

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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### United Nations

#### **Calling for Non-Recognition of Unagreed Changes to Pre-1967 Borders, Jerusalem, General Assembly Adopts Five Resolutions on Middle East**

The General Assembly ... adopted five resolutions on the question of Palestine and the Middle East ...

Through the terms of the text titled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine" (document A/74/L.15) ... the Assembly called on Member States to ensure that agreements with Israel do not imply recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the territories it occupied in 1967. The Assembly reiterates its call for the achievement of a just, lasting peace in the Middle East and an end to the Israeli occupation, while calling on Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with international law, cease actions aimed at altering the demographic composition of the Territory, and immediately halt all settlement activities. By the terms of a resolution titled "The Syrian Golan" (document A/74/L.9) ... the Assembly declares that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and demands that Israel withdraw from the territory. ...

"Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People" (document A/74/L.14) requests the Committee to exert all efforts to promote the right to self-determination of Palestinians and to support the achievement of an end to Israeli occupation. ...

"Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat" (document A/74/L.16) ... requests the Division to continue to monitor developments relevant to the question of Palestine. ...

"Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat" (document A/74/L.17) ... requests the Department [to] disseminate information on activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine and peace efforts. ...

**Riyad H. Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine**, stressed the need to act seriously to end Israel's occupation of Palestinian land through all legitimate means available to the international community. ... there is no military solution and there is no way that the Palestinian people will accept less than their full human rights. Partial solutions or attempts to bully, oppress and exhaust the Palestinians into accepting limited autonomy, less than freedom, or submitting to perpetual colonization and occupation will

never work and can only bring more conflict. ...

... he said that a just solution continues to be rejected by Israel and those supporting its illegal occupation. Failing to hold Israel accountable for its crimes has led it to believe it is a State above the law. ...

Palestinian civilians, including women and children, continue to be killed and injured, he said. Turning to the 12-year blockade of Gaza by Israel, he said that 2 million Palestinians are isolated in an "open-air prison," with the unemployment rate at an unprecedented 53 per cent overall, and a shocking 70 per cent among youth. ...

That consensus, he continued, has not wavered despite Israel's intransigence and attempts to destroy a two-State formula ... He also appealed for humanitarian assistance to Palestinian people until their inalienable rights are realized ...

**Sudqi Atallah Abd Alkadetr Al Omoush (Jordan)** emphasized the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to establish a sovereign State and noted that their continued suffering has led to a rise in hunger, poverty and a deprivation of rights and dignity. A comprehensive peace agreement, including a two-State solution as outlined in the Arab Peace Initiative, would lead to security and stability for the entire region, he said, stressing that the expansion of settlements and destruction of Palestinian homes threaten the viability for such an agreement. ... Jordan is committed to protecting Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem and will counter any attempts to alter the status of those sites. ...

**Danny Ben Yosef Danon (Israel)** recalled that the 1949 partition plan was internationally accepted and established considering arguments from both sides with a view to finding a constructive solution. Since 1977, however, 29 November has been twisted from a day of solidarity with the Palestinians into a way to blame Israel for the situation of Palestinians. If Palestinian leadership had chosen a pragmatic approach and demonstrated a willingness to compromise at the outset, there would be no Palestinian refugees. ... Though the Jewish people have a biblical and historic right to the entirety of the land, Israel accepted the partition plan in the spirit of compromise. Arab leadership, by contrast, chose war, he said.

Palestinians now attack Israel using a diplomatic terror campaign characterized by demonization and lies, as evidenced at the United Nations, he said. By adopting the Palestinian narrative, the international community is actively preventing the Palestinians from finding a solution to the conflict. ... During the twentieth century an estimated 850,000 Jews were forced out of Arab countries and became refugees but were ignored by the international community because it didn't serve the Palestinian narrative ...

Accepting the Palestinian Authority's stated policy of glorifying terrorism against Jews and condemning Jews for living in Jerusalem is counterproductive to peace, he said, calling the international community morally bankrupt. ...

