

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

The Committee at the National Model United Nations Conference

Format: The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) is a report writing committee.

Mandate: According to Resolution A/RES/67/20, the General Assembly:

“Requests the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to support the Middle East peace process for the achievement of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and the just resolution of all final status issues and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people, and in this regard authorizes the Committee to make such adjustments in its approved programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session and thereafter.”¹

Voting: The CEIRPP is a committee created under the supervision of the General Assembly, with 25 Member States and 24 Observer States.² Each Member State has one vote (Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure) and substantive decisions require the majority of votes (Rule 32). In this regard, States under the status of “Observer” are only allowed to vote in procedural matters as stated in Rule 5 (Rules of Procedure); therefore, Observer States are not counted in the total number of members present for the Quorum stated in Rule 14 (Rules of Procedure).

General Assembly Action on the Status of Palestine

The Status of Palestine was an intensely debated issue throughout the 67th session of the General Assembly.³ This debate was a landmark moment in the history of the United Nations, and resulted in increased visibility and recognition of the Palestinian people.⁴

Within this context, on November 29, 2012, the General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/67/19, which defined the Status of Palestine before the United Nations.⁵ With the adoption of this resolution, Palestine was recognized as a non-member Observer State, elevating it to a status similar to that of the Holy See.⁶ During voting procedure, the resolution was approved with an overwhelming majority of 138 votes in favor, nine against (which included Israel, the United States, and Canada), 41 abstentions, and five absences.⁷ In this vein, “this historic vote sent a strong message in favor of the two-State solution, the peace process and respect for international law.”⁸ It is fundamental to acknowledge that the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was already granted the status of observer; however, through A/RES/67/19 Palestine has been recognized with the status of observer *state*.

¹ United Nations General Assembly, *Question on Palestine (A/RES/67/20)*, 2012.

² United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *Question of Palestine: The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, 2012.

³ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel’s Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

⁴ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel’s Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Brief Summary on Resolution Status of Palestine in the United Nations: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, 2012.

⁶ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel’s Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

⁷ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Brief Summary on Resolution Status of Palestine in the United Nations: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, 2012.

⁸ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel’s Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

This resolution reinforces several arguments contained in previous resolutions, such as the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the conviction in the peaceful resolution of conflicts, mainly through the establishment of the two-State solution.⁹ In addition, this document recognizes the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as the representative of the Palestinian state, and calls upon the implementation of the recommendations issued by the United Nations, by respecting the contributions of the Madrid Conference, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet roadmap.¹⁰

Recent activity of the CEIRPP

The Bureau of the CEIRPP has noted with regret the reaction of Israel vis-à-vis General Assembly Resolution A/RES/67/19.¹¹ In this vein, “Israel [has] authorized the construction of 3,000 units in the settlements of Gilo, Pisgat Ze’ev, Ariel and Gush Etzion.”¹² According to data collected by Peace Now, Israeli settlement activity in 2012 may have reached more than 6,000 building tenders, constituting a new record in matters of settlement activity.¹³

One of the most controversial Israeli construction plans, the so called “E-1” Plan, has already showed an escalation on its settlement campaign. If realized, the “E-1” Plan “would isolate Ramallah and Bethlehem from East Jerusalem and from each other, further destroying the territorial contiguity of the Palestinian State”.¹⁴ The Israeli government received several notes of concern from the international community; however, the construction plans have not experienced any substantial delay.

According to the latest report by the CEIRPP to the General Assembly, several topics remain key areas of interest of the body.¹⁵ CEIRPP has raised concerns about the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip. Within this context, the Bureau of the Committee issued a Statement this past November on the status of the conflict in Gaza.¹⁶ Through a public statement and “in the strongest possible terms”, CEIRPP condemned the attacks perpetrated against the population in the Gaza Strip.¹⁷ At the same time, the Bureau clearly noted the condemnation of the killing of Israeli civilians, due to the fire of rockets into Israeli territory.¹⁸ One of the strongest demands expressed through this statement focuses on the “Committee demands [to] Israel, the occupying Power, [to] end, immediately and unconditionally, its military campaign in the Gaza Strip”.¹⁹

⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *Status of Palestine in the United Nations (A/RES/67/19)*, 2012.

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Question on Palestine (A/RES/67/20)*, 2012.

¹¹ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel's Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

¹² United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel's Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

¹³ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel's Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

¹⁴ United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel's Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2012.

¹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: General Assembly Official Records Sixty-seventh Session - Supplement No.35*, 2012.

¹⁶ United Nations Department of Public Information, *Statement by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the Situation in Gaza Strip*, 2012.

¹⁷ United Nations Department of Public Information, *Statement by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the Situation in Gaza Strip*, 2012.

¹⁸ United Nations Department of Public Information, *Statement by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the Situation in Gaza Strip*, 2012.

¹⁹ United Nations Department of Public Information, *Statement by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the Situation in Gaza Strip*, 2012.

