**NGO Action News**

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**NGO ACTION NEWS**

**Global: Jerusalem**

    Against the background of settlement expansion in East Jerusalem, on 31 July, [Peace Now](http://peacenow.org.il/en/palestinian-family-sheikh-jarrah-faces-imminent-eviction-benefit-settlers) reported the case of a Palestinian family facing on 9 August eviction from their home in East Jerusalem’s Sheikh Jarrah’s neighbourhood for the benefit of settlers whose family had owned the property before 1948. According to the organization, the settlers regained ownership of the house on the basis of the right of return for Jewish owners of property in East Jerusalem, encapsulated in a law passed by the Knesset in 1970 which created “an unequal situation where only Jews may return to private properties lost during the 1948 war.”  
  
  
   On 23 and 27 July, [The Association for Civil Rights in Israel](http://www.acri.org.il/en/2017/07/27/harm-to-journalists-and-freedom-of-the-press-in-recent-events-in-jerusalem/) (ACRI) sent letters to the Israeli Police urging to allow full freedom of movements to journalists covering events in Jerusalem following the killing of two Israeli police officers on 14 July. In a previous update, ACRI provided its [2017 East Jerusalem Facts and Figures](http://www.acri.org.il/en/2017/05/24/east-jerusalem-facts-and-figures-2017/).  
  
  
         On 25 July, [Amnesty International](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/07/israeli-forces-carry-out-violent-hospital-raids-in-ruthless-display-of-force/) issued a press release entitled “*Israeli forces carry out violent hospital raids in ruthless display of force*”.  
  
  
         On 22 July, [Gush Shalom](http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/press_releases/1501799018/) called for an “emergency demonstration” to voice concern over Israeli policies on Jerusalem.    
   
         On 20 July, Al Haq and [Al Quds University’s Community Action Center](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/topics/wall-and-jerusalem/1128-international-community-must-intervene-to-end-israels-targeting-of-jerusalem), a non-profit association that seeks to empower the Palestinian community in East Jerusalem, called on the international community to take action to ensure an end to measures amounting to collective punishment in the city (“*International community must intervene to end Israel’s targeting of Jerusalem*”).  
   
   On 19 July, a Commentary released by the [International Crisis Group](https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/israelpalestine/palestinian-activism-reawakens-jerusalem-after-holy-esplanade-attack) (“*Palestinian Activism Reawakens in Jerusalem after Holy Esplanade Attack*”) analyzed the implications of suppressing Palestinian political activity in East Jerusalem and recommended to include Palestinian leaders in arrangements to manage its holy sites.  
   
         In a joint public statement, the [Heads of Local Churches in Jerusalem](http://blogs.elca.org/peacenotwalls/files/2017/07/Heads-of-Churches-Statement-on-Haram-AlSharif-1.pdf) expressed concern about the escalation of violence in Jerusalem, condemned all acts of violence and called for respect for the historic *status quo* governing holy sites in Jerusalem.    
   
      A new visual on the situation in East Jerusalem (“*Residency Revocation: Israel’s Forcible Transfer of Palestinians from Jerusalem*”) was presented on 3 July by seven [Palestinian NGO](https://al-shabaka.org/releases/residency-revocation-israels-forcible-transfer-palestinians-jerusalem/)s in collaboration with Visualizing Palestine, an organization which uses data, technology and design to advance social justice.  
   
    Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies at [Columbia University](http://www.palestine.mei.columbia.edu/event-extras/2017/5/22/the-case-of-the-mamilla-cemetery-delgitimization-or-desecration), posted an article analyzing developments regarding the historic Muslim Mammilla cemetery in Jerusalem (“*The Case of Mammilla Cemetery: Delegitimization or Desecration*?”).

**Middle East**

         [Defence for Children International](http://www.dci-palestine.org/campaign_end_collective_punishment_of_gaza_s_children_petition) (DCI) – Palestine is collecting signatures for a petition entitled “*End collective punishment of Gaza’s children*”,  asking ICC Prosecutor Bensouda to take urgent action to ensure accountability for collective punishment imposed on Palestinian civilians in Gaza, 43% of whom are reported to be under the age of 15.  
  
  
    Following a decrease during the holy month of Ramadan, the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions ([ICAHD](https://icahd.org/2017/07/27/july-2017-demolition-and-displacement-summary/)) noted that in July demolitions of Palestinian homes had reached previous levels (*July 2017 Demolition and Displacement Summary*).  
   
         [Hamoked](http://www.hamoked.org/timeline.aspx?pageID=timelinehousedemolitions)-Center for the Defence of the Individual provided background information on Israeli policies regarding punitive house demolitions since 1967.  
   
