers-occupied-arab-territories>.

³⁹⁴ UNI Global Union, “Global Unions File ILO Complaint to Recover Wages of over 200,000 Palestinian Workers in Israel,” September 27, 2024, <https://uniglobalunion.org/news/ilo-complaint-palestine/>; International Labour Organization, NORMLEX, “Representation (Article 24) — Israel — C095 — 2024,”

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000%3A50010%3A%3A%3A50010%3AP50010_ARTICLE_NO%3A24. The UNI Global Union source is one of the organizations that filed the representation and reports the allegations in that capacity.

³⁹⁵ International Labour Organization Governing Body, “Decisions on the Reports of the Officers of the Governing Body concerning the Receivability of Representations Made under Article 24 of the ILO Constitution,” November 7, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/gb/352/decisions-reports-officers-governing-body-concerning-receivability>; International Labour Organization Governing Body, *Report on the Status of Pending Representations Submitted under Article 24 of the ILO Constitution, GB.356/INS/INF/3*, March 5, 2026, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/gb/gb356/report-status-pending-representations-submitted-under-article-24-ilo>. Receivability is a procedural determination, not a finding on the merits.



Article 24 is a general supervisory procedure used in cases involving many Member States and is not Israel-specific in design. Its significance here is that it extended Israel-focused scrutiny from the annual occupied-territories mechanism into the ILO's formal labor-supervision system. The proceeding examines Israel's obligations regarding wages and benefits, while the security crisis that caused the suspension of Palestinian employment remains background context rather than the legal object of the case.

Until 2025, Palestine participated in the ILO under the designation of a liberation movement, a status dating to 1975. Following UNGA Resolution ES-10/23, the Governing Body recommended in October–November 2024 that the Conference replace that designation with non-member observer State status.³⁹⁶

On June 6, 2025, the Conference adopted the change. Palestine may now sit among Member States, submit and co-sponsor proposals and amendments, make statements on behalf of governments, raise procedural motions, suggest agenda items, and participate through a tripartite delegation. It may not vote or submit candidates for election to ILO organs. The ILO subsequently adopted “State of Palestine” as its institutional designation at Palestine's request.³⁹⁷

The decision did not make Palestine an ILO member, but it materially expanded Palestinian diplomatic standing inside a specialized agency. It illustrates how procedural changes across UN institutions can cumulatively advance Palestinian statehood claims outside a negotiated Israeli-Palestinian settlement.

The ILO also finances and implements programs supporting Palestinian employment, social protection, enterprises, trade unions, public institutions, and economic recovery. Its Governing Body maintains an enhanced development-cooperation program for the occupied Arab territories and has repeatedly called for additional donor funding.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ International Labour Organization Governing Body, The Status of Palestine in the ILO and Its Participation Rights in ILO Meetings, GB.352/INS/9, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/gb/352/status-palestine-ilo-and-its-participation-rights-ilo-meetings>; International Labour Organization Governing Body, “Decision concerning the Status of Palestine in the ILO and Its Participation Rights in ILO Meetings,” October 31, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/gb/352/decision-concerning-status-palestine-ilo-and-its-participation-rights-ilo>; International Labour Conference, Resolution on the Status of Palestine in the ILO and Participation Rights of Palestine in ILO Meetings, ILC.113/Resolution II, June 6, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/resolution-status-palestine-ilo-and-participation-rights-palestine-ilo>.

³⁹⁷ International Labour Conference, Resolution on the Status of Palestine in the ILO and Participation Rights of Palestine in ILO Meetings, ILC.113/Resolution II, June 6, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/resolution-status-palestine-ilo-and-participation-rights-palestine-ilo>; International Labour Organization, “State of Palestine,” ILO Thesaurus, <https://metadata.ilo.org/thesaurus/858.html>; International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.114/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2026), 7, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/ilc/ilc114/situation-workers-occupied-arab-territories>.

³⁹⁸ International Labour Organization, “State of Palestine,” <https://www.ilo.org/occupied-palestinian-territory>; International Labour Organization Governing Body, Enhanced Programme of Development Cooperation for the Occupied Arab Territories, GB.355/POL/4, October 24, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/gb/355/enhanced-programme-development-cooperation-occupied-arab-territories>; International Labour



Employment in Israel had provided many Palestinians with wages substantially higher than those generally available in the Palestinian economy and represented a significant form of practical economic cooperation. October 7 destroyed political trust and led Israel to treat large-scale Palestinian labor access as a security risk. The ILO emphasizes the human and economic costs of the resulting restrictions but gives less attention to terrorism and failed Palestinian governance as causes of economic separation.³⁹⁹

This framework reduces Palestinian political agency. Access to Israeli employment is treated as essential to Palestinian labor rights and development, while the decisions and institutions that repeatedly undermine security and economic integration receive comparatively limited scrutiny.

The ILO uses the language of employment, wages, permits, social protection, and workers' rights rather than the legal vocabulary of the Human Rights Council or the humanitarian language of OCHA. The institutional effect is similar: Israel faces a dedicated annual report and Conference debate, an Article 24 proceeding scrutinizes its wage-related obligations, Palestine's status has been upgraded within the agency, and Palestinian economic hardship is attributed principally to occupation and Israeli restrictions.⁴⁰⁰

The ILO's distinctive role is to embed this pressure within international labor governance. Its annual mission, Director-General's report, Conference proceedings, formal supervisory processes, development programs, and status decisions convert the economic consequences of conflict into a recurring labor-rights case centered overwhelmingly on Israeli responsibility.

Organization Governing Body, "Decision concerning the Enhanced Programme of Development Cooperation for the Occupied Arab Territories," November 21, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/gb/355/decision-concerning-enhanced-programme-development-cooperation-occupied>.

³⁹⁹ International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.114/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2026), 13, 20–21, 36, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/ilc/ilc114/situation-workers-occupied-arab-territories>.

⁴⁰⁰ International Labour Organization, The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the Director-General—Appendix, ILC.112/DG/APP (Geneva: ILO, 2024), 7, 11–64, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/report-112th-session-ilc-june-2024-situation-workers-occupied-arab>; International Labour Organization Governing Body, "Decisions on the Reports of the Officers of the Governing Body concerning the Receivability of Representations Made under Article 24 of the ILO Constitution," November 7, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/gb/352/decisions-reports-officers-governing-body-concerning-receivability>; International Labour Conference, Resolution on the Status of Palestine in the ILO and Participation Rights of Palestine in ILO Meetings, ILC.113/Resolution II, June 6, 2025, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/resolution-status-palestine-ilo-and-participation-rights-palestine-ilo>.



28. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Organizational Status: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a UN specialized agency responsible for international cooperation in education, science, culture, communication, information, and heritage protection.⁴⁰¹

Core Mandate: UNESCO promotes education, literacy, teacher training, scientific cooperation, freedom of expression, media development, cultural preservation, and the protection of world heritage.⁴⁰²

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNESCO is financed through assessed Member State contributions, voluntary contributions, earmarked projects, special accounts, and revenue-generating funds. Its Integrated Budget Framework combines these funding sources. The approved regular budget for 2024–2025 was approximately \$685.4 million. For 2026–2027, UNESCO adopted a regular-budget level of \$610 million but an expenditure plan of \$534.6 million because contributions from withdrawing Member States were not expected to be received. Its integrated programme budget was approximately \$1.739 billion. UNESCO also identified approximately \$23 million in residual Management Cost Account reserves, whose use was subject to Executive Board approval.⁴⁰³

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNESCO is governed by the General Conference, in which each Member State has one vote, and a 58-member Executive Board elected by the Conference. The General Conference sets UNESCO's programs and budget and appoints the Director-General every four years following nomination by the Executive Board.⁴⁰⁴

UNESCO is the cultural arm of the UN's anti-Israel architecture. It converts political claims into authoritative judgments about history, archaeology, education, sacred sites, and cultural legitimacy. In a conflict in which historical connection is central, UNESCO helps determine

⁴⁰¹ UNESCO, "UNESCO in Brief," <https://www.unesco.org/en/brief>.

⁴⁰² UNESCO, "UNESCO in Brief," <https://www.unesco.org/en/brief>.

⁴⁰³ UNESCO, 42 C/5: *Approved Programme and Budget, 2024–2025* (Paris: UNESCO, 2024), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000389188>; Khaled El-Enany, "Speech on the Occasion of the Opening of the 224th Session of the Executive Board," UNESCO, April 13, 2026, https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2026/04/DG_224_opening.pdf; UNESCO Executive Board, *Report of the Preparatory Group*, 222 EX/PG/1.INF.3 (Paris: UNESCO, 2025), https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2025/09/222_PG_report.pdf.

⁴⁰⁴ UNESCO, "General Conference," <https://www.unesco.org/en/general-conference?hub=424>; UNESCO, "Candidates for Post of Director-General to Be Interviewed on Wednesday and Thursday," April 24, 2017, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/candidates-post-director-general-be-interviewed-wednesday-and-thursday>.



which narratives receive international recognition and which forms of sovereignty are treated as foreign intrusion.

UNESCO maintains recurring agenda tracks entitled “Occupied Palestine” and “Educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories.” These tracks generate Executive Board decisions, reports, follow-up requirements, heritage proceedings, and monitoring demands directed principally at Israel. They remained active in 2026, alongside a separate program concerning the effects of the Gaza war across UNESCO’s mandate.⁴⁰⁵

Jerusalem has also been subjected to a long series of UNESCO decisions describing Israel as the “occupying Power,” declaring Israeli measures affecting the city null and void, condemning reported excavations, tunnelling, construction, and other projects as illegal, and demanding both a reactive monitoring mission and a permanent UNESCO representative in East Jerusalem. The 2026 World Heritage Committee decision recalled 30 previous Executive Board decisions and 14 previous World Heritage Committee decisions before retaining the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls on the List of World Heritage in Danger.⁴⁰⁶

This is more than ordinary heritage conservation. It constitutes a permanent political dossier challenging Israeli authority in Jerusalem through the language and institutions of international cultural protection.

On October 31, 2011, UNESCO’s General Conference admitted Palestine as a full Member State by 107 votes to 14, with 52 abstentions. UNESCO thereby became the first UN specialized agency to grant Palestine full membership while its application for UN membership remained unresolved. The UNGA did not accord Palestine non-member observer State status until November 2012.⁴⁰⁷

The decision allowed Palestinian statehood to advance institutionally without negotiated agreement on borders, Jerusalem, security, recognition, or an end to the conflict. UNESCO helped transform statehood from a prospective outcome of negotiations into a status that could be accumulated across international organizations.

⁴⁰⁵ UNESCO Executive Board, “Recently Published Documents,” updated September 7, 2026, <https://www.unesco.org/en/executive-board/latest-documents?hub=200839>.

⁴⁰⁶ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “Decision 48 COM 7A.4: Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls (Site Proposed by Jordan),” 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/8996>.

⁴⁰⁷ UNESCO General Conference, *Records of the General Conference, 36th Session, Paris, 25 October–10 November 2011, vol. 1: Resolutions* (Paris: UNESCO, 2012), resolution 76, https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_general-conference-36_resolutions.pdf; United Nations, “Palestinian Flag Raised at UNESCO,” December 13, 2011, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-195808/>; United Nations General Assembly, “General Assembly Votes Overwhelmingly to Accord Palestine ‘Non-Member Observer State’ Status in United Nations,” November 29, 2012, <https://press.un.org/en/2012/ga11317.doc.htm>. The UNESCO resolution records the admission date but not the roll-call tally; the contemporaneous UNESCO/UN reporting records the 107–14 vote with 52 abstentions and UNESCO’s status as the first UN agency to admit Palestine as a full member.