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United Nations General Assembly (2012). *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: General Assembly Official Records Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No.35*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from:

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Report%20of%20the%20Committee%20on%20the%20Exercise%20of%20the%20Inalienable%20Rights%20of%20the%20Palestinian%20People%20A-67-35.pdf>

This document is one of the most complete in terms for understanding the current situation in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Throughout this report, you are able to find specific information regarding the mandate and the Members that constitute the Committee, as well as historical data on the creation of CEIRPP. Also, it discusses in an orderly manner several areas of interest, the progress made and the obstacles encountered in diverse topics as settlements, violence, among others. This Report contains key information on Resolutions approved by the General Assembly on the Question of Palestine, as well as it takes note of actions taken regarding the status of the rights of the Palestinian People worldwide.

United Nations General Assembly. (2012, December 4). *Status of Palestine in the United Nations (A/RES/67/19)*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/50c5e6152.pdf>

This document summarizes the results achieved within the 67th General Assembly Session, held in early December 2012. Within this framework, Member States discussed intensively on the Status of Palestine before the United Nations. Thus, after years of sustained disagreement, the General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/67/19, which recognizes Palestine as a non-member Observer State, granting Palestine with a status similar to that of the Holy See. The resolution reaffirms principles and arguments contained in previous resolutions, once again reaffirming the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2012). *Brief Summary on Resolution Status of Palestine in the United Nations: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,UNGA,...50c5e6152.0.html>

On this Web site, you are able to find specific information on Resolution A/RES/67/19, the same that recognize Palestine as non-member Observer State. In this sense, it provides data regarding the voting procedure held by the General Assembly regarding the adoption of the resolution in question. Thus, the evidence is overwhelming, by exposing a substantial majority that approved the Resolution, demonstrating 138 votes in favor to 9 votes against. Thus, from December 4, 2012, Palestine is considered as an Observer State of the United Nations.

United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL). (2012). *Question of Palestine: The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/com.htm>

This Web site gives us an overview of recent developments concerning CEIRPP activities. In this way, it provides us with basic information on the Committee, including: its mandate, its member states and some brief historical notes. Also, the Web site presents a summary of the events held on issues related to the mandate of CEIRPP. Besides, it provides links to public statements made by the Bureau of the Committee. Accordingly, it is an input of brief and basic information, in order to learn about the latest activities on the exercise of the rights of the Palestinian people.

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United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL). (2012). *CEIRPP Resolutions*. Retrieved January 31, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/fCEIRPPresns?OpenView>

United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL). (2012). *Question of Palestine: The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/com.htm>

United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL). (2012). *The Statement by Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on Israel's Settlement Activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.nsf/47D4E277B48D9D3685256DDC00612265/70D4E7A4CB59FFD085257ACD0049DB1C>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2012). *Brief Summary on Resolution Status of Palestine in the United Nations: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,UNGA,...50c5e6152.0.html>

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United Nations General Assembly. (2012, December 4). *Status of Palestine in the United Nations (A/RES/67/19)*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/50c5e6152.pdf>

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I. Supporting Palestinian Women as Political Leaders

*Despite, but perhaps also thanks to, decades of political turmoil, we were thrust into political life early in the game [...] Though women should always be the primary defenders of their rights [...] change will only be realized when men join in too.*²⁰

Recent advances of Palestinian women in the political arena

The situation of the Palestinian question in the United Nations developed rapidly within the last months of 2012. This too was certain for the role of Palestinian women in the political spectrum of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). October 20th, 2012 was a major victory for Palestinian women's political participation, with the election of the Bethlehem's first-ever female mayor, university English Literature Professor Vera Baboun.²¹ Baboun's election, aside from being of great importance for women in Palestinian politics, was also prominent given Bethlehem's importance be that locally, regionally, and/or internationally. The election was also important because of Baboun's victory over that of well-known male political competitors.²² One of Baboun's greatest challenges is to recover international aid lost by the holy city after Hama's election and leadership in 2006 prompted a halt of international funds.²³ In the mean time, Baboun has expressed her willingness to fight for her city while considering her election as "a sign that Palestinians want change."²⁴

Another great advancement in Palestinian women's role in the political sphere was accomplished when Maysoun Qawasmi, a female candidate for the West Bank's largest city which also holds the highest presence of Israeli colonizers as it constitutes the second holiest city after Jerusalem, Hebron, headed the first all-women list.²⁵ Even if Qawasmi's "By Participating, We Can" movement did not achieve enough votes to secure a seat on the city's council, it was the first time in Palestinian history that a women-only list participated in municipal election.²⁶

Palestinian women's political participation has gained momentum not only within the oPts, but also within Israel's territory. Asma Aghbaria-Zahalka, a Palestinian-Israeli woman is leading, within the framework of Israel's general elections to be held on January 22nd, 2013, the Jewish-Arab political party Daam.²⁷ Aghbaria-Zahalka, described as