**Mohamed Fathi Ahmed Edrees (Egypt)** said that the situation in the occupied territories has deteriorated in recent years, expressing concern about the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza. "We cannot talk about security and stability in the Middle East without a just, comprehensive, and durable solution to the Palestinian question," he added. ... Having led and provided a peace model it had hoped others would draw lessons from, Egypt regrets the current situation in the Middle East. ...

**Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland)** said that Israel's occupation of the West Bank and accelerated settlement activities erode the prospects for peace in the region. The meeting of European and Arab Ministers held in Dublin in February demonstrated Ireland's readiness to work with all parties towards a resumption of negotiations to resolve the question of Palestine ...

The representative of **Israel** said the draft texts completely ignore Israel's perspectives. Two of the resolutions renew the mandate of two United Nations bodies, namely the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, whose sole purpose are to

promote propaganda against a Member State. This is unprecedented. ...

The representative of **Iran**... said that [Israel] uses fallacies as tools to divert attention from its expansionist policies and brutalities. As such, these fallacies constitute weapons of mass deception. The Israeli regime is famous for its atrocities, apartheid policies and well-documented war crimes, he said, adding that it has a long history of following opportunistic policies to divert attention from its own savage actions against innocent Palestinians. Israel is the only regime openly practicing racism, having recently legalized it, he said, stressing that Israel's occupation and racism lie at the heart of all conflicts in the Middle East. ...

The representative of the **United States** said her delegation opposed all the resolutions under consideration which are biased against Israel. This one-sided approach undermines trust, she said, expressing disappointment that Israel is disproportionately singled out through such resolutions. ... The resolutions also say nothing about terrorist attacks against civilians, she said, pointing out that they do not mention Hamas or other armed groups in the Gaza Strip. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/ga12220.doc.htm>

**Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine (A/74/L.15)**

<https://www.undocs.org/en/A/74/L.15>

**The Syrian Golan (A/74/L.9)**

<https://www.undocs.org/en/A/74/L.9>

**Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/74/L.14)**

<https://www.undocs.org/en/A/74/L.14>

**Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (A/74/L.16)**

<https://www.undocs.org/en/A/74/L.16>

**Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat (A/74/L.17)**

<https://www.undocs.org/en/A/74/L.17>

## UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

### Press briefing on Israel

... the High Commissioner met with Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director of Human Rights Watch who was compelled to leave Israel on 25 November 2019, after the Israeli Supreme Court upheld the legality of the Government's decision to not renew his visa. The High Commissioner deeply regrets this decision, which both the UN Human Rights Office and a group of three UN Special Rapporteurs had urged the Government to reverse in the wake of the Supreme Court ruling. The expulsion of Mr Shakir casts a shadow over Israel's commitments to freedom of expression and freedom of association, as well as over the ability of human rights defenders and organisations to carry out their important work. The Special Rapporteurs pointed out that the freedoms of expression and association protect the expression of support for, or opposition to, movements such as the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions), which do not incite discrimination, violence or hostility.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25371&LangID=E>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Council of Europe

#### **Statement of Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić following the desecration of the Jewish cemetery in Westhoffen**

I strongly condemn the desecration of the Jewish cemetery in Westhoffen, eastern France. We must take all measures to fight increasing anti-Semitism on our continent. This is imperative for the Council of Europe and its member states. Jewish life and heritage are part of our European identity and Jews in Europe must be able to live without fear.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/declaration-de-la-secretaire-generale-marija-pejcinovic-buric-suite-a-la-profanation-du-cimetiere-israelite-de-westhoffen>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### Scottish Parliament

#### **Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 7 days**

#### **Draft content of the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Specified Type A Procedures) (Scotland) Regulations** (closing date 11 December 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/population-health/human-tissue-regulations-2019/>

#### **Equality Act 2010: Commencing the socio-economic duty (Welsh Government)** (closing date 17 January 2020)

<https://gov.wales/equality-act-2010-commencing-socio-economic-duty>

#### **Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill** (closing date 31 January 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/113449.aspx>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438