    The [Alternative Information Center](http://www.alternativenews.org/index.php/headlines/427-settlers-invade-hebron) (AIC) reported on 26 July (“*Settlers Invade Hebron*”) and 31 July (“*The Invasion of the Abu Rajab Building in Downtown Hebron*”) two instances of settlers taking action to occupy Palestinian houses in Hebron.  
   
         On 28-29 July, [7amleh-The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media](http://7amleh.org/2017/07/31/7amleh-trains-trainers-in-digital-security/) conducted a train-the-trainers workshop on issues related to digital security, stressing the importance of educating youth about privacy and safety when using the internet.  
   
     In a briefing paper published on 27 July (“An Environmental Approach: The Protection of Natural Resources in the OPT”), [Al Haq](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/topics/housing-land-and-natural-resources/1130-new-briefing-paper-on-the-protection-of-natural-resources-in-the-occupied-palestinian-territory) argues that besides international human rights and humanitarian law, the application of international environmental law opens further avenues to ensure accountability and the protection of natural resources and the environment in the OPT.  
  
  
    On 25 July, the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](http://pchrgaza.org/en/?p=9309) (PCHR) in Gaza organized a workshop entitled “*Consequences of Former Prisoners’ Salary Suspension on their Economic and Social Rights*”.  
  
  
   On 24 July, [Physicians for Human Rights–Israel](http://www.phr.org.il/en/routine-denial-lifesaving-care-female-cancer-patients/?pr=6255) called on the Israeli authorities to provide women who suffer from diseases for which no treatment is available in Gaza with immediate access to health services outside the Gaza Strip (“*Routine Denial of Lifesaving Care for Female Cancer Patients*”).  
  
  
       Following a tightening of movement restrictions in Hebron in May, on 20 July [B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/hebron/20170720_new_restrictions) provided an overview (“*Summer 2017: New movement restrictions heighten isolation of Palestinian neighbourhoods*”), concluding that the policies implemented did amount to collective punishment and were causing “a silent, ongoing transfer of Palestinians from the heart of Hebron”.  
  
  
       On 16 July, [Addameer](http://www.addameer.org/news/joint-report-estimates-388-palestinians-arrested-june-2017) and other Palestinian NGOs issued a joint report providing statistics with regard to the arrest of Palestinians from the OPT during the month of June as well as information about the treatment of detainees.  
  
  
      On 13 July, the [Gaza Community Mental Health Programme](http://www.gcmhp.com/en/news.aspx?id=1625) reported the visit of a delegation from Doctors of the World-Spain to explore chances for future cooperation between the two NGOs.  
   
       On 12 July, the [Women’s Center for Legal Aid and Counselling](http://www.wclac.org/english/etemplate.php?id=1899) (WCLAC) launched a new publication in Ramallah entitled “*Palestinian Model Parliament: Towards Legislation based on Palestinian Identity, Progressive Ideas, and Just Content*”. In its July bulletin, WCLAC further drew attention to the election of 25-year-old electrical engineer Yusra Mohammed Badwan as mayor of Azzun, the youngest elected [female Palestinian mayor](http://www.wclac.org/english/etemplate.php?id=1936) serving in a West Bank town.  
  
  
     On the occasion of the third anniversary of the Israeli “Operation Protective Edge” in Gaza, on 7 July, [Al Mezan Center for Human Rights](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/21999/Three+Years+after+Israel%E2%80%99s+Military+Assault+on+Gaza%2C+International+Community+Must+Ensure+an+End+to+Collective+Punishment+and+Impunity) called on the international community to ensure an end to collective punishment and impunity. Furthermore, Al Mezan, Visualizing Palestine and Adalah-The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel released jointly produced visuals entitled “[zero accountability](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/22001/JOINT+PRESS+RELEASE%3A+ZERO+ACCOUNTABILITY)” and “[no crime happened here](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/22003/JOINT+PRESS+RELEASE%3A+No+Crime+Happened+Here)”.  
  
  
    On the first July weekend, the [Geneva Initiative](http://www.geneva-accord.org/mainmenu/russian-speaking-israeli-s-discuss-the-conflict) organized a seminar with 25 young political activists belonging to the Russian-speaking community in Israel; among the topics discussed was the role of civil society in the Northern Ireland peace process.

**Europe**

         [Medical Aid for Palestinians](https://www.map.org.uk/challenge-events/london-to-windsor-3-september) (MAP) opened registration to join a “*Ride for Palestinian Health and Dignity*” from London to Windsor on 3 September.  
   
