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**NGO Action News 31 December 2020**

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND THEQUESTION OF PALESTINE**

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**Middle East**

* 31 December [BADIL](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/92-2020/5122-pr-en-311220-45.html) concluded the “Palestinian Stories” project, which it implemented in cooperation with 6 grassroots institutions. The project included 27 female and male youth participants and aimed to shed light on the ongoing daily violations that Palestinians suffer, strengthen communication between the Palestinian people, especially in light of the escalation of the fragmentation, separation and isolation policies practiced by Israel.
* On 28 December 2020, [Al-Haq](https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/17724.html) sent letters to the High Representative of the European Commission, the Executive Vice President and European Union (EU) Commissioner for Trade, and EU Member States with diplomatic representatives in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), welcoming and calling on them to support the principled initiative of the 46 MEPs, representing most of the European Parliament’s political groups, to ban trade with, and support for illegal settlements established in occupied territories.
* On 27 December, [Adalah – the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel](https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/10207) sent an urgent letter to senior Israeli officials demanding they act to immediately reverse the decision to block Palestinians designated by Israel as “security prisoners” from receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. The NGO also called on Israel to refrain from infringing upon the health and human rights of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli facilities, as authorities have been doing on a consistent basis since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.
* On 24 December, [B’Tselem](https://www.btselem.org/settler_violence/2020_olive_harvest) published the short briefing “2020 olive harvest – another year of severe, state-backed settler violence”, which included an interactive map of the occupied West Bank and documented 39 incidents in which settlers attacked Palestinian harvesters, blocked their access to their own olive groves, stole crops, and damaged trees and farming equipment. The incidents occurred in villages throughout the West Bank – in the districts of Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Salfit, and Qalqiliyah.
* On 22 December, [ten Israeli, Palestinian and international health and human rights organizations](https://www.mezan.org/en/post/23892) issued a joint statement demanding that Israel provide necessary COVID-19 vaccines to Palestinian health care systems under its legal obligations as the occupying Power in the OPT. Signatories to the statement were Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Amnesty International Israel, B’Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights, Medical Human Rights Network IFHHRO, MEDACT, Physicians for Human Rights Israel and The Palestinian Center for Human Rights.
* On 21 December, [HaMoked](http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates2207) informed that following its petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice, the Israeli military allowed an East Jerusalem resident to enter Gaza to mourn her father with her mother and siblings.
* On 18 December, the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](https://www.pchrgaza.org/en/31-palestinian-european-human-rights-organisations-networks-trade-unions-demand-basque-company-caf-be-included-in-un-settlement-database/) informed that 31 prominent human rights organisations, networks and trade unions from Palestine and Europe had submitted a report to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva demanding that the Spanish company Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles (CAF) be included in the UN database of businesses involved in Israel’s illegal settlement enterprise for its role in expanding and operating Israel’s Jerusalem Light Rail (JLR), entrenching Israel’s illegal settlements in occupied and annexed Jerusalem.
* On 16 December [BADIL](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/92-2020/5118-pr-en-161220-44.html) released its 25th working paper “Creeping Annexation: A Pillar of Zionist-Israeli Colonization Process in Palestine”, which places the most recent developments of the annexation of large spans of the West Bank within the context of the Zionist-Israeli colonization of Mandatory Palestine since the late 19th century.
* On 14 December 2020, [Al-Haq](https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/17639.html) launched the report “Deprived a Voice: An Investigation into Shrinking Space in Area C”, which examines the daily harassment of human rights defenders by Israeli forces and settlers. In doing so, the report examines how human rights defenders, including human rights field workers, journalists, medical personnel and volunteers, are targeted and silenced in Area C, in an attempt by Israel to shrink Palestinian space for critical human rights work.

**Europe**

* On 15 December, the [European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine (ECCP)](https://www.eccpalestine.org/the-eus-funding-of-companies-listed-on-the-un-database/) issued the briefing “The EU’s funding of companies listed on the UN database”, which inter alia outlined that ECCP found out that six companies listed in the UN database for their direct complicity with illegal Israeli settlements had received European taxpayers’ money through two research programs: the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) from 2007 to 2013, and the Horizon 2020 programme from 2014 to 2020.

*This newsletter informs about recent and upcoming activities of Civil Society Organizations affiliated with the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the UN Secretariat provide the information “as is” without warranty of any*kind,*and do not accept any responsibility or liability for the accuracy, or reliability of the information contained in the websites linked in the newsletter.*