**NGO Action News – 10 August 2018**

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Middle East

* On 10 August, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) issued a press release to denounce Israel’s deliberate targeting of civilian property and the destruction of Al-Mishal Cultural Centre and the wounding of twenty civilians in Gaza City. PCHR stressed that the attack was a “serious violation of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Declaration,” and the provisions of international humanitarian law dealing with the protection of cultural property in times of war and occupation.
* On 9 August, Gisha- Legal Centre for Freedom of Movement issued a statement to express its concern with the escalation of hostilities impacting civilians in both Gaza and southern Israel. Gisha reiterated that deliberate or indiscriminate fire on civilian population centres was a grave violation of international law. The NGO denounced the “massive bombardment of the Gaza Strip” which led to the death and injury of civilians and caused damage to water and sewage facilities.
* On 9 August, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights condemned the Israeli military’s targeting of civilians and their properties, and “the unnecessary harm and trauma caused to the population in Gaza.” Al Mezan spoke of the recent restrictions on the movement of goods and in the permitted fishing zone; and warned against any further escalation in hostilities, as it could lead to full-scale military bombardment.
* On 9 August, Al-Haq strongly condemned the Israeli Forces’ continued suppression of the Great March of Return and warned against Israel’s “persistent, deliberate, unnecessary, indiscriminate and disproportionate” use of force against Palestinian protestors in Gaza. The continued killing of peaceful protestors constitutes clear violations of Israel’s obligations under ICCPR and amounts to the war crime of wilful killing and individual criminal responsibility at the International Criminal Court (ICC).
* On 6 August, The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) issued a press release to denounce the detention of workers in civil society organizations at Ben Gurion Airport while returning from abroad. ACRI explained that Shin Bet had resumed its practice of summoning human rights activists to “warning conversations.” The NGO petitioned earlier the Supreme Court, challenging the authority of Shin Bet, and wrote on 31 July to the Petitions Department of the State Attorney’s Office concerning the recent incidents.

Europe

* On 6 August, the UK-based Palestinian Return Centre (PRC) issued a new report on “UNRWA’s social assistance and poverty reduction approaches- the case of Gazan refugees in Jordan”. The study provides an overview of the Gazan refugees’ living conditions and an assessment of UNRWA’s medium-term strategies to alleviate poverty among Palestinian refugee families in its fields of operation, particularly the Social Safety Net Program.

United Nations

* On 10 August, UNRWA concluded its 2018 children’s summer camp implemented by the Agency’s community health, family and child protection programmes. It was conducted across the West Bank under the title of “My Identity is my Dignity”. Eighteen summer camps for refugee children were organized by UNRWA seeking to build youth confidence and leadership skills and to help encourage a spirit of volunteerism in Palestine refugee communities.
* On 8 August, Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick called on the Israeli authorities to immediately allow the entry of UN-purchased emergency fuel into the Gaza strip to avoid closure of hospitals and overflow of sewage in Gaza streets. He stated that “restricting the entry of emergency fuel to Gaza is a dangerous practice” and warned against a “cycle of repeated or worsening crisis,” which needs to be addressed with longer-term solutions.