         On 26 July, the UK-based [Palestine Return Center](http://www.prc.org.uk/portal/index.php/activities-news/press-release/3727-israel-funded-group-launches-smearing-campaign-against-un-special-rapporteur-and-prc) (PRC) reported a campaign by UN Watch pressuring Western University in Canada to cut funding for Prof. Michael Lynk, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967.  
  
  
         On 26 July, the [European Council on Foreign Relations](http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/rethinking_oslo_how_europe_can_promote_peace_in_israel_palestine_7219) (ECFR) published a policy brief by Omar Dajani and Hugh Lovatt entitled “*Rethinking Oslo: How Europe can promote peace in Israel-Palestine*”.  
   
         In a statement released on 6 July, the [Norwegian Refugee Council](https://www.nrc.no/news/2017/july/three-years-after-the-war-thousands-of-displaced-in-gaza-await-return-to-their-homes/) (NRC) estimated that three years after the 2014 war in Gaza, a little over one third of the 11,000 houses destroyed during the war had been rebuilt and 35,000 people remained displaced, living in tents.

**North America**

       On 24 July**,**[Jewish Voice for Peace](https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/interfaith-leaders-denied-entry-israel-supporting-palestinian-human-rights/)(JVP) reported that five leaders of an interfaith delegation to Israel/Palestine were denied permission to board their plane in the U.S., apparently based on Israeli legislation banning supporters of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement from entering the country.  
   
      In a letter dated 17 July, the [American Civil Liberties Union](https://www.aclu.org/letter/aclu-letter-house-opposing-israel-anti-boycott-act) (ACLU) urged members of the U.S. House of Representatives to oppose and refrain from co-sponsoring the Israel Anti-Boycott Act. Imposing civil and criminal punishment on individuals solely for their political beliefs, the bill was inconsistent with U.S. constitutional rights, ACLU argued.  
   
         On 12 July, McNally Jackson Independent Booksellers in New York hosted an event featuring filmmaker and writer Omar Robert Hamilton in conversation with authors Molly Crabapple and Remi Kanazi on a new anthology entitled “This is not Border: Reportage and Reflection from the [Palestine Festival of Literature](http://www.mcnallyjackson.com/event/palestine-festival-literature-not-border)”.  
  
  
         On 2 July, [Al Shabaka](https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/dont-historicize-balfour-declaration-past-still-palestinians-present/) –The Palestinian Policy Network published a commentary by Yara Hawari entitled “*Don’t Historicize the Balfour Declaration: The Past is still the Palestinians’ Present*”.  
  
  
         In a letter dated 28 June, over 30 Members of the [U.S. Congress](https://imeu.org/uploads/files/Letter-to-Tillerson-on-Amro-Case-06-28-2017.pdf) requested U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson “to urgently pursue all diplomatic tools” at his disposal to encourage the Israeli authorities concerned to reconsider the charges against Issa Amro, founder of the Hebron-based non-violent direct action group Youth against Settlements.

**Africa**

         In a statement published on 21 July, [South Africa](http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/2017/pale0721.htm)’s Department of International Relations and Cooperation called for the release of Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) member and civil society leader [Khalida Jarrar](http://www.addameer.org/prisoner/khalida-jarrar) who was arrested on 2 July and subsequently issued with a six-month administrative detention order.   
 

**United Nations**

   On 20-21 July, the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, with support by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), convened the [International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem](https://unispal.un.org/databases/dprtest/ngoweb.nsf/f12fded4d0597000852573fc005b9471/8f958d516c7b975785258124006b30ab?OpenDocument) in Baku, Azerbaijan. The theme of the Conference was “Jerusalem and the international community: providing political and economic support”. The  Conference provided up-to-date information on the situation in the City, especially in light of the ongoing deteriorating situation following the incidents around the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and presented ideas and proposals about how the international community, especially OIC Member States, can provide concrete support to the Palestinian population in Jerusalem, with a focus on education and training for fostering resilience, especially among youth, and on economic recovery and development, in particular in the tourism sector.

       At its 41st session, held in Krakow from 2-12 July, [UNESCO](http://en.unesco.org/news/world-heritage-committee-inscribes-new-site-and-approves-extension-existing-site-unesco-s-world)’s World Heritage Committee inscribed Hebron/Al Khalil Old Town on the World Heritage List and added it to the List of World Heritage in Danger.

     On 12 July, [UNDP](http://www.ps.undp.org/) launched a report on challenges to economic recovery and long-term development in Gaza entitled “Gaza Economy – Nearing Total Collapse”.  
  
  
         In an open letter dated 4 July, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders asked [UN Secretary-General Guterres](https://www.fidh.org/en/region/asia/burma/open-letter-to-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-about-the) for protection to ensure that human rights organizations working on issues related to Palestine are able to carry out their activities without any hindrance and fear of reprisals.