Membership enabled Palestine to ratify the World Heritage Convention and nominate properties as the “State of Palestine.” By 2026, UNESCO listed six such properties: Bethlehem, Battir, Hebron/Al-Khalil, Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan, Saint Hilarion Monastery/Tell Umm Amer, and Sebastia.⁴⁰⁸

Palestine’s admission also produced immediate financial consequences. Existing American statutes were applied to terminate U.S. funding to UNESCO after it admitted Palestine as a full member, and Israel likewise suspended its contributions.⁴⁰⁹

The Temple Mount is the location of the First and Second Jewish Temples and the central sacred site in Jewish history. Jerusalem has been the spiritual and national center of the Jewish people for millennia. The Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron is likewise one of Judaism’s oldest sacred sites and is traditionally identified as the burial place of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, and Leah.⁴¹⁰

UNESCO’s Jerusalem decisions formally reaffirm the Old City’s importance to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Their operative provisions, however, consistently describe Israel as the occupying power, declare Israeli legal and administrative measures void, characterize reported Israeli archaeological and construction activity as illegal, and rely heavily on concerns submitted by Jordan and Palestine concerning Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The underlying 2026 conservation report recorded that UNESCO sought relevant information from Israel, but the recurring framework continues to provide Palestinian and Jordanian claims with an institutional platform from which Israeli administration is treated as presumptively unlawful.⁴¹¹

The result is not a formal denial of Jewish history. It is an institutional separation of Jewish historical connection from legitimate Israeli sovereignty. Jewish attachment may be acknowledged in general language, while Israeli administration, archaeology, preservation work, and infrastructure are treated through the operative language of occupation and illegality.

The same pattern applies to Hebron. UNESCO inscribed “Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town” as a property of the State of Palestine and simultaneously placed it on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2017. The 2026 decision retained that classification, deplored Israeli settlements, archaeological excavations, demolitions, access restrictions, and installation of an elevator at Al-

⁴⁰⁸ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “State of Palestine,” <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ps>.

⁴⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Palestinian Admission to UNESCO,” October 31, 2011, archived by the United Nations, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-209831/>; UNESCO Multimedia Archives, “United States’ Statement Regarding the Loss of Voting Rights at UNESCO,” November 8, 2013, <https://www.unesco.org/archives/multimedia/document-211>.

⁴¹⁰ Michael Zank, “The Temple Mount,” Boston University, https://www.bu.edu/mzank/Michael_Zank/Jerusalem/templemount.html; UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town: Nomination File*, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/159613>.

⁴¹¹ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “Decision 48 COM 7A.4: Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls (Site Proposed by Jordan),” 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/8996>; UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *State of Conservation of the Properties Inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger*, WHC/26/48.COM/7A.Add.3.Rev, July 21, 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/document/226821>.



Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of the Patriarchs, and placed the property under reinforced monitoring with reports every three months.⁴¹²

These decisions do not legally transfer ownership or sovereignty. They nevertheless assign Palestinian institutions the role of State Party, classify the sites within an internationally recognized Palestinian heritage portfolio, and portray Israeli administration as interference by an occupying power. The political effect is to strengthen Palestinian territorial claims to sites central to Jewish history while weakening the legitimacy of Israeli sovereignty over them.

The inscriptions of Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan in 2023 and Sebastia in 2026 extended this process. UNESCO heritage recognition became another means of attaching disputed archaeological and historical landscapes to the institutional category of the “State of Palestine.”⁴¹³

October 7 did not interrupt UNESCO’s Israel-focused machinery. At its 2024 sessions, the Executive Board continued the “Occupied Palestine” and “Educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories” tracks while adding a separate program covering the impact of the Gaza war on education, culture, heritage, science, communication, and media. The three tracks remained active in UNESCO’s 2026 documentation.⁴¹⁴

The World Heritage Committee also renewed its Jerusalem decisions in 2024, 2025, and 2026. Its latest decision again described Israel as the occupying power, treated Israeli measures affecting Jerusalem as null and void, condemned reported excavations and works, demanded international monitoring, and retained the Old City on the danger list. UNESCO likewise renewed its Hebron decisions in all three years.⁴¹⁵

These proceedings preserve the established causal structure: Israeli actions are documented, condemned, and subjected to recurring international supervision, while Hamas’s militarization of educational and civilian environments receives no comparable permanent UNESCO mechanism. Damage to Palestinian schools, universities, cultural properties, and media institutions is

⁴¹² UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town,” <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1565>; UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “Decision 48 COM 7A.10: Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (State of Palestine),” 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/9002>.

⁴¹³ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “State of Palestine,” <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ps>.

⁴¹⁴ UNESCO Executive Board, *Decisions Adopted by the Executive Board at Its 220th Session*, 220 EX/Decisions (Paris: UNESCO, 2024), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000391785>; UNESCO Executive Board, “Recently Published Documents,” updated September 7, 2026, <https://www.unesco.org/en/executive-board/latest-documents?hub=200839>.

⁴¹⁵ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “Decision 48 COM 7A.4: Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls (Site Proposed by Jordan),” 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/8996>; UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “Decision 48 COM 7A.10: Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (State of Palestine),” 2026, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/9002>. Each 2026 decision recalls the corresponding World Heritage Committee decisions from the 2024 and 2025 sessions as well as the 2026 action.



incorporated into a continuing institutional case against Israel; the military system that helped turn those environments into a battlefield remains peripheral.

UNESCO has not established a standing review or enforcement process for Palestinian curricula comparable to its recurring machinery on “Occupied Palestine.” Its Palestinian education work emphasizes access, reconstruction, institutional support, and damage to educational facilities without applying equivalent political pressure over curricula that can perpetuate hostility and conflict. An organization founded to build peace through education treats disruption of Palestinian education as an international emergency but does not subject the ideological use of that education to comparable institutional scrutiny.

Israel and the United States announced their withdrawal from UNESCO in 2017, and both departures became effective on December 31, 2018. Israel cited UNESCO’s admission of Palestine, politicization of heritage, and repeated decisions concerning Jerusalem and Hebron. The United States cited mounting arrears, the need for institutional reform, and UNESCO’s “continuing anti-Israel bias.”⁴¹⁶

The United States rejoined UNESCO in July 2023. In July 2025, the Trump administration announced another withdrawal, citing UNESCO’s political agenda, its admission of Palestine, and what the administration described as the proliferation of anti-Israel rhetoric. The withdrawal will take effect on December 31, 2026; until then, the United States remains a full UNESCO member. Israel has remained outside the organization since its 2018 withdrawal.⁴¹⁷

Israel’s departure and the repeated American withdrawals were direct responses to UNESCO’s treatment of Israel and Palestine. They reflect the extent to which disputes over Jerusalem, Palestinian statehood, and Jewish heritage have reshaped an organization nominally devoted to international cooperation in education, science, and culture.

UNESCO’s influence lies in its ability to give political claims the authority of cultural expertise. Diplomatic assertions about Jerusalem, Hebron, archaeology, education, and Palestinian

⁴¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, “The United States Withdraws from UNESCO,” October 12, 2017, archived by the United Nations, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/the-united-states-withdraws-from-unesco-us-department-of-state-press-release/>; UNESCO, “Declaration by UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay on the Withdrawal of Israel from the Organization,” December 29, 2017, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/declaration-unesco-director-general-audrey-azoulay-withdrawal-israel-organization>; Jewish Telegraphic Agency, “Israel to Leave UNESCO alongside US, Netanyahu Says,” October 13, 2017, <https://www.jta.org/2017/10/13/united-states/israel-to-leave-unesco-alongside-us-netanyahu-says>.

⁴¹⁷ UNESCO, “The United States Becomes the 194th Member State of UNESCO,” July 11, 2023, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/united-states-becomes-194th-member-state-unesco>; U.S. Department of State, “The United States Withdraws from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),” July 22, 2025, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/07/the-united-states-withdraws-from-the-united-nations-educational-scientific-and-cultural-organization-unesco/>; UNESCO, “Israel – News & Events,” <https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/il/newsroom>.



statehood become World Heritage inscriptions, conservation decisions, monitoring requirements, official maps, institutional terminology, and recurring agenda items.

Through these mechanisms, UNESCO internationalizes a Palestinian narrative concerning Israel's history, sacred places, archaeology, sovereignty, and authority to govern Jerusalem. It does not formally erase Jewish history or legally determine territorial title. It does, however, repeatedly place Israeli sovereignty and administration within a framework of occupation and illegality while supplying Palestinian claims with the institutional authority of the UN's principal cultural organization.



29. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Organizational Status: UN Trade and Development, generally known by its original abbreviation UNCTAD, is a permanent intergovernmental body established by the UNGA in 1964 and operating as part of the UN Secretariat.⁴¹⁸

Core Mandate: UNCTAD supports developing countries through research, policy analysis, intergovernmental consensus-building, and technical assistance concerning trade, investment, finance, debt, technology, commodities, and integration into the global economy.⁴¹⁹

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UNCTAD is financed through assessed contributions under the UN regular budget and voluntary extrabudgetary contributions. The Secretary-General's original proposal for UN budget Section 12, "Trade and development," allocated approximately \$88.3 million in regular-budget resources for 2026 and projected approximately \$60.3 million in extrabudgetary resources.⁴²⁰

Governance and Leadership Selection: UNCTAD has 195 member States. Its quadrennial Conference is its highest decision-making body, while the Trade and Development Board oversees its work between conferences. The UNCTAD Secretary-General is appointed by the UN Secretary-General and confirmed by the UNGA.⁴²¹

UNCTAD is the economic-accounting arm of the UN's anti-Israel architecture. It converts a political framework centered on occupation into economic estimates, development analysis, and quantified claims against Israel.

UNCTAD established its Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit in 1985 pursuant to UNCTAD Resolution 146 (VI). It produces recurring reports on the Palestinian economy, supports technical-cooperation projects, and maintains the issue as a regular subject of the Trade

⁴¹⁸ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *UNCTAD at a Glance* (Geneva: United Nations, 2023), https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/UNCTAD-at-a-glance_en.pdf.

⁴¹⁹ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "About UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)," <https://unctad.org/about>.

⁴²⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026, Part IV: International Cooperation for Development, Section 12: Trade and Development*, A/80/6 (Sect. 12), April 1, 2025, 45, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n25/067/56/pdf/n2506756.pdf>; United Nations General Assembly, *Revised Estimates Relating to the Proposed Programme Budget for 2026 and the Support Account for Peacekeeping Operations*, A/80/400, September 4, 2025, 121–22, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n25/234/15/pdf/n2523415.pdf>.

⁴²¹ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "UNCTAD16: About," <https://unctad.org/unctad16/about>; UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Trade and Development Board," <https://unctad.org/about/trade-and-development-board>; UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Rebeca Grynspan Appointed as UNCTAD's Secretary-General," June 11, 2021, <https://unctad.org/news/rebeca-grynspan-appointed-unctads-secretary-general>.



and Development Board. UNGA Resolution 77/22 requested UNCTAD to continue reporting on Palestinian economic development and the economic costs of Israeli occupation.⁴²²

The mandate establishes the principal causal question in advance. UNCTAD is instructed to assess the effects and costs of Israeli occupation, rather than impartially compare the economic consequences of Israeli policy with those of Hamas rule, Palestinian terrorism, corruption, political repression, rejection of peace initiatives, or the diversion of resources into military infrastructure.

UNCTAD does not maintain an equivalent recurring program calculating the economic costs of Hamas and PIJ activity, Palestinian governance failures, or regional attacks against Israel. Its institutional machinery is designed to quantify Palestinian losses principally through a framework of Israeli responsibility.

