



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Third Committee Approves Eight Draft Resolutions, including Texts on Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Privacy in Digital Age, Condemning Glorification Of Nazism

... The Committee next took up the draft resolution titled "Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" (document A/C.3/77/L.5) ...

The representative of the Russian Federation, presenting the draft, said his delegation wants to propose an oral amendment ... In 1945, Member States of the anti-Hitler coalition won a great victory over Nazism. Thanks to this victory, the current United Nations and the modern system of the promotion of human rights were created. The decision at the Nuremberg tribunal legally enshrined this victory over Nazism. Issues highlighted by the proposed resolution have worsened, he cautioned, pointing to racist and xenophobic rhetoric, calls to deport migrants and refugees, Islamophobia, Afrophobia and antisemitism. Voicing concern over the war against the memorials of those who fought Nazism and fascism, he said that in the very heart of Europe, the world is witnessing marches of neo-Nazis in honour of those who actively collaborated with Nazis and are complicit in their crimes. ...

The Committee then took up draft amendment "L.52", which inserts a new operative paragraph, reading: "Notes with alarm that the Russian Federation has sought to justify its territorial aggression against Ukraine on the purported basis of eliminating neo-Nazism, and underlines that the pretextual use of neo-Nazism to justify territorial aggression seriously undermines genuine attempts to combat neo-Nazism." ...

The representative of Canada said her country indisputably and stridently opposes the glorification of Nazism; however, it condemns the indefensible use of the resolution by the Russian Federation to justify its invasion of Ukraine. The use of such false narratives undermines attempts to battle Nazism and neo-Nazism, as well as racism and intolerance. Further, she stated that the text as a whole is problematic ...

The representative of the United Kingdom, voicing deep concern over the presentation of this resolution, condemned the glorification of Nazism and neo-Nazism. The resolution,

however, is part of Moscow's attempt to justify its aggression against Ukraine by furthering lies and distorting history. ... his delegation will vote against the resolution to stop the further instrumentalization of human rights concerns to justify the illegal invasion of Ukraine. ...

The representative of the United States, opposing Moscow's disinformation narrative, categorically condemned the glorification of Nazism and all modern forms of violent extremism, antisemitism, and xenophobia. Opposing Moscow's use of the United Nations system to spread disinformation, he called the resolution a cynical attempt by Moscow to further its geopolitical aims by invoking the Holocaust and Second World War. The resolution is not a serious attempt to combat Nazism, antisemitism, and xenophobia, but a shameful political plot to justify Moscow's war of aggression in Ukraine. ...

The Committee then adopted draft resolution "L.5" by a recorded vote of 105 in favour to 52 against, with 15 abstentions.

By its terms, the Assembly would express alarm at the spread in many parts of the world of various extremist political parties, movements and ideologies, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups. It would note with concern that the presence of extreme right-wing ideologues can inject into political discourse the same ideologies that make neo-Nazism and extremism so dangerous. The Assembly would also express deep concern about the glorification of the Nazi movement, neo-Nazism and former members of the Waffen SS organization, which include erecting monuments and holding public demonstrations in glorification of the Nazi past.

Further to the text, the Assembly would condemn incidents that glorify Nazism, such as acts involving pro-Nazi graffiti and paintings, including on monuments dedicated to victims of the Second World War. It would express alarm over the use by extremist groups, including neo-Nazi groups, of the Internet and social media to recruit new members, especially targeting children and young people, and to disseminate their hate-filled messages. Also by the draft, the Assembly would condemn any denial of the Holocaust as well as any manifestation of religious intolerance or violence based on ethnic origin or religious belief. ...

The representative of Israel underscored that neo-Nazism is more than just a glorification of a past movement, adding that it is a contemporary phenomenon with a strong interest in racial inequality and antisemitism. Israel voted in favour of the resolution; however, that should not be seen as a green light for countries to use unacceptable comparisons with Nazi ideology or the Holocaust in the context of the war in Ukraine. In this context, she rejected any politicization or trivialization of the Holocaust. ...

