**NGO Action News**

March 31, 2017

<https://unispal.un.org/ngoactionnews.nsf/1c0b3ab87dc4f2f8852568f8007759fd/973309ca72ce8bdb852580f400691e5f?OpenDocument>

**NGO ACTION NEWS**

**Middle East**

On 1 April, [Gush Shalom](http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/events/1464389870) reports that an Israeli and East Jerusalem coalition will lead a Peace March in Jerusalem under the theme “*After 50 Years, High Time to End the Occupation*”.

On 31 March, [Peace Now Settlement Watch](http://peacenow.org.il/en/category/settlement-watch) issued two press releases in relation to planned settlement construction and policies.   
  
On 30 March, [Addameer](http://www.addameer.org/news/take-action-palestinian-prisoners-month-2017) called for action to defend the rights of Palestinian detainees and prisoners (*Take Action: Palestinian Prisoners’ Month 2017)*. On 26 March, the organization stated that 12 members of the [Palestinian Legislative Council](http://www.addameer.org/news/12-palestinian-legislative-council-members-held-israeli-prisons) (PLC) were currently held in Israeli prisons.   
  
In March, [Physicians for Human Rights](http://www.phr.org.il/en/politics-of-punishment/) Israel released its 2016 report on solitary confinement in Israeli prisons.  
  
To commemorate Land Day, on 30 March, [Al Mezan Center](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/21894/On+the+41st+Commemoration+of+Land+Day+) for Human Rights issued a press release expressing concern about an uptick in Israeli land confiscation policies and called on the international community to ensure respect for Palestinians’ rights in accordance with the UN Charter and international law.  
  
On 28 March, [BADIL](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/86-2017/4754-pr-en-280317-28.html)-Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights reaffirmed its support for the PA Directive on Legal Aid for Palestinian Communities Facing Forcible Transfer. In a statement issued the same day, the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council ([PHROC](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/targets/palestinian-human-rights-organizations/1112-phroc-calls-upon-un-agencies-and-other-international-organizations-to-adhere-to-the-state-of-palestines-directive-on-legal-aid-for-palestinian-communities-facing-forcible-transfer)) further called on the UN and other international organizations to abide by the directive.   
  
On 28 March, [B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/harassment/20170328_soldiers_take_boy_and_desert_him_near_village) reported an instance of harassment against two Palestinian minors (12 and 13) and their families by IDF soldiers apparently seeking to investigate a shooting incident near the West Bank village of Azzun.   
  
On 23 March, [Tomorrow’s Youth Organization](http://www.tomorrowsyouth.org/programs/international-internships/) (TYO) announced the start of a new cycle of its International Internship Programme. For ten weeks, four recent graduates from the US and Ireland will be conducting activities with children, youth and adults in refugee camps in the Nablus area.   
  
On 19 March, the [Gaza Community Mental Health Programme](http://www.gcmhp.com/en/news.aspx?id=1589) started the 2017-2018 cycle of its *Higher Diploma for Community Mental Health*to which 15 students have been admitted.

**Europe**

On 29 March, several organizations including the [International Human Rights Federation](https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/globalisation-human-rights/report-reveals-links-between-five-french-banks-and-insurance) issued a paper reporting links between five French banks and insurance companies and illegal Israeli settlements.

A legal opinion by a prominent human rights lawyer requested by the UK-based [Palestine Solidarity Campaign](https://www.palestinecampaign.org/victory-free-speech-palestine/) found major faults with the UK Government’s new antisemitism definition, the group said, as it impedes legitimate criticism of Israel.

**North America**

On 4 April, the Centre for Palestine Studies at Columbia is inviting to a film screening followed by a discussion with [**filmmaker Hany Abu Assad**](http://www.palestine.mei.columbia.edu/cps-events-spring-2017/2017/4/4/hany-abu-assad-film-screening).

On 3 April, the Centre for Palestine Studies at [**Columbia University**](http://www.palestine.mei.columbia.edu/cps-events-spring-2017/2017/4/3/seeing-like-the-sea-the-politics-of-solidarity-and-pleasure-aboard-the-ships-to-gaza) will host a talk by Nikolas Kosmatopoulos, Assistant Professor at the American University of Beirut, entitled “Seeing like the Sea - The Politics of Solidarity and Pleasure aboard the Ships to Gaza”.

From 31 March to 2 April, [**Jewish Voice for Peace**](https://nmm.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/) will hold its 2017 National Member Meeting in Chicago.

On 28 March, the [**US Campaign for Palestinian Rights**](https://uscpr.org/campaigns/oppose-israel-anti-boycott-act/) launched an action alert calling on citizens to contact Members of Congress asking them to oppose a new bill (Israel Anti-Boycott Act) which reportedly seeks to impose fines on corporations refusing to do business with illegal Israeli settlements.