UNCTAD's 2025 report stated that the Palestinian economy experienced its steepest contraction on record. According to the report, GDP declined by 27 percent in 2024 compared with 2023, leaving output at approximately 70 percent of its 2022 level. GDP per capita fell to approximately its 2003 level, while unemployment approached 80 percent in Gaza. UNCTAD separately reported that Gaza's GDP contracted by 83 percent in 2024 and by 87 percent cumulatively across 2023 and 2024, pushing the population below the poverty line.⁴²³

UNCTAD attributed this collapse primarily to Israeli military operations, destruction, occupation, movement and access restrictions, and the withholding or disruption of Palestinian revenues. Its analysis gave substantially less prominence to Hamas's governance of Gaza, investment in tunnels and weapons, initiation of the October 7 attack, hostage-taking, and use of civilian areas for military operations.⁴²⁴

Hamas governed Gaza from 2007 and devoted extensive resources to military infrastructure while initiating repeated conflicts with Israel. Those decisions were important determinants of Gaza's investment climate, border access, productive capacity, and exposure to war. By treating

⁴²² UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Assistance to the Palestinian People," <https://unctad.org/topic/palestinian-people/APPU-about>; UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "The Palestinian People," <https://unctad.org/topic/palestinian-people>.

⁴²³ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *Report on UNCTAD Assistance to the Palestinian People: Developments in the Economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, TD/B/72/3, September 30, 2025, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdb72_d3_en.pdf; UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Gaza's Economy Collapsed 83% in 2024, Pushing All 2.3 Million People into Poverty," November 24, 2025, <https://unctad.org/news/gazas-economy-collapsed-83-2024-pushing-all-23-million-people-poverty>.

⁴²⁴ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *Report on UNCTAD Assistance to the Palestinian People: Developments in the Economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, TD/B/72/3, September 30, 2025, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdb72_d3_en.pdf.



them as secondary, UNCTAD converts the economic consequences of the conflict into an accumulating ledger of Israeli responsibility.⁴²⁵

In February 2026, UNCTAD published a study estimating the cumulative economic cost of occupation between 2000 and 2024. Its counterfactual model calculated approximately \$212.2 billion in lost potential GDP, equivalent to 19.4 times the Palestinian economy's observed GDP in 2024. This was a model-based estimate of economic output that UNCTAD believed might have existed without occupation, not an observed financial transfer, cash expenditure, or independently measured stock of physical damage.⁴²⁶

The scale of the estimate gives the occupation framework substantial political force. Once expressed as a precise dollar value under the UN emblem, a counterfactual economic model can be presented as a quantified debt attributable to Israel and cited in campaigns for compensation, reconstruction financing, sanctions, boycotts, divestment, or diplomatic pressure.

UNCTAD does not maintain a comparable recurring mechanism measuring the destruction of Israeli communities on October 7, the evacuation of northern and southern towns, reserve-mobilization costs, lost agricultural production, tourism and business disruption, missile-defense expenditures, damaged infrastructure, or the wider costs of attacks by Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran, and other regional actors. Palestinian losses are a permanent subject of UN economic analysis; Israeli losses are not.

This asymmetry is embedded in the mandate rather than merely in individual reports. UNCTAD repeatedly measures Palestinian losses through categories of occupation, restrictions, and Israeli military action, while terrorism, corruption, mismanagement, militarization, and rejectionism receive less systematic economic accounting.

UNCTAD's figures consequently provide technical authority for political claims generated elsewhere in the UN system. The calculations appear as neutral economic findings, but the selection of what is measured, which counterfactual assumptions are adopted, and whose costs are excluded helps determine the conclusion. Israel is entered into the ledger as the principal cost, while Palestinian and regional responsibility remains largely outside the calculation.

⁴²⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2021*, "Hamas," <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2021/>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Key Hamas Leaders and Financiers," November 19, 2024, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2720>.

⁴²⁶ UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *The Cumulative Economic Cost of Occupation for the Palestinian People (2000–2024) and the Long Road to Recovery*, UNCTAD/GDS/APP/2026/1, February 17, 2026, 28, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/gdsapp2026d1_en.pdf.



30. United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Organizational Status: The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the UN program responsible for sustainable urban development and human settlements.⁴²⁷

Core Mandate: Promotes adequate housing, inclusive urban planning, land governance, basic services, resilience, reconstruction, and sustainable cities.⁴²⁸

Financial Framework and Funding Model: UN-Habitat is financed through the UN regular budget, non-earmarked foundation resources, earmarked voluntary contributions, and project funding. Its draft work programme and budget projected approximately \$190.3 million in overall resource requirements for 2026. This was an all-resources planning estimate, not a single assessed appropriation or a figure for actual expenditure.⁴²⁹

Governance and Leadership Selection: UN-Habitat is governed by the universal-membership UN-Habitat Assembly and a 36-member Executive Board elected by the Assembly. Its Executive Director is elected by the UNGA following nomination by the Secretary-General.⁴³⁰

UN-Habitat embeds Palestinian territorial and political claims in the professional language of housing, land, planning, and reconstruction. Its work in Area C and East Jerusalem supports Palestinian institutions in planning disputed territory, challenging Israeli planning authority, protecting Palestinian construction from demolition, strengthening land claims, and coordinating international advocacy against Israeli policies.

UN-Habitat maintains a dedicated “State of Palestine” country program covering Area C, East Jerusalem, Gaza, and Palestinian-administered areas. Its work has included local outline plans, national and regional spatial planning, land registration, mapping, municipal development, institutional capacity-building, and cooperation with Palestinian ministries and civil-society organizations.⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), “About Us,” <https://unhabitat.org/about-us>.

⁴²⁸ UN-Habitat, “Our Strategy,” <https://unhabitat.org/about-us/our-strategy>.

⁴²⁹ United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Draft Work Programme of UN-Habitat and Draft Budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2026*, HSP/EB.2025/21 (2025), paras. 8–12, https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2025/09/doc_2b_hsp-eb.2025-21_-_draft_work_programme_and_budget_2026.pdf.

⁴³⁰ UN-Habitat, *The Governance Structure of UN-Habitat* (2025), https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2025/09/2._governance_structure_of_un-habitat_-_2025_induction_seminar_sept_2025.pdf; UN-Habitat, “Our Executive Director,” <https://unhabitat.org/our-executive-director>.

⁴³¹ UN-Habitat, *Palestine Habitat Country Programme Document (2023–2026)* (2022), <https://unhabitat.org/palestine-habitat-country-programme-document-2023-2026>.



UN-Habitat describes Area C as essential to the territorial continuity and economic viability of a future Palestinian state. The UN's 2015 "One UN" approach called for Palestinian planning encompassing Area C and the "ultimate transfer of authority in Area C to the State of Palestine." UN-Habitat has similarly described local plans as components of a national Palestinian planning framework linking Area C communities with Palestinian cities in Areas A and B.⁴³²

The political purpose is explicit. UN-Habitat is helping Palestinian institutions develop administrative capacity, territorial continuity, and land claims in territory where Israel retains planning and zoning authority under the interim Oslo framework. Planning thereby becomes a method of advancing Palestinian statehood and shaping facts on the ground before sovereignty and borders have been resolved through negotiations.

UN-Habitat describes its Area C program as helping Palestinian communities "resist displacement" through outline and other plans intended to reduce exposure to demolition. Its stated objectives include making planning more responsive to Palestinian needs, strengthening Palestinian planning and local-governance capacity, and coordinating advocacy for changes to what it calls the restrictive Israeli planning system.⁴³³

The organization works with the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government and local organizations to prepare plans, mobilize communities, monitor Israeli decisions, and integrate local projects into wider Palestinian regional and national strategies. UN-Habitat has described this cooperation as work to "defend and advocate for the planning rights" of Palestinian communities. It also developed a Human Rights Impact Assessment Mechanism to help Palestinian institutions prioritize interventions and challenge what UN bodies describe as a coercive environment.⁴³⁴

An international advisory board commissioned by UN-Habitat concluded that Palestinian local outline plans were technically sound and should be approved by the Israeli Civil Administration without further delay. UN-Habitat's broader approach links technical planning with legal protection, coordinated advocacy, common messaging, and long-term Palestinian institutional development.⁴³⁵

⁴³² UN-Habitat, "'One UN' Approach to Spatial Planning in 'Area C' of the Occupied West Bank," October 14, 2015, <https://unhabitat.org/one-un-approach-to-spatial-planning-in-area-c-of-the-occupied-west-bank>.

⁴³³ UN-Habitat, "Urban Legislation, Land and Governance," <https://unhabitat.org/palestine-urban-legislation-land-and-governance>.

⁴³⁴ UN-Habitat, "Publications Supporting the Spatial Planning Initiatives in Palestine Launched," December 19, 2016, <https://unhabitat.org/publications-supporting-the-spatial-planning-initiatives-in-palestine-launched>; UN-Habitat, The Human Rights Impact Assessment Mechanism and Local Outline Plans in the So-Called "Area C," West Bank, Palestine: Guidelines for Implementation for Planners (2020), <https://unhabitat.org/the-human-rights-impact-assessment-mechanism-and-local-outline-plans-in-the-so-called-area-c-west>.

⁴³⁵ UN-Habitat, *Why Planning Needs to Change in the Occupied West Bank* (2015), https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/1501143606wpdm_IAB%20Report%20on%20Area%20C_English%20Summary.pdf.



Foreign governments have financed this work. In 2019, the European Union provided \$4.4 million for two projects under the title “Achieving Planning and Land Rights in Area C, West Bank.” The projects supported spatial planning, preparation of a Palestinian national urban policy, land registration, and a land-information system in cooperation with Palestinian institutions. Earlier Area C planning programs received British support, while Belgium and other donors supported related planning and community-development work.⁴³⁶

These activities bypass or prejudge the political process established by Oslo. International funding helps Palestinian institutions perform planning, land-registration, and governance functions in territory where Israel retains primary civil and security authority under the interim agreements. Construction lacking Israeli authorization is then presented as protected development, while Israeli enforcement is framed as demolition, displacement, and denial of rights.

UN-Habitat’s analysis gives little comparable attention to Israel’s position that Area C planning involves security requirements, military zones, transportation routes, archaeological and environmental protection, Israeli communities, state-land determinations, and competing ownership claims. It instead presents the dispute primarily as a conflict between Palestinian development rights and an unjust Israeli planning system.

The issue is therefore not merely whether individual buildings receive permits. It concerns control of Area C, Palestinian territorial continuity, and whether international funding and planning programs should help determine the territorial outcome before a negotiated settlement.

UN-Habitat applies a similar approach in East Jerusalem by supporting Palestinian community plans, technical and legal capacity, housing claims, advocacy, and efforts to expand Palestinian building opportunities. Its 2015 report *Right to Develop: Planning Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem* examined Palestinian strategies for navigating and, in the words used at its launch, “circumventing” restrictions imposed by Israeli planning authorities. Belgium has supported related UN-Habitat community-planning work in East Jerusalem.⁴³⁷

UN-Habitat does not approach East Jerusalem principally as a city to be planned under a unified Israeli municipal authority. It treats the area as occupied Palestinian territory in which Palestinian communities should organize separately, resist Israeli control, and preserve the institutional and territorial basis for incorporation into a future Palestinian state.

⁴³⁶ UN-Habitat, “European Union Extends USD 4.4 Million Support to Palestine Project,” October 14, 2019, <https://unhabitat.org/news/14-oct-2019/european-union-extends-usd-44-million-support-to-palestine-project>; UN-Habitat, Mid-Term Evaluation of Achieving Planning and Land Rights Project in Area C, West Bank, Palestine (2019–2023) (2021), <https://unhabitat.org/mid-term-evaluation-of-achieving-planning-and-land-rights-project-in-area-c-west-bank-palestine>.

⁴³⁷ UN-Habitat, “UN-Habitat Launches New Report on Planning for Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem,” June 5, 2015, <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-launches-new-report-on-planning-for-palestinian-communities-in-east-jerusalem>; UN-Habitat, “Palestine - Urban Planning and Design,” <https://unhabitat.org/palestine-urban-planning-and-design-2>.