The representative of Belarus, recalling that the death camp in Auschwitz was liberated by Soviet soldiers, said that, in total, more than 60 million citizens of the anti-Hitler coalition gave their lives to defeat fascism, including 2 million Belarusian citizens. ...

The representative of Austria ... said his country rejects all forms of totalitarianism, racism and intolerance. Nazism is severely penalized in Austrian law, and the fight against antisemitism is also a key priority. He went on to condemn the Russian Federation's illegal war of aggression and rejected its inaccurate use of "denazification" in the text to justify the war. ... In the past, Austria abstained; however, this year is different due to the use of the text by one country that inflicts war on another, he said, adding that his country therefore voted against the resolution. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/gashc4365.doc.htm>

Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (A/C.3/77/L.5)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.3/77/L.5>

Draft amendment to draft resolution A/C.3/77/L.5 (A/C.3/77/L.51)
<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.3/77/L.51>

Draft amendment to draft resolution A/C.3/77/L.5 (A/C.3/77/L.52)
<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.3/77/L.52>

TOP

Israel

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Expert: Home destructions during conflict are an international crime

“We should stop shutting our eyes to widespread or systematic destruction of civilian homes in conflict. We need to stop what must be called: domicide,” said Balakrishnan Rajagopal, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing.

Rajagopal made this statement during a presentation of his report to the UN General Assembly. He said that conflicts, where civilian homes are deliberately targeted have left millions displaced and have resulted in the most severe housing rights violations. ...

“I have seen how in a few seconds a home, the culmination of a life-long effort, the pride of entire families, is wiped out and turned into rubble, he said. “Destroyed is not only a home. Destroyed are the savings of entire families; destroyed are memories; destroyed is the comfort of belonging. Domicide causes social and psychological trauma that is difficult for me to describe or even to imagine.” ...

“We must not tolerate that those are responsible for such egregious crimes continue in positions of power,” he continued. “They must face international justice.”

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/11/expert-home-destructions-during-conflict-are-international-crime>

Adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and the right to non-discrimination in this context (A/77/190)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/77/190>

United Nations

Secretary-General Declares ‘We Must Pursue Every Avenue to Revitalize the Peace Process’ for Israel and Palestine, at Opening of International Media Seminar

... **António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations:** “... Today, we face an extremely challenging environment of growing violence, escalating tensions, and numerous civilian deaths. Among those recently killed was veteran Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh ... I was appalled by her killing and reiterate my call for an independent and transparent investigation for effective accountability.

All attacks against journalists must end. Media workers must be able to carry out their vital work freely and without harassment ... or the fear of being targeted ... we must pursue every avenue to revitalize the peace process. There is no credible alternative to a two-State solution with Israel and Palestine living side-by-side in peace and security, based on the 1967 borders, and with Jerusalem as the capital of both states. Your work is a critical pillar for peace and a reminder of the pivotal role of free and independent media. Your actions and determination demonstrate the power of words over weapons and help keep hope alive ...” ...

Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, said in May this year, the world watched in shock as news networks showed footage from the funeral of Shireen Abu Akleh, Al-Jazeera's veteran correspondent; an outrageous act, and attack on media freedom. Through outreach efforts with the Member States, the Committee advocated for the implementation of the international consensus based on two States, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security within the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital. ...

The day began with the panel discussion "Honouring the legacy of Shireen Abu Akleh: Protecting journalists covering the conflict". ...

Mr. Levy [Columnist and *Haaretz* editorial board] said the best way to commemorate Shireen was to find Israel accountable for her murder. Shireen was not the first Palestinian journalist who had been killed and she wouldn't be the last. It was expected the international community would commemorate her memory, but also ensure that Israel was held accountable for her death. Because Shireen was an American, this presented a unique opportunity; there was interest from the United States, and protests around the world, however this was not enough. Israel first denied the murder, then responded vaguely, and then admitted that Shireen had potentially been killed by Israeli soldiers, before downplaying the situation. However, the soldier who killed her knew he was killing a journalist, as she was wearing a Press vest.

