**NGO ACTION NEWS**

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**Middle East**

On 20 October, the Palestinian Centre for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA) released a special report entitled “[Social Media](http://www.madacenter.org/news.php?lang=1&id=288): A New Venue to Censor and Prosecute Journalists” which raises concerns about violations committed by Israeli and Palestinian forces against Palestinian journalists for their social media posts.

In a report issued on 20 October (“[Silencing the Press](http://pchrgaza.org/en/?p=8497)”, Report No. 18), the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) said that Israeli arrests of journalists covering non-violent demonstrations against the Wall and settlements had significantly increased since October 2015. On 19 October, PCHR also [expressed concern](http://pchrgaza.org/en/?p=8490) about three arrests over Facebook posts by Palestinian security services.

On 17 October, Defence for Children International-Palestine reported that at least four [Palestinian teen-agers](http://www.dci-palestine.org/facebook_posts_land_palestinian_teens_in_administrative_detention) had been placed under administrative detention by the Israeli authorities over Facebook posts.

Following a visit to monitor humanitarian conditions at the Rafah Crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, on 19 October, the ICRC called on the Egyptian authorities to facilitate access for Gaza patients and students and expressed hope that the crossing would be permanently open.

On 16 October, Al Haq launched its [“Facts on the Ground”](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/targets/third-party-states/1079-al-haqs-launches-the-facts-on-the-ground-campaign) campaign which focuses on Israel’s exploitation of Palestinian natural resources and the associated violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

**Europe**

Under the theme “Take Part: [Lobby of Parliament for Palestine](https://www.palestinecampaign.org/2016lobby/)”, the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign in the UK is calling on the public to join on 15 November meetings with British Members of Parliament. The main focus of the lobbying effort shall be illegal settlements.

On 18 October, a delegation of Palestinian students due to visit the British Parliament for discussions with [Scottish National Party](http://snpfop.scot/2016/10/awards-for-snp-mps-seized-by-israeli-authorities/) (SNP) Members of Parliament (MPs) was prevented from leaving Palestine by the Israeli authorities and awards intended for the MPs were seized.

On 17 October, the EU Delegation to Israel posted on Twitter a message of support for B’Tselem highlighting an [EU-funded project](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/maintaining-human-rights-vulnerable-palestinian-communities-risk-forced-displacement-area-0_enl) to protect Palestinian communities at risk of displacement in (West Bank) Area C, currently implemented by B’Tselem. After calling for external pressure to stop settlements and end the occupation at an informal “Arria-formula” Security Council meeting on 14 October, B’Tselem director Hagai El-Ad has been harshly criticized in Israel. At the Security Council debate on 19 October, the U.S. representative thanked B’Tselem and Americans for Peace Now for sharing their technical expertise and stressed the importance of creating a political atmosphere in which all voices can be heard.

**North America**

On 25 October, Columbia University Law School in New York will be hosting a conversation entitled “Human Rights, International Law and the Occupation of Palestine” with [Prof. Michael Lynk](http://web.law.columbia.edu/content/human-rights-international-law-and-israeli-occupation-palestine), UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967.

**United Nations**

On 26 October (13:15 to 14:15), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is organizing at UNHQ in New York a side-event entitled “From Dispossession to Resilience: The De-Development of Palestine and its Normative and Humanitarian Implications” with legal expert Diana Buttu, NRC Policy and Protection Adviser Itay Epshtain and Prof. Michael Lynk, UN Special Rapporteur.

In a 19 October briefing to the UN Security Council, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O’Brien said he continues “to be alarmed by Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians and the numerous responses to such attacks or alleged attacks by Israeli forces, many of which have raised allegations about [excessive use of force](http://www.ochaopt.org/content/protection-civilians-weekly-report-4-17-october-2016).”

On 18 October, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI) and Al Haq held a [briefing](https://www.facebook.com/pg/UN.palestinianrights/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10157627240885346) at UNHQ on current human issues in the OPT including the impact of [settlement businesses](https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/01/19/occupation-inc/how-settlement-businesses-contribute-israels-violations-palestinian) on Palestinian rights, the use of excessive force, collective punishment and the need for [accountability](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/4812/2016/en/).

In a letter to UN Member States of 17 October, AI stated that Israel’s investigation mechanisms had long shielded Israeli security personnel responsible for unlawful killings from prosecution. The organization called for independent investigations to be initiated automatically into all killings, the application of universal jurisdiction by States to end impunity and the suspension of sales of arms and crowd control equipment to Israel until substantive steps to achieve accountability are taken.

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