Planning consequently becomes a challenge to Israeli sovereignty claims in Jerusalem. Neighborhood plans, land claims, housing projects, and institutional capacity help maintain a separate Palestinian political geography while depicting Israeli municipal and national authority as an obstacle to Palestinian rights.

After October 7, UN-Habitat expanded its work assessing damage to Gaza's buildings and housing, displacement, debris, land and property issues, and reconstruction requirements. It submitted reports to its Executive Board and launched an early-recovery and housing-rehabilitation project in 2025.⁴³⁸

The destruction of Gaza's urban environment cannot be separated from Hamas's military strategy. Hamas constructed an extensive tunnel network beneath densely populated areas, embedded military infrastructure within civilian neighborhoods, stored weapons near homes and public institutions, and used the built environment as operational cover.⁴³⁹

UN-Habitat's Gaza reporting concentrates on physical destruction, displacement, and Palestinian reconstruction needs. It does not maintain an equivalent systematic mechanism examining Hamas's militarization of housing, roads, utilities, public buildings, land, and underground space or the relationship between that military infrastructure and the resulting urban destruction.

Reconstruction divorced from demilitarization would risk recreating the environment Hamas exploited. A responsible reconstruction program should make underground inspection, controls on dual-use materials, exclusion of terrorist-linked contractors and organizations, financial transparency, and prevention of renewed military construction central conditions of recovery.

Israeli communities were also destroyed or evacuated after October 7. Hamas devastated kibbutzim and towns near Gaza, while sustained Hezbollah fire displaced residents from northern Israel and damaged homes, businesses, farms, schools, and local infrastructure.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Status of the Development of the Efforts to Reconstruct the Human Settlements in the Gaza Strip, HSP/EB.2024/INF/13 (October 4, 2024), https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2024/10/hsp-eb-2024-inf-13_-_report_on_efforts_to_reconstruct_human_settlements_in_gaza_strip.pdf; UN-Habitat, "UN-Habitat Launches Recovery Project in Gaza," June 24, 2025, <https://unhabitat.org/news/24-jun-2025/un-habitat-launches-recovery-project-in-gaza>.

⁴³⁹ Adolfo Arranz, Jonathan Saul, Stephen Farrell, Simon Scarr, and Clare Trainor, "Inside the Tunnels of Gaza," Reuters, December 31, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS/GAZA-TUNNELS/gkvldmzorvb/>; Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, Detailed Findings on the Military Operations and Attacks Carried Out in the Occupied Palestinian Territory from 7 October to 31 December 2023, A/HRC/56/CRP.4 (2024), paras. 89–91, <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Detailed-findings-on-the-military-operations-and-attacks-carried-out-in-the-Occupied-Palestinian-Territory-from-7-October-to-31-December-2023-1.pdf>.

⁴⁴⁰ State Comptroller and Ombudsman of Israel, *The Rehabilitation Processes of the Western Negev Settlements, Their Communities, and Their Residents Following the Terrorist Attack of October 7: Special Interim Report* (February 24, 2025), <https://library.mevaker.gov.il/sites/DigitalLibrary/Documents/2025/Swords-of-Iron-2/2025->



These events did not generate a comparable UN-Habitat country program, land-and-property mechanism, coordinated donor strategy, or sustained reconstruction platform for Israeli communities. Palestinian construction in Area C is treated as rights-based development and an instrument of state-building, while Israeli communities in the same territory are treated within the UN system as unlawful settlements. Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem receive support in resisting Israeli planning authority, while Israeli sovereignty claims are rejected. Gaza receives a dedicated recovery framework, while Israeli communities destroyed or displaced by terrorist organizations remain peripheral to UN-Habitat's institutional agenda.⁴⁴¹

UN-Habitat's influence therefore extends beyond technical planning. In Area C and East Jerusalem, it uses planning, land administration, institutional development, and donor coordination to advance Palestinian territorial objectives while treating Israeli authority as an obstacle to be challenged. Through those activities, professional urban-development tools acquire direct consequences for sovereignty, borders, demographics, land control, and the future political map.

Swords-of-Iron-2-Negev-Taktzir-EN.pdf; State Comptroller and Ombudsman of Israel, *Assistance to Northern Communities and Small Businesses During the War* (June 10, 2025),

<https://library.mevaker.gov.il/sites/DigitalLibrary/Pages/Reports/8722-3.aspx>.

⁴⁴¹ UN-Habitat, "Urban Legislation, Land and Governance," <https://unhabitat.org/palestine-urban-legislation-land-and-governance>; UN-Habitat, "UN-Habitat Launches New Report on Planning for Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem," June 5, 2015, <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-launches-new-report-on-planning-for-palestinian-communities-in-east-jerusalem>; United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Status of the Development of the Efforts to Reconstruct the Human Settlements in the Gaza Strip*, HSP/EB.2024/INF/13 (October 4, 2024), https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2024/10/hsp-eb-2024-inf-13_-_report_on_efforts_to_reconstruct_human_settlements_in_gaza_strip.pdf; United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2334 (2016), S/RES/2334 (2016), December 23, 2016, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unsc-resolution-2334-illegality-israeli-settlements/>; State Comptroller and Ombudsman of Israel, *The Rehabilitation Processes of the Western Negev Settlements, Their Communities, and Their Residents Following the Terrorist Attack of October 7: Special Interim Report* (February 24, 2025), <https://library.mevaker.gov.il/sites/DigitalLibrary/Documents/2025/Swords-of-Iron-2/2025-Swords-of-Iron-2-Negev-Taktzir-EN.pdf>.



31. World Food Programme

Organizational Status: The World Food Programme (WFP) is a United Nations humanitarian program and the UN system's principal food-assistance organization.⁴⁴²

Core Mandate: WFP provides emergency food assistance, cash transfers, nutrition support, school meals, logistics and supply-chain services, resilience programs, and food-security analysis.⁴⁴³

Financial Framework and Funding Model: WFP is financed entirely through voluntary contributions from governments, institutions, companies, foundations, and individual donors. It recorded approximately \$6.52 billion in contributions for 2025 and reported supporting 121 million people during the year. For 2026, WFP forecast operational requirements of approximately \$13 billion to assist 110 million people, while anticipating that available funding would cover less than half of that amount.⁴⁴⁴

Governance and Leadership Selection: WFP is governed by a 36-member Executive Board, with 18 members elected by ECOSOC and 18 by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization. Its Executive Director is appointed jointly by the UN Secretary-General and the FAO Director-General.⁴⁴⁵

WFP supplied one of the most consequential elements of the UN's campaign against Israel: the authoritative claim that Israeli policy was starving Gaza. WFP did not independently determine whether Gaza met the technical criteria for famine. That function belonged to the multi-partner Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system, of which WFP is a global partner. WFP nevertheless contributed information, promoted IPC findings, briefed the UNSC, and translated technical assessments into highly influential public warnings about starvation and famine.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴² World Food Programme, "Who We Are," <https://www.wfp.org/who-we-are>.

⁴⁴³ World Food Programme, "Who We Are," <https://www.wfp.org/who-we-are>.

⁴⁴⁴ World Food Programme, "WFP at a Glance," July 21, 2026, <https://www.wfp.org/stories/wfp-glance>; World Food Programme, "The World Food Programme Challenges Business Leaders at Davos to Address Global Hunger for the Sake of Humanity and Economic Stability," January 18, 2026, <https://www.wfp.org/news/world-food-programme-challenges-business-leaders-davos-address-global-hunger-sake-humanity-and>.

⁴⁴⁵ World Food Programme Executive Board, "Members of the Board," <https://executiveboard.wfp.org/members-board>; World Food Programme, "Governance and Leadership," <https://www.wfp.org/governance-and-leadership>.

⁴⁴⁶ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, "IPC Partnership and Governance," <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/ipc-global-partnership-and-programme/partnership/en/>; World Food Programme, "Gaza Grapples with Catastrophic Hunger as New Report Predicts Famine if Conflict Continues," December 21, 2023, <https://www.wfp.org/news/gaza-grapples-catastrophic-hunger-new-report-predicts-famine-if-conflict-continues>; World Food Programme, "WFP Deputy Chief Warns Security Council of Imminent Famine in Northern Gaza Unless Conditions Change," February 28, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-deputy-chief-warns-security-council-imminent-famine-northern-gaza-unless-conditions-change>.



WFP began issuing stark starvation warnings before the first wartime IPC assessment was completed. On November 16, 2023, Executive Director Cindy McCain said that food and water supplies were “practically non-existent” and that civilians faced the “immediate possibility of starvation.” WFP also stated that only 10 percent of the food supplies considered necessary had entered Gaza since the war began.⁴⁴⁷

In December 2023, WFP promoted the first IPC assessment, which classified Gaza’s entire population as facing Crisis-level food insecurity or worse during the projected period from December 8, 2023, through February 7, 2024. WFP declared that no one in Gaza was safe from starvation. In February 2024, it warned the UNSC that famine was imminent in northern Gaza unless conditions changed.⁴⁴⁸

The March 2024 IPC analysis projected that famine would become manifest in the northern governorates between mid-March and May. Approximately 677,000 people were assessed as facing household-level Phase 5 conditions at the time, while approximately 1.1 million were projected to face Phase 5 during the March-to-July projection period. Household-level Phase 5, designated “Catastrophe,” is not identical to an area-level famine classification, which requires separate thresholds for extreme food deprivation, acute malnutrition, and mortality.⁴⁴⁹

WFP’s public language compressed these distinctions. McCain declared that people were “starving to death right now” and described the crisis as man-made. The IPC assessment was a conditional projection based on assumptions about future food access, humanitarian services, malnutrition, population size, and continued fighting. WFP’s rhetoric helped turn that projection into the broader public impression that famine had already been established throughout Gaza.⁴⁵⁰

In June 2024, an IPC Famine Review Committee examination concluded that the available evidence did not indicate that famine was then occurring in northern Gaza. Humanitarian and commercial food availability and nutrition, health, water, and sanitation services had increased beyond some of the assumptions used in the earlier projections. The number projected to face

⁴⁴⁷ World Food Programme, “Gaza Faces Widespread Hunger as Food Systems Collapse, Warns WFP,” November 16, 2023, <https://www.wfp.org/news/gaza-faces-widespread-hunger-food-systems-collapse-warns-wfp>.

⁴⁴⁸ World Food Programme, “Gaza Grapples with Catastrophic Hunger as New Report Predicts Famine if Conflict Continues,” December 21, 2023, <https://www.wfp.org/news/gaza-grapples-catastrophic-hunger-new-report-predicts-famine-if-conflict-continues>; World Food Programme, “WFP Deputy Chief Warns Security Council of Imminent Famine in Northern Gaza Unless Conditions Change,” February 28, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-deputy-chief-warns-security-council-imminent-famine-northern-gaza-unless-conditions-change>.

⁴⁴⁹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “The Gaza Strip: IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, 15 February–15 July 2024,” March 18, 2024, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

⁴⁵⁰ World Food Programme, “Famine Imminent in Northern Gaza, New Report Warns,” March 18, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/famine-imminent-northern-gaza-new-report-warns>; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “The Gaza Strip: IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, 15 February–15 July 2024,” March 18, 2024, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.



household-level Phase 5 conditions fell from approximately 1.1 million in the March analysis to approximately 495,000 in the June analysis.⁴⁵¹

The June finding did not establish that no one had experienced starvation. It showed that the projected area-level famine was not confirmed under the conditions that subsequently developed. WFP described the change as a limited improvement, but its more categorical March warnings had already circulated worldwide.⁴⁵²

The 2024 assessments failed to incorporate complete data on humanitarian and commercial food entering Gaza, used inaccurate population estimates, relied excessively on organizations operating under Hamas rule, and did not adequately distinguish supplies denied entry from supplies that entered but awaited collection, were looted, entered private markets, or were lost during distribution.⁴⁵³

Conditions deteriorated again in 2025. In July, WFP, FAO, and UNICEF announced that food-consumption and acute-malnutrition indicators had crossed famine thresholds in parts of Gaza, while acknowledging that reliable mortality data remained difficult to collect. On August 22, the IPC classified famine as occurring in Gaza Governorate “with reasonable evidence” and projected its expansion into Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis. More than half a million people across Gaza were assessed as facing household-level Phase 5 conditions, with approximately 641,000 projected to do so by the end of September. Unlike the March 2024 forecast, this was an area-level famine classification.⁴⁵⁴

Israel rejected the determination and alleged that the IPC relied on partial malnutrition data, excluded contradictory evidence, inadequately incorporated Israeli information on food entry and availability, extrapolated uncertain mortality figures, and used mid-upper-arm-circumference data in a manner that did not establish the standard famine threshold.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Gaza Strip: Risk of Famine as 495,000 People Face Catastrophic Acute Food Insecurity (IPC Phase 5),” June 25, 2024, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-105/en/>.