The legacy of Shireen was to continue to cover the Palestinian fate. The world was losing interest in the conflict; there were new issues to deal with. Israel had labelled any criticism about the occupation as anti-semitic; a tactic which was working well. This presented a major violation of free speech in the West. In the framework of a murder of a journalist, the world needed to be informed about what was going on. The occupation was there and was not a temporary phenomenon. Israel was an apartheid state, and there was no intention to end to the occupation. Shireen's legacy was to continue to force people to understand what was going on. The truth was in danger and the world must not keep silent. Apathy and ignorance were the biggest enemies.

Mr. Mansour [Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations] said Shireen Abu Akleh was the legacy of the Palestinian people, who gave her life for advancing justice for the Palestinian people. The Security Council had been united in approving the statement condemning her killing, asking for an independent investigation and justice. The Israeli occupiers killed her, and justice needed to be served. The United Nations should not rest until those who had killed her were brought to justice. More than 200 young Palestinian journalists had graduated through a United Nations programme, which was now to be named as the Shireen Abu Akleh programme. People had forgotten about the Palestinians, but the question of Palestine would never be forgotten. The Palestinians had been waiting for 55 years since the occupation; they would not break. ... The State of Palestine should be admitted to the Security Council, to protect the two State solution which was being destroyed by the Israeli occupation. ...

To have justice, peace and fairness, the Palestinian people needed to be allowed to visit institutions including the International Court of Justice. Several questions needed to be addressed: What were the legal consequences for States and the United Nations under a long occupation? What were the legal implications of those who denied the Palestinian people the rights to self-determination? What were the legal consequences of a situation in which the Palestinian people were living under, namely discrimination? If the international community did not treat Palestine fairly, they would be pushed to go the bigger house, and the international community would need to listen. Mr. Mansour said there was hope for peace; Palestine needed a chance to live and to be free. ...

Mr Levy said ... Generally in Israel, journalists did not face physical threats or pressure from the government or the secret services. What was faced was the betrayal of

colleagues in the mission. The Israeli media was the biggest collaborator with the Israeli occupation, not because of ideologies or pressures, but due to interests and because the readers did not want to know. This enabled the unbelievable situation in which many Israelis took pride in the morality of Israel, while close to their homes, crimes against humanity were taking place daily. ...

... Israeli society was living in denial. Israelis were not accountable for anything. If anyone tried to break the wall of denial, they were considered a traitor and a liar. ... Never in the history of the occupation was Israel blamed for any acts directly in the media. Alternatively, if a Palestinian shot someone, it would be labelled as murder, even if it was done so in self-defence. ...

Mr. Mansour said over the years, 55 Palestinian journalists had been murdered by the Israeli occupation. ... The issue of protection was immense; in the West Bank alone, this year had seen 7000 people injured, and the largest number killed so far. Israelis should be creative in terms of visa situations; Palestine could help them to report their reality and their lives under occupation. ...

... the Palestinian people should not be left to survive under the ruthless occupation. There were many Israeli media conniving with the occupation to tell the wrong story. How many more thousands of Palestinians needed to be killed or imprisoned? No one person would be able to correct the policy of apartheid. ...

Mr Levy said ... Israelis had lost faith in peace and what it meant. Peace by itself could not be the target; there would never be peace without justice. For many years, it had been felt that the national sentiments of the average Palestinians were for everyone to live together in dignity. This was no longer the national sentiment in Israel; they wanted separation. ...

Mr. Mansour said it was not a reality to expect Palestinians to approach Israelis for peace. The international community should convene and force them to negotiate, as had occurred in the past. ...

The second panel of the day focused on the topic "Forgotten stories in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: how political news eclipses coverage of economic challenges." ...

Mr. Gharib [Professor, American University] said ... Israel's control of the occupied territory had led to shrinkage of the Palestinian economy and the encirclement of Palestinian villages with Israeli settlements. Israel often defended its position in the name of security, and blamed the Palestinians for their own deprivations. Even sympathetic news focused on the loss of life, rather than the damage to the economy. Israel had no incentive to devote resources to alleviate the situation in West Bank, and instead pressured its government for further land confiscations and greater resources, which was rarely covered by the media. ...

