**NGO Action News**

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<https://unispal.un.org/ngoactionnews.nsf/1c0b3ab87dc4f2f8852568f8007759fd/b6e12a4052145c07852581300081a5ee?OpenDocument>

**NGO ACTION NEWS**

      In relation to the hunger strike started by Palestinian detainees on 17 April, on 25 May, the [ICRC](https://www.icrc.org/en/document/israel-occupied-territories-palestinian-detainees-hunger-strike-risk-irreversible-health) called on all concerned parties and authorities to find a solution that would avoid any loss of life or irreversible damage to the detainees’ health (“*Palestinian detainees on hunger strike at risk of irreversible health consequences*”).

       On 24 May, [Amnesty International](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/05/israel-release-palestinian-prisoner-of-conscience-detained-without-charge-or-trial/) (AI) issued a statement calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ahmed Qatamesh, a Palestinian academic, writer and political analyst whom the organization considers a prisoner of conscience, currently held in administrative detention without charge or trial.

**Middle East**

     On 25 May, [B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/detainees_and_prisoners/20170525_prisoners_hunger_strike) issued a press release expressing concern about the condition of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike (“*Israel is ignoring its obligations to the prisoners and the medical condition of the hunger strikers is deteriorating*”).  The organization also reported on [21 May](http://www.btselem.org/area_c/20170521_olive_trees_uprooted_in_wadi_qana) about the uprooting of trees in the Qalqiliya area in the West Bank (“*Civil Administration uproots 135 olive trees on privately owned land in Wadi Qana – part of Israel’s efforts towards its de facto annexation*”).

     To mark fifty years of the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, on 24 May the [Israel-Palestine Journal](http://www.pij.org/) launched a special issue (“*Time for Justice and Peace.*
*100 Years of Conflict. 50 Years of Occupation. End the Occupation*”).

      A new website established by Shatil and the Israel-Diaspora Partnership to Save Israel and Stop the Occupation (SISO) will feature activities by civil society organizations that have joined the [50-Out forum](http://50out.co.il/en/what-is-50out/), seeking “to leverage this 50th anniversary to make real change”.

     On 21 May, [Peace Now](http://peacenow.org.il/en/annual-construction-reports-shows-34-increase-construction-starts-settlements) released its annual Settlement Construction Report suggesting a 34% increase in construction starts throughout the West Bank during 2016, compared to the same period in 2015.

**United Nations**

         On 24 May, [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21659&LangID=E) Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein urged Israel to respect the human rights of detainees, expressing particular concern about reports of punitive measures against the hunger strikers, including restricted access to lawyers and the denial of family visits.

         In a meeting held on 17 May, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People officially endorsed the programme for the UN Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation at UNHQ in New York on 29 and 30 June.  The Committee also approved the programme of the International Conference on Jerusalem, jointly organized by the Committee and the OIC, which will take place in Baku (Azerbaijan) on 20 and 21 July 2017. Updated information on the events will be available on the [UNISPAL website](https://unispal.un.org/databases/dprtest/ngoweb.nsf/f12fded4d0597000852573fc005b9471/d4e9a9e4789d611e8525811d00673b58?OpenDocument).

        In the lead-up to the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2018, a newly launched [UN platform](http://www.un.org/en/udhr-video) allows people around the world to upload a video-recording of themselves reading an article of the Declaration in the language of their choice. Recorded videos are evaluated by the UN, and selected ones are featured on a dedicated [UN webpage](https://www.un.org/en/udhr-video/curated.shtml) and [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyo_Sh4coDITcZf_BUz1p-Q). The campaign by the UN Department of Public Information is carried out in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Showbox and the Universal Human Rights Initiative as part of the ongoing [Stand up for someone’s rights today](http://www.standup4humanrights.org/en/) campaign.