⁴⁵² Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Gaza Strip: Risk of Famine as 495,000 People Face Catastrophic Acute Food Insecurity (IPC Phase 5),” June 25, 2024, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-105/en/>; World Food Programme, “WFP Response to New IPC Food Security Assessment on Gaza,” June 25, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-response-new-ipc-food-security-assessment-gaza>.

⁴⁵³ State of Israel, “The Third IPC Report on Gaza (June 2024) Displays Persistent Neutrality, Transparency and Methodology Failures,” September 3, 2024.

⁴⁵⁴ World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and UNICEF, “UN Agencies Warn Key Food and Nutrition Indicators Exceed Famine Thresholds in Gaza,” July 29, 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/un-agencies-warn-key-food-and-nutrition-indicators-exceed-famine-thresholds-gaza>; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Gaza Strip: Famine Confirmed in Gaza Governorate, Projected to Expand,” August 22, 2025, https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_July_Sept2025_Special_Snapshot.pdf.

⁴⁵⁵ State of Israel, Politics Disguised as Science: Systematic Distortions in the IPC’s Gaza Report of August 2025, 2025.



Following the October 2025 ceasefire and a substantial increase in humanitarian and commercial food flows, the IPC reported in December that no part of Gaza remained classified in famine. A UNICEF-led SMART survey conducted in accessible areas in June 2026, covering approximately 83 percent of the population, found combined acute malnutrition among surveyed children at 1.3 percent. UNICEF cautioned that this finding did not mean the broader nutrition crisis had ended. In July 2026, the IPC classified all five Gaza governorates at Phase 3, or Crisis, rather than Phase 5, while warning that conditions remained fragile and dependent on continued assistance. These later findings demonstrate how rapidly conditions changed but do not, by themselves, retrospectively prove or disprove the August 2025 classification.⁴⁵⁶

WFP and IPC statements entered the wider UN, diplomatic, and legal debate. Ten days after the March 2024 IPC assessment, the ICJ stated that famine was “setting in” and ordered Israel to ensure the unhindered provision of humanitarian assistance at scale, including by increasing the capacity and number of land crossings. The Court expressly cited OCHA’s reporting on deaths attributed to malnutrition and dehydration for that statement, rather than identifying WFP as its direct source.⁴⁵⁷

In November 2024, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant after finding reasonable grounds to believe that they bore responsibility for, among other alleged crimes, starvation as a method of warfare. While the ICC’s public summary did not identify WFP or IPC as its evidentiary source, WFP’s assessments and declarations nevertheless helped establish the wider factual and political narrative in which the legal proceedings occurred.⁴⁵⁸ Food-security warnings were repeated by UN officials, governments, NGOs, journalists, and advocates until the proposition that Israel was starving Gaza acquired the appearance of an institutionally corroborated UN conclusion.

WFP closely tracked Israeli restrictions, crossing capacity, convoy approvals, inspections, and delays but did not publish an equally detailed accounting of what happened to food after it entered Gaza.

⁴⁵⁶ World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNICEF, and World Health Organization, “UN Agencies Welcome News That Famine Has Been Pushed Back in the Gaza Strip, but Warn Fragile Gains Could Be Reversed without Increased and Sustained Support,” December 19, 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/un-agencies-welcome-news-famine-has-been-pushed-back-gaza-strip-warn-fragile-gains-could-be>; UNICEF, “State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report No. 48 (Mid-Year),” June 30, 2026, <https://www.unicef.org/media/183611/file/State-of-Palestine-Humanitarian-Situation-Report-No.48-%28Mid-Year%29%2C30-June-2026.pdf>; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Gaza Strip: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for 16 April–30 June 2026 and Projection for 1 July–31 December 2026,” July 23, 2026, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1165303/>.

⁴⁵⁷ International Court of Justice, Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (*South Africa v. Israel*), Order of March 28, 2024, paras. 21, 45, <https://www.icj-cij.org/node/203847>.

⁴⁵⁸ International Criminal Court, “Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Rejects the State of Israel’s Challenges to Jurisdiction and Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant,” November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>.



In February 2024, WFP suspended deliveries to northern Gaza after convoys encountered violence, crowds, and the seizure of food. On June 10, 2025, WFP reported that a 59-truck convoy carrying 930 metric tons of flour had been stopped and unloaded by hungry civilians before reaching its intended destination. The same statement acknowledged that some trucks had been looted by armed gangs, injuring drivers and damaging vehicles.⁴⁵⁹

These incidents do not by themselves establish that Hamas seized WFP supplies, but they demonstrate that the volume crossing Gaza's border was not the same as the volume reaching intended recipients. WFP's public reporting generally described post-entry losses as desperation, insecurity, looting, or the breakdown of law and order. It rarely identified the organizations controlling or benefiting from seized supplies and did not produce a comparable quantified account of diversion, black-market resale, taxation, armed control, or distribution failure inside Gaza.⁴⁶⁰

Hamas governed Gaza from 2007, controlled ministries, police and security organizations, maintained extensive armed and administrative networks, initiated the October 7 war, and continued operating from Gaza's civilian environment. A comprehensive assessment of Gaza's food economy should therefore examine Hamas's influence over aid routes, warehouses, recipient systems, markets, prices, taxation, armed protection, and resale, as well as the conduct of other armed groups, criminal organizations, and private traders.⁴⁶¹

WFP did not establish a transparent public system for measuring those variables or for quantifying food that entered Gaza but remained uncollected, was seized, entered private markets, or disappeared before reaching households. Operational insecurity explains some of this uncertainty, but it does not eliminate the resulting asymmetry. Israeli decisions at Gaza's borders were measured and attributed with precision; responsibility for failures inside Gaza was more often absorbed into generalized descriptions of disorder and desperation.

The institutional problem lies in the public framework surrounding that work. Its rhetoric sometimes moved beyond the precision and conditionality of the underlying technical assessments, centered responsibility overwhelmingly on Israel, and gave far less sustained attention to Hamas, armed groups, looting, market manipulation, and failures of internal distribution.

The March 2024 famine projection was not confirmed, while the August 2025 assessment did classify famine in Gaza Governorate under disputed but formally applied IPC methodology. Conditions subsequently improved enough for the classification to be removed. This record

⁴⁵⁹ World Food Programme, "UN Food Agency Pauses Deliveries to the North of Gaza," February 20, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/un-food-agency-pauses-deliveries-north-gaza/>; World Food Programme, "Statement on WFP Aid Operations in Gaza," June 10, 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/statement-wfp-aid-operations-gaza>.

⁴⁶⁰ World Food Programme, "UN Food Agency Pauses Deliveries to the North of Gaza," February 20, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/news/un-food-agency-pauses-deliveries-north-gaza/>; World Food Programme, "Statement on WFP Aid Operations in Gaza," June 10, 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/statement-wfp-aid-operations-gaza>.

⁴⁶¹ U.S. Department of State, "Hamas," in Country Reports on Terrorism 2023, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2023/>.



demonstrates the danger of converting conditional projections, household-level Phase 5 estimates, and contested data into categorical political accusations before the relevant distinctions and uncertainties are understood.⁴⁶²

Within the UN's anti-Israel architecture, WFP supplied more than food assistance. It supplied the terminology, statistics, institutional authority, and repeated public warnings that helped transform a complex crisis involving border restrictions, warfare, damaged infrastructure, humanitarian-access constraints, internal disorder, looting, market failure, and armed-group control into the far simpler international accusation that Israel was starving Gaza.

⁴⁶² Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, "Gaza Strip: Risk of Famine as 495,000 People Face Catastrophic Acute Food Insecurity (IPC Phase 5)," June 25, 2024, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-105/en/>; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, "Gaza Strip: Famine Confirmed in Gaza Governorate, Projected to Expand," August 22, 2025, <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-134/en/>; World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNICEF, and World Health Organization, "UN Agencies Welcome News That Famine Has Been Pushed Back in the Gaza Strip, but Warn Fragile Gains Could Be Reversed without Increased and Sustained Support," December 19, 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/news/un-agencies-welcome-news-famine-has-been-pushed-back-gaza-strip-warn-fragile-gains-could-be>.



32. International Organization for Migration

Organizational Status: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an intergovernmental organization that became a related organization of the United Nations system in September 2016. It retains its own constitution, membership, governing bodies, and budget.⁴⁶³

Core Mandate: IOM promotes humane and orderly migration and assists governments and affected populations through displacement response, emergency shelter, site management, voluntary return and reintegration, resettlement, counter-trafficking, labor-migration programs, migration data, and migration governance.⁴⁶⁴

Financial Framework and Funding Model: IOM's budget has administrative and operational components. Its operational activities are financed predominantly through voluntary, usually earmarked or project-based contributions from governments, UN pooled funds, international institutions, and other donors. Its 2026 Global Appeal seeks approximately \$4.7 billion to assist 41 million people and strengthen migration-management and humanitarian-response systems.⁴⁶⁵

Governance and Leadership Selection: IOM is governed by its Council, in which each Member State has one representative and one vote. The Council is the organization's highest authority and elects the Director General by a two-thirds majority.⁴⁶⁶

IOM's role in the UN's anti-Israel architecture lies in giving the conflict a specialized migration and displacement framework. Palestinian displacement, shelter needs, and movement restrictions receive extensive institutional attention, while Israeli displacement and the armed-group activity that contributed to the war receive substantially less treatment in IOM's public reporting.

Since October 7, IOM has emphasized the displacement of most of Gaza's population, many people repeatedly. Its response has included emergency shelter, essential household items, site

⁴⁶³ United Nations, *Agreement concerning the Relationship between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration*, A/70/976, July 8, 2016, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/833655>; International Organization for Migration, *Constitution*, 2nd ed., https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_constitution_en.pdf.

⁴⁶⁴ International Organization for Migration, *Making Migration Work for All: IOM Snapshot 2024* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2024), <https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1486/files/documents/2024-11/iom-snapshot-2024-web.pdf>.

⁴⁶⁵ International Organization for Migration, *Programme and Budget for 2025*, C/115/7, October 1, 2024, <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/115/c-115-7-programme-and-budget-for-2025.pdf>; International Organization for Migration, "IOM Launches 2026 Global Appeal to Support 41 Million People on the Move," December 8, 2025, <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-launches-2026-global-appeal-support-41-million-people-move>.

⁴⁶⁶ International Organization for Migration, *Constitution*, 2nd ed., arts. 6–7, 13, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_constitution_en.pdf.



management, water and sanitation assistance, protection, health support, displacement information, and early-recovery planning.⁴⁶⁷

This displacement followed a broader causal sequence. Hamas-led forces attacked Israel on October 7, murdered and abducted civilians, and subsequently continued operating fighters, tunnels, weapons, and other military infrastructure within Gaza's densely populated environment. Israel responded with a major military campaign, access restrictions, and repeated evacuation orders that themselves caused or intensified civilian displacement.⁴⁶⁸

IOM's reporting begins with humanitarian conditions within its area of operations. Nevertheless, when Israeli operations, evacuation orders, access restrictions, and deteriorating conditions are documented in detail while Hamas's military embedding and responsibility for initiating and prolonging the war receive less sustained attention, displacement can appear principally as something Israel imposed rather than as the consequence of a war involving decisions by both Israel and Hamas.

Terms such as repeated displacement, forced displacement, unsafe evacuation, movement restrictions, shelter deprivation, and loss of dignity carry consequences beyond humanitarian planning. They enter funding appeals, diplomatic debates, media reporting, legal submissions, and allegations of forcible transfer or permanent demographic change.

IOM is not a court and ordinarily does not determine whether a particular military evacuation was lawful, whether civilians were moved for their protection, or whether an armed group created the military conditions requiring evacuation. Its data may nevertheless be incorporated into wider UN and advocacy claims attributing the displacement crisis principally to Israeli conduct.⁴⁶⁹

This follows a broader institutional pattern. A specialized organization records one category of harm, publishes it through official international channels, and supplies the resulting data and terminology to humanitarian, political, and legal bodies. If the underlying military context is not

⁴⁶⁷ International Organization for Migration, "Occupied Palestinian Territory Crisis Response Plan 2025," last updated December 16, 2024, <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/occupied-palestinian-territory-crisis-response-plan-2025>.

⁴⁶⁸ United Nations Human Rights Council, Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, Detailed Findings on Attacks Carried Out on and after 7 October 2023 in Israel, A/HRC/56/CRP.3, June 10, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/coi-attacks-7october2023-report-10jun24/>; State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Hamas-Israel Conflict 2023: Key Legal Aspects," <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/hamas-israel-conflict2023-key-legal-aspects>; International Organization for Migration, "Occupied Palestinian Territory Crisis Response Plan 2025," last updated December 16, 2024, <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/occupied-palestinian-territory-crisis-response-plan-2025>.

⁴⁶⁹ International Organization for Migration, *Constitution*, 2nd ed., https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_constitution_en.pdf; International Organization for Migration, "Occupied Palestinian Territory Crisis Response Plan 2026," last updated December 9, 2025, <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/occupied-palestinian-territory-crisis-response-plan-2026>.



presented with comparable detail, the humanitarian product can carry a political implication that exceeds its operational findings.

IOM's 2026 Occupied Palestinian Territory Crisis Response Plan seeks \$170 million and targets 1,286,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank. The figure is sometimes rounded to 1.3 million in IOM public communications. The plan supports humanitarian assistance and early recovery and is accompanied by continuing site-management and operational reporting focused predominantly on Gaza.⁴⁷⁰ IOM's public Global Crisis Response Platform does not contain a comparable country-level appeal or displacement-monitoring operation for Israelis displaced by Hamas and Hezbollah.

Hamas-led forces attacked and temporarily overran Israeli communities near Gaza, killing and abducting civilians and destroying homes and other property. Beginning on October 8, 2023, Hezbollah's sustained rocket, missile, anti-tank, and drone attacks led Israel to evacuate numerous northern communities. Residents lost access to homes, schools, farms, businesses, and community networks, and many remained displaced for extended periods.⁴⁷¹

These population movements did not produce a comparable IOM shelter operation, crisis-response appeal, displacement dataset, or sustained international reporting structure. Palestinian displacement became a prominent international migration and humanitarian issue, while Israeli displacement was treated primarily as a matter for Israel's domestic authorities. The effect is that Palestinians appear principally as displaced civilians, while Israelis appear principally as state and military actors, even when Israeli civilians have been driven from their homes by cross-border attacks.

The conflict also displaced civilians in Lebanon. Hezbollah initiated sustained cross-border fire on October 8, 2023, while Israeli airstrikes, evacuation warnings, and ground operations subsequently caused extensive displacement and destruction inside Lebanon. Any comprehensive regional analysis should therefore examine Palestinian displacement in Gaza, Israeli displacement caused by Hamas and Hezbollah, Lebanese displacement during the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, and the role of Iran and its allied armed organizations in driving regional escalation.⁴⁷²

⁴⁷⁰ International Organization for Migration, "Occupied Palestinian Territory Crisis Response Plan 2026," last updated December 9, 2025, <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/occupied-palestinian-territory-crisis-response-plan-2026>.

⁴⁷¹ United Nations Human Rights Council, Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, A/HRC/56/26, May 27, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/coi-report-a-hrc-56-26-27may24/>; United Nations Secretary-General, "Remarks to the Security Council on the Situation in Lebanon," September 25, 2024, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2024-09-25/secretary-generals-remarks-the-security-council-the-situation-lebanon-bilingual-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english>.

⁴⁷² United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, "UNIFIL Statement on Rocket and Return Fire on 08 October 2023," October 8, 2023, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/news/unifil-statement-on-rocket-and-return-fire-on-08-october->



IOM tracks where Palestinians move, the condition of displacement sites, shelter deficiencies, movement restrictions, and the effects of Israeli operations. It does not maintain a comparably detailed public reporting system examining Hamas's placement of military infrastructure in civilian areas, interference with evacuation, continued hostage detention, use of underground facilities beneath neighborhoods, or responsibility for prolonging the fighting. Individual reports may mention armed groups or hostilities, but these factors do not receive the same sustained data architecture applied to Palestinian displacement and humanitarian need.

This imbalance can detach displacement from the decisions that produced it. Palestinian civilians are presented primarily as people acted upon, while Hamas's agency and military strategy become secondary context. Israeli civilians displaced by Hamas and Hezbollah receive little attention within the same institutional framework.

IOM's significance lies in supplying a specialized vocabulary and data framework concerning displacement, evacuation, shelter, sites, and movement. When those products document Palestinian displacement in detail while giving substantially less institutional attention to Israeli displacement and to the armed-group conduct that contributed to both, they reinforce a wider UN narrative centered predominantly on Israeli responsibility.

2023; International Organization for Migration, "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2024," <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2024>.



33. International Criminal Court

Organizational Status: The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an independent, treaty-based international court established by the Rome Statute. It is not a UN organ, although it emerged from a UN-led diplomatic process and maintains a formal relationship with the United Nations under Article 2 of the Statute and the 2004 UN–ICC Relationship Agreement.⁴⁷³

Core Mandate: Investigates and prosecutes individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression when the Rome Statute’s jurisdictional and admissibility requirements are met.⁴⁷⁴

Financial Framework and Funding Model: The ICC is financed primarily through assessed contributions from States Parties, supplemented by voluntary contributions and other income. The Court’s proposed 2026 programme budget was €196,852,900. Israel and the United States are not States Parties and do not finance the Court through State Party assessments. The ICC operates outside the UN regular budget, although the Rome Statute permits UN funding, subject to UNGA approval, particularly for expenses arising from UNSC referrals.⁴⁷⁵

Governance and Leadership Selection: The Assembly of States Parties adopts the ICC budget and elects its judges and Prosecutor. Judges and the Prosecutor generally serve non-renewable nine-year terms. Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the UNSC may refer a situation to the ICC even when the state concerned has not joined the Rome Statute. It may also request the deferral of an investigation or prosecution for renewable twelve-month periods.⁴⁷⁶

The ICC belongs in this report because it represents the potential coercive legal endpoint of the UN’s anti-Israel ecosystem. UN political decisions helped create the jurisdictional pathway used in the Palestinian situation, while UN agencies and investigative mechanisms supply much of the

⁴⁷³ International Criminal Court, “The ICC at a Glance,” <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/ICCAatAGlanceENG.pdf>; United Nations and International Criminal Court, *Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the International Criminal Court*, October 4, 2004, <https://treaties.un.org/pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=0800000280073f01>.

⁴⁷⁴ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 5 and 12–17, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>.

⁴⁷⁵ International Criminal Court, “About the Court,” <https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court>; International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 115–17, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>; United Nations Treaty Collection, “Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,” status as at September 16, 2026, https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-10&chapter=18&clang=_en.

⁴⁷⁶ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 13(b), 16, 36(9)(a), 42(4), and 112, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>.



surrounding factual and legal narrative. The ICC can convert that architecture into arrest warrants and personal criminal jeopardy for Israeli leaders.

The UNGA directed much of the preparatory work that produced the ICC, assigned the International Law Commission responsibility for preparing a draft statute, and convened the 1998 Rome Diplomatic Conference. The UN Secretary-General is the depositary of the Rome Statute, and the Court's founding treaty requires a formal relationship with the United Nations. The Palestinian leadership consequently deposited its 2015 instrument of accession with the UN Secretary-General.⁴⁷⁷

The UNSC can extend ICC jurisdiction to situations involving non-party states. It referred Darfur to the Court through Resolution 1593 in 2005 and Libya through Resolution 1970 in 2011. It also possesses the reverse power under Article 16 to request renewable twelve-month deferrals. The Palestinian situation, however, was not referred by the UNSC; its jurisdictional pathway arose through Palestinian accession to the Rome Statute and referral of the situation to the Prosecutor.⁴⁷⁸

The ICC remains legally independent of the United Nations. Its Prosecutor and judges make decisions under the Rome Statute rather than under instructions from the UNGA, the Secretary-General, or UN agencies. The relevant connection is therefore institutional and evidentiary, not formal UN control over the Court's judicial decisions.⁴⁷⁹

In November 2012, UNGA Resolution 67/19 accorded Palestine non-member observer State status by a vote of 138–9, with 41 abstentions. Palestine remained outside full UN membership, while its borders, sovereignty, security arrangements, and relationship with Israel remained unresolved.⁴⁸⁰

In January 2015, the Palestinian leadership deposited an instrument of accession to the Rome Statute, which entered into force for Palestine on April 1, 2015. In February 2021, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber ruled by majority that Palestine was a State Party for Rome Statute purposes and

⁴⁷⁷ United Nations, Codification Division, "United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court," https://legal.un.org/diplconf_records/1998_icc/; United Nations Treaty Collection, "State of Palestine: Accession," C.N.13.2015.TREATIES-XVIII.10, January 6, 2015, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/cn/2015/cn.13.2015-eng.pdf>.

⁴⁷⁸ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 13(b) and 16, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>; United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1593 (2005), March 31, 2005, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/544817>; United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1970 (2011), February 26, 2011, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/698927>; International Criminal Court, "Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, Respecting an Investigation of the Situation in Palestine," March 3, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-fatou-bensouda-respecting-investigation-situation-palestine>.

⁴⁷⁹ International Criminal Court, "The ICC at a Glance," <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/ICCAAtAGlanceENG.pdf>.

⁴⁸⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 67/19, "Status of Palestine in the United Nations," November 29, 2012, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/739031>.



that the Court's territorial jurisdiction extended to Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.⁴⁸¹

The Chamber expressly limited its ruling to the Rome Statute and did not determine whether Palestine qualified as a state under general international law or resolve the territory's final borders. UNGA Resolution 67/19 was an important institutional predicate for accession, but the resolution did not itself confer ICC jurisdiction. Jurisdiction resulted from Palestine's accession, the Court's acceptance of that accession, and the Chamber's interpretation of the Statute.⁴⁸²

Israel argues that the Palestinian Authority cannot delegate criminal jurisdiction over Israelis that it does not possess under the Oslo arrangements. The ICC has not accepted that limitation as barring its territorial jurisdiction. The result is that, under the Court's interpretation, Palestinian accession can expose Israelis to prosecution for alleged crimes committed in disputed territory even though Israel never joined the Court.⁴⁸³

UN political recognition thus helped transform unresolved Palestinian statehood from a subject of negotiation into part of a jurisdictional pathway over citizens of a non-party state.

On January 1, 2015, Palestine lodged a declaration accepting ICC jurisdiction retroactively from June 13, 2014. Its subsequent referral retained that starting date. Three Israeli teenagers had been abducted by Hamas-affiliated operatives on June 12, one day before the declared jurisdictional period began. The chosen date therefore placed the initial abduction outside the temporal starting point while covering Israel's ensuing operations and the 2014 Gaza war.⁴⁸⁴

In December 2019, Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda concluded that the statutory criteria for opening an investigation had been satisfied and requested a jurisdictional ruling. Following the Pre-Trial

⁴⁸¹ United Nations Treaty Collection, "State of Palestine: Accession," C.N.13.2015.TREATIES-XVIII.10, January 6, 2015, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/cn/2015/cn.13.2015-eng.pdf>; International Criminal Court, "ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Issues Its Decision on the Prosecutor's Request Related to Territorial Jurisdiction over Palestine," February 5, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-issues-its-decision-prosecutors-request-related-territorial>.

⁴⁸² International Criminal Court, "ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Issues Its Decision on the Prosecutor's Request Related to Territorial Jurisdiction over Palestine," February 5, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-issues-its-decision-prosecutors-request-related-territorial>.

⁴⁸³ International Criminal Court, "ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Issues Its Decision on the Prosecutor's Request Related to Territorial Jurisdiction over Palestine," February 5, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-issues-its-decision-prosecutors-request-related-territorial>; International Criminal Court, "Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Rejects the State of Israel's Challenges to Jurisdiction and Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant," November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>.

⁴⁸⁴ International Criminal Court, "Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, Respecting an Investigation of the Situation in Palestine," March 3, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-fatou-bensouda-respecting-investigation-situation-palestine>; Israel Security Agency, *Annual Summary 2014: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Activity*, <https://www.shabak.gov.il/media/pfsombuu/2014.pdf>.



Chamber's February 2021 decision, the Prosecutor formally opened the investigation in March 2021.⁴⁸⁵

In May 2024, Prosecutor Karim Khan sought arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. He announced the applications alongside requests for warrants against Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif, and Ismail Haniyeh.⁴⁸⁶

The simultaneous presentation placed the elected leaders of a democratic state responding to the October 7 massacre within the same prosecutorial announcement as the leaders of the organization that initiated the war. Although the applications concerned different alleged conduct, the presentation created a politically powerful appearance of equivalence.

In November 2024, the Pre-Trial Chamber issued warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant. It found reasonable grounds to believe that they bore criminal responsibility for the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare and for crimes against humanity including murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts. It also alleged responsibility as civilian superiors for intentionally directing an attack against a civilian population. These were warrant-stage allegations based on a reasonable-grounds standard, not findings of guilt.⁴⁸⁷

The Chamber also issued a warrant for Mohammed Deif, which it later terminated after receiving evidence of his death. Applications concerning Haniyeh and Sinwar were withdrawn following their deaths. The warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant remained active as of September 2026 and can be withdrawn only by ICC judges.⁴⁸⁸

The starvation allegation developed within a broader international information environment shaped by OCHA, WFP, the IPC, WHO, and other UN bodies. Their reporting supplied prominent public claims concerning food access, hunger, health conditions, and humanitarian restrictions. Because much of the ICC's evidentiary record remains confidential, however, the

⁴⁸⁵ International Criminal Court, "Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, Respecting an Investigation of the Situation in Palestine," March 3, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-fatou-bensouda-respecting-investigation-situation-palestine>.

⁴⁸⁶ International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor, *Annual Report 2024*, December 4, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-12/2024-12-04-ICC-Annual-Report-OTP-web.pdf>.

⁴⁸⁷ International Criminal Court, "Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Rejects the State of Israel's Challenges to Jurisdiction and Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant," November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>.

⁴⁸⁸ International Criminal Court, "Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Issues Warrant of Arrest for Mohammed Diab Ibrahim Al-Masri (Deif)," November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-issues-warrant-arrest-mohammed-diab-ibrahim>; International Criminal Court, "Decision Terminating Proceedings against Mr Mohammed Diab Ibrahim Al Masri (Deif)," February 26, 2025, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/CourtRecords/0902ebd180ad67a3.pdf>; International Criminal Court, "At Large," <https://www.icc-cpi.int/taxonomy/term/329>; International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, art. 58(4), <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>.



public record does not establish how heavily the judges relied on any particular UN or IPC assessment when approving the warrants.⁴⁸⁹

The Rome Statute is based on complementarity: the ICC is intended to act when relevant national authorities are unwilling or unable genuinely to investigate or prosecute the conduct at issue. Israel has an independent judiciary, attorney-general, military legal system, criminal investigators, and extensive judicial review. Israel therefore argues that ICC intervention is unwarranted and that its domestic legal system is capable of examining alleged misconduct.⁴⁹⁰

Complementarity does not automatically exempt a state because it is democratic or possesses functioning courts. The legal question is whether genuine domestic proceedings address substantially the same persons and conduct covered by the ICC case. Whether the Court has applied that standard properly to Israel remains disputed.⁴⁹¹

The precedent is nevertheless far-reaching. Under the ICC's interpretation, leaders of non-party democracies confronting terrorist organizations embedded among civilians may face personal warrants based on territorial jurisdiction derived from another State Party, even when the accused officials' own state never accepted the Court's authority.

An ICC lawyer accused Prosecutor Karim Khan of sexual misconduct and abuse of authority. A second woman later made allegations concerning his conduct earlier in his career. Khan denied wrongdoing and stepped aside in May 2025 while the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services investigated.⁴⁹²

Following the investigation, the bureau of the Assembly of States Parties concluded that Khan had engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationship with a junior ICC lawyer and recommended his removal. In July 2026, 82 of the Court's 125 States Parties voted to remove him after finding

⁴⁸⁹ International Criminal Court, "Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Rejects the State of Israel's Challenges to Jurisdiction and Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant," November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>; International Criminal Court, Assembly of States Parties, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, ICC-ASP/24/10, para. 313, https://asp.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/asp_docs/ICC-ASP-24-10-ENG.pdf.

⁴⁹⁰ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 1 and 17, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>; State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "ICC's Lack of Jurisdiction," <https://govextra.gov.il/foreign-affairs/icc/home/>.

⁴⁹¹ International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor, *Policy Paper on Case Selection and Prioritisation*, September 15, 2016, paras. 29–31, https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/itemsDocuments/20160915_OTP-Policy_Case-Selection_Eng.pdf.

⁴⁹² Stephanie van den Berg, "ICC Prosecutor Khan to Go on Leave amid Sexual Misconduct Probe, Court Sources Say," Reuters, May 16, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/icc-prosecutor-khan-leave-amid-sexual-misconduct-probe-court-sources-say-2025-05-16/>; The Guardian, "Second Woman Accuses ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan of Sexual Misconduct," August 28, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2025/aug/28/second-woman-accuses-icc-chief-prosecutor-karim-khan-of-sexual-misconduct>.



serious misconduct and a serious breach of duty. Khan denied the allegations and announced that he would challenge the decision.⁴⁹³

Separately, the Guardian reported in November 2025 that a covert private-intelligence operation had targeted Khan's accuser and her family. According to leaked documents and sources cited by the newspaper, investigators sought evidence connecting the woman to Israel or Mossad that could have supported claims that the allegations were an Israeli effort to discredit Khan. No such connection was found. The reporting linked the operation to a high-level Qatari diplomatic unit, which Qatar denied. One participating firm acknowledged an ICC-related operation but denied that it had targeted the woman or been commissioned by the Qatari government. The Guardian reported that it had seen no evidence that Khan was personally involved.⁴⁹⁴

Khan's removal created a serious credibility problem for the prosecutorial leadership that initiated the unprecedented cases against Netanyahu and Gallant. It did not, however, invalidate the judicially issued warrants or establish that the Israel cases were legally unfounded. Those questions remain for the Court's judges.⁴⁹⁵

UNGA Resolution 67/19 helped create the institutional conditions for Palestinian accession to the Rome Statute. The ICC then treated Palestine as a State Party and relied on that status when establishing territorial jurisdiction. UN political action therefore formed an important part of the legal pathway used to pursue citizens of a state that never joined the Court.⁴⁹⁶

UN bodies also shape the information environment surrounding the cases. OCHA produces casualty, access, hunger, and displacement reporting. WHO records incidents affecting health care. WFP and the IPC assess hunger and famine conditions. HRC commissions, OHCHR mechanisms, and Special Rapporteurs advance allegations of war crimes, apartheid, extermination, and genocide. These products can be submitted to the ICC, cited by advocates,

⁴⁹³ Stephanie van den Berg, "ICC Bureau Says Khan Should Be Fired for Inappropriate Sexual Relationship," Reuters, June 24, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/icc-bureau-says-khan-should-be-fired-inappropriate-sexual-relationship-2026-06-24/>; International Criminal Court, Assembly of States Parties, "Statement of the ASP President Following the Conclusion of Disciplinary Proceedings Involving Prosecutor Karim Khan," July 24, 2026, <https://icccpi-web.icccpi-prod.uniccloud.org/news/statement-asp-president-following-conclusion-disciplinary-proceedings-involving-prosecutor>; The Guardian, "Karim Khan Ousted as Prosecutor of International Criminal Court," July 24, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2026/jul/24/karim-khan-ousted-from-role-as-prosecutor-of-international-criminal-court>.

⁴⁹⁴ The Guardian, "Qatar-Linked Intelligence Operation Targeted ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan's Alleged Victim," November 6, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2025/nov/06/qatar-linked-intelligence-operation-targeted-icc-prosecutor-karim-khan-alleged-victim>.

⁴⁹⁵ International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor, "Statement of ICC Office of the Prosecutor on the ASP Decision on Disciplinary Proceedings Involving the Prosecutor," July 24, 2026, <https://icccpi-web.icccpi-prod.uniccloud.org/news/statement-icc-office-prosecutor-asp-decision-disciplinary-proceedings-involving-prosecutor>; International Criminal Court, "At Large," <https://www.icc-cpi.int/taxonomy/term/329>.

⁴⁹⁶ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 67/19, "Status of Palestine in the United Nations," November 29, 2012, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/739031>; International Criminal Court, "ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Issues Its Decision on the Prosecutor's Request Related to Territorial Jurisdiction over Palestine," February 5, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-issues-its-decision-prosecutors-request-related-territorial>.



and used to reinforce the broader narrative surrounding criminal proceedings. Their precise role in the Court's confidential evidence, however, cannot be determined from the public record.⁴⁹⁷

The process also works in reverse. ICC investigations and warrants are cited throughout the international system as evidence that accusations against Israel possess legal credibility, even though a warrant reflects reasonable grounds rather than a conviction. The Court's actions consequently reinforce further diplomatic, economic, and legal pressure.

This is why the ICC belongs in a report about the UN's anti-Israel ecosystem despite not being a UN body. The UN helped create the Court, contributed to the institutional pathway for Palestinian State Party status, possesses mechanisms through which ICC jurisdiction can be activated, and generates much of the surrounding source material. The ICC supplies the coercive endpoint.

In February 2025, President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 14203 imposing sanctions on the ICC. The order described the Court's actions against the United States and Israel as illegitimate, rejected ICC jurisdiction over nationals of non-party states, condemned the warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant, and authorized financial and visa restrictions. The sanctions were subsequently applied to Khan and other ICC judges and prosecutors and, in August 2026, to ICC President Tomoko Akane and senior trial lawyer Abdoulaye Seye.⁴⁹⁸

Washington's concern extended beyond Israel. The administration argued that accepting ICC jurisdiction over Israeli officials through contested Palestinian territorial jurisdiction could establish a precedent affecting American soldiers and officials, particularly in connection with the Court's Afghanistan investigation.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁷ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, art. 15(2), <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>; International Criminal Court, Assembly of States Parties, *Proposed Programme Budget for 2026*, ICC-ASP/24/10, para. 313, https://asp.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/asp_docs/ICC-ASP-24-10-ENG.pdf.

⁴⁹⁸ White House, "Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court," Executive Order 14203, February 6, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/imposing-sanctions-on-the-international-criminal-court/>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, "Issuance of Executive Order Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court; International Criminal Court-related Designation," February 13, 2025, <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20250213>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, "Counter Narcotics Designations; International Criminal Court-related Designations; Issuance of International Criminal Court-related General Licenses," June 5, 2025, <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20250605>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, "International Criminal Court-Related Designations; Issuance of International Criminal Court-Related General License," August 20, 2025, <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20250820>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, "International Criminal Court-related Designations; Venezuela-related Designation; Issuance of International Criminal Court-related General License," August 18, 2026, <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20260818>.

⁴⁹⁹ White House, "Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court," Executive Order 14203, February 6, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/imposing-sanctions-on-the-international-criminal-court/>; Michael R. Pompeo, "Remarks to the Press," U.S. Department of State, March 15, 2019, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/remarks-to-the-press-6/>.



The ICC is more consequential than a condemnatory UN resolution because it targets individuals. Its warrants can restrict travel, expose officials to possible arrest in States Parties, disrupt diplomacy, and deter political and military leaders from making security decisions.⁵⁰⁰

The institutional sequence is significant. The UNGA elevated Palestine's status. Palestine used that status to join the ICC. The Court accepted jurisdiction beginning the day after the 2014 kidnapping and later extended territorial jurisdiction across Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. UN agencies and investigative mechanisms generated humanitarian and legal accusations surrounding Israeli military operations. The ICC ultimately issued warrants against Israel's prime minister and former defense minister.⁵⁰¹

The Prosecutor who initiated those cases was subsequently removed for serious misconduct and breach of duty after a separate, reportedly Qatar-linked intelligence operation unsuccessfully sought evidence connecting his accuser to Israel. His removal did not terminate the warrants, but it intensified questions about the Court's leadership and credibility.⁵⁰²

The ICC is not part of the United Nations. It is nevertheless the sharpest enforcement instrument within the broader lawfare architecture that UN institutions helped construct. UN bodies generate political recognition, accusations, statistics, and institutional legitimacy. The ICC can convert that environment into personal criminal liability.

⁵⁰⁰ International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, arts. 86 and 89, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/2024-05/Rome-Statute-eng.pdf>.

⁵⁰¹ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 67/19, "Status of Palestine in the United Nations," November 29, 2012, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/739031>; International Criminal Court, "Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, Respecting an Investigation of the Situation in Palestine," March 3, 2021, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-fatou-bensouda-respecting-investigation-situation-palestine>; International Criminal Court, "Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I Rejects the State of Israel's Challenges to Jurisdiction and Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant," November 21, 2024, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>.

⁵⁰² International Criminal Court, Assembly of States Parties, "Statement of the ASP President Following the Conclusion of Disciplinary Proceedings Involving Prosecutor Karim Khan," July 24, 2026, <https://icccpi-web.icccpi-prod.unicloud.org/news/statement-asp-president-following-conclusion-disciplinary-proceedings-involving-prosecutor>; The Guardian, "Qatar-Linked Intelligence Operation Targeted ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan's Alleged Victim," November 6, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2025/nov/06/qatar-linked-intelligence-operation-targeted-icc-prosecutor-karim-khan-alleged-victim>; International Criminal Court, "At Large," <https://www.icc-cpi.int/taxonomy/term/329>.



Conclusion and Recommendations

The UN's anti-Israel bias is not episodic or confined to a handful of hostile resolutions. Over decades, Member States have created, renewed, and financed an institutional ecosystem that repeatedly condemns and delegitimizes Israel and supports legal, diplomatic, and economic pressure against it. UNGA majorities create mandates, committees, budgets, and reporting requirements; Secretariat units turn those decisions into continuing bureaucratic structures; and the HRC, OHCHR, commissions of inquiry, Special Rapporteurs, and international legal mechanisms translate political campaigns into the language of human rights and international law. Humanitarian, development, health, education, gender, cultural, labor, and economic bodies reproduce many of the same claims through specialized professional frameworks. Political resolutions generate investigations; investigations produce reports and legal allegations; and those products feed databases, corporate pressure, sanctions campaigns, court proceedings, and further resolutions.

The result is a system that applies exceptional and frequently discriminatory scrutiny to Israel while weakening the universal principles the UN claims to uphold. The UN Charter is based on sovereign equality, international peace and security, human rights, and cooperation among states. Yet Israel alone remains subject to a permanent country-specific HRC agenda item, while several other Palestine-focused mechanisms are distinguished by their unusual longevity or open-ended duration. These mechanisms frequently marginalize terrorism and abuses committed by Israel's adversaries and convert contested political and legal claims into authoritative-looking UN findings. This blurs the distinction between impartial international law and political advocacy, damages the credibility of human-rights institutions, and turns universal standards into instruments of unequal treatment.

October 7 exposed this inversion with particular clarity. After the Hamas-led assault produced the largest mass killing of Jews since the Holocaust, many UN institutions rapidly returned to frameworks that gave far greater sustained attention to Israeli conduct than to Hamas's responsibility for initiating the war, taking hostages, and operating from civilian areas. Palestinians continued to be treated principally as a collective victim category, while Hamas's military and political agency often remained secondary in the institutional analysis.

The danger extends beyond Israel's security and international standing. Open-ended commissions, politicized mandate-holders, corporate databases, selective interpretations of international law, and criminal proceedings against leaders of non-party states can establish precedents usable against other democracies conducting counterterrorism operations, defending territorial claims, imposing sanctions, or resisting transnational political pressure. Some authoritarian governments face substantial UN scrutiny, but they also participate in political blocs that shape UN priorities, while several permanent mechanisms directed at Israel have no direct institutional equivalent. Democratic states finance a substantial share of this system.

Democratic governments therefore have a direct interest in confronting this machinery even when they disagree with particular Israeli policies. The central issue is whether international



institutions apply equal standards, evidentiary rigor, due process, accountability, and realistic interpretations of international law while recognizing the legitimate security needs of democratic states. Permanent discriminatory machinery against one democracy lowers the barrier to selective use against others, obscures the distinction between democracies and terrorist organizations, and weakens legitimate national-defense and counterterrorism tools. Political and financial support should therefore be made conditional on equal treatment and measurable institutional reform.

The following steps should form the basis of a common strategy for democratic governments and other states committed to defending the UN's founding principles, preventing the politicization of international institutions, protecting the integrity of international law, and combating antisemitism and the delegitimization of Israel.

First, end automatic discretionary funding for discriminatory UN mechanisms. Governments and legislatures should require affirmative authorization for voluntary contributions to mechanisms that form key parts of the UN's anti-Israel ecosystem and publish transparent accounts of all direct and indirect support, including voluntary contributions, pooled funds, extrabudgetary resources, grants, contractors, implementing partners, and external support to Special Procedures. Because assessed contributions are generally collective obligations rather than earmarked payments, donor states should oppose discriminatory appropriations during UN budget negotiations and seek reductions or offsets through lawful procedures. Any withholding of assessed contributions should account for applicable treaty, Charter, domestic-law, arrears, and voting consequences. General voluntary contributions should not provide indirect funding for activities that governments would refuse to finance directly.

Second, make dismantling permanent anti-Israel mechanisms a condition of future political and discretionary financial support. Democratic governments should demand the abolition of HRC Agenda Item 7, termination of the open-ended commission of inquiry on Israel and the Palestinian territories, and an end to the Special Rapporteur mandate that continues until the conclusion of the Israeli occupation rather than being established for a fixed period. They should also seek the closure of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Division for Palestinian Rights, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices, and related advocacy infrastructure. Israel should be examined under the same country, thematic, and periodic-review mechanisms applied to other states.

Third, impose measurable neutrality, transparency, and anti-terror safeguards on broader UN agencies. The problem is not confined to explicitly Israel-focused institutions. Bodies operating in humanitarian affairs, health, development, children's rights, women's rights, education, culture, labor, and human rights have been incorporated into the same political ecosystem. Discretionary funding should depend on public disclosure of methodologies, sources, personnel, partners, subcontractors, and relevant external financing; independent audits; effective correction procedures; lawful and rigorous anti-terror vetting; and demonstrated willingness to examine all relevant actors. Agencies that repeatedly fail these standards should lose voluntary support.



Fourth, refuse to finance or legitimize selective international lawfare and economic warfare. Governments should deny discretionary support to mechanisms that use one-sided or inadequately substantiated allegations to promote arms embargoes, corporate blacklists, sanctions, prosecutions, boycotts, or other campaigns against democratic states, their officials, companies, universities, or citizens. Requests for cooperation with investigations or databases created by structurally discriminatory mandates should receive heightened scrutiny. Equal treatment, sound evidence, and due process should be enforceable conditions of cooperation rather than rhetorical principles.

Fifth, establish individual accountability for egregious abuses. UN privileges and immunities protect legitimate official functions but should not be treated as political impunity. Where reliable evidence satisfies applicable legal thresholds, governments should consider visa restrictions, asset freezes, financial sanctions, terrorism-related designations, prosecution, or other individual measures against officials, employees, mandate-holders, contractors, or affiliated personnel who materially support terrorism, engage in serious misconduct, or misuse their positions to conduct unlawful campaigns against democratic states and their citizens. Any action should comply with applicable immunity rules, statutory requirements, and due-process protections.

The United States' designation of Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese illustrates both the availability and the controversy of such measures. Washington sanctioned her in July 2025 for what it described as efforts to promote ICC action and political and economic warfare against American and Israeli persons. A federal court temporarily blocked the sanctions in May 2026, after which an appellate ruling permitted the government to restore her to the sanctions list while litigation continued. Governments considering similar action should base it on clearly defined legal standards and substantiated individual conduct.

Sixth, build a coordinated democratic response to politicized international lawfare. Democracies concerned that legal theories, investigative mechanisms, sanctions campaigns, corporate databases, and prosecutions developed against Israel could later be applied selectively against them should establish a standing coalition to monitor discriminatory initiatives, coordinate voting and diplomatic responses, share information concerning appointments and funding, challenge biased mandate-holders, and support one another in international proceedings. Its purpose should be to defend international law through equal application, evidentiary rigor, due process, and recognition of the right of states to defend their citizens against terrorism and hybrid warfare.

Seventh, make support for discriminatory machinery relevant to broader diplomatic relationships. Major democratic donor states should make clear that persistent efforts to create or preserve discriminatory mechanisms may affect foreign assistance, development cooperation, trade preferences, and diplomatic support. Such decisions should be proportionate and based on transparent criteria, but governments should no longer treat systematic participation in campaigns against democratic allies as unrelated to the wider bilateral relationship. States should be encouraged to oppose, defund, reform, or withdraw from mechanisms that have become instruments of institutional discrimination.



Eighth, replace failed bodies and functions where reform proves impossible. Ending support for a politicized mechanism does not require abandoning humanitarian assistance, refugee relief, development, health cooperation, human-rights protection, or international diplomacy. Essential services can be transferred to bilateral programs, mission-focused coalitions, effective regional institutions, rigorously vetted NGOs, host governments, and private-sector providers. Replacement mechanisms should include transparent procurement, independent audits, anti-terror screening, end-use monitoring, measurable outcomes, and automatic suspension when assistance is diverted.

The choice is not between accepting the UN's existing anti-Israel machinery and abandoning international cooperation. International institutions should be judged by whether they advance the purposes for which they were created. Democracies that refuse to finance discriminatory, politicized, or terror-compromised institutions are defending the conditions necessary for genuine international cooperation: equal treatment, accountability, transparency, lawful respect for state sovereignty, and measurable results. Where the UN meets those standards, democratic governments should work with it. Where it does not, they should be prepared to defund discretionary activities, disengage from compromised mechanisms, and build more accountable alternatives.