Significantly, attempts to relieve the suffering of the Palestinians were negatively viewed as a substitute for overcoming the occupation. Improving economic circumstances of the Palestinians could be seen as a diversion, which hindered political progress. ...

Ms. Hatuqa [Multimedia Journalist] said ... Politics and economics went hand in hand. Palestinians did not want to focus on the economy as much, as there had been attempts by political parties to focus on economic peace, which was a way to bypass the political situation. ... There was a belief among donors that once the economy was fixed, things would be better politically; however, this was not the case. ...

Mr. Rosenberg [Business Editor *Haaretz*] said ... On the ground, economic distress was a big factor in Palestinian life, which impacted ordinary Palestinians daily. This was viewed as less dramatic by the media, except in situations of conflict, which elicited more interest. ... Economics was a big part of the occupation. A key issue was the extent that economic distress contributed to tensions and violence. ... In Israel, the Prime Minister was able to decide through influence, the major issues impacting the country. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/pal2244.doc.htm>

Changing Media Landscape Both ‘an Opportunity and a Hindrance’ for Young Israeli, Palestinian Journalists, International Media Seminar Final Panel Discussion Hears

... Media experts discussed the opportunities presented, and challenges for young journalists reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the positive and negative sides of social media ...

Ms. Vellucci [Director of the United Nations Information Service in Geneva] said the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was impacting the young generation, who represented around one third of those affected. For a long time, young people did not feel enabled to make their voices heard; however, thanks to the surge of digital media, this had changed. ...

Mr. Ghaith [Communications Analyst, United Nations Development Programme] said there had been an upsurge in both online and offline censorship. ... There was a scarcity in the platforms of Palestinian local news outlets, which resulted in a lack of opportunities for young journalists. There was a 44.3 per cent rate of unemployment for media graduates in Palestine, and female journalists were facing an additional layer of hinderance, with two thirds of this group left unemployed.

Journalists were often paid below average wages ... At times, Palestinian journalists also withheld stories due to fear from the occupation forces.

Ms. Pfeuffer [Journalist] said in Israel, self-censorship was also an issue. The fears were different from those of Palestinians, but speaking about the occupation was not encouraged within the current political atmosphere. Significant efforts had been made by Israeli politicians to wine over the media, as they understood this was the key to retaining power. ...

Mr. Marai [Manager, Media Initiatives, Media Initiatives Department Aljazeera Media Institute] said many Palestinian journalists had been fired from their jobs for speaking out. Due to censorship, social media content was limited, which made freedom of expression difficult and that Palestinian voices weren't always heard. ...

Mr. Ghaith said ... Palestinian journalists sometimes fell prey to becoming activists and journalists at the same time, which could lead to them not being taken seriously, both within the country and to international audiences. There was a tendency to romanticize and become nostalgic within narratives, but that stemmed from their identity, and people around the world needed to understand this. ...

Mr. Marai said the Israeli media was strong and had many platforms. In some instances, people on social media had been taking on the roles of journalists, shifting aside traditional media and reaching people worldwide. Although these “citizen journalists” were not professionals and sometimes made mistakes, they were projecting the voice of Palestinians all around the world, and they needed to be supported. ...

Some speakers said the issue of double standards towards the Palestinian journalists vs. those covering the war in Ukraine resonated. It seemed to be ok that journalists in Ukraine were teaching people on social media to make Molotov cocktails, while if a Palestinian was doing this, it would have severe consequences. ...

In Israeli journalism there was a double standard where most Israelis supported Ukraine, yet wouldn't understand how similar the situation was to their own conflict.

Panellists also said the ability to have free speech had a major impact on any society, but also came with its own challenges. It was important for young Israeli and Palestinian journalists to interact and help each other. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/pal2245.doc.htm>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

Scottish Parliament

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

TOP

Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 8 days**

Mapping Exercise - Youth Workers supporting young people facing racism & antisemitism in Scotland (closing date 14 November 2022)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Z5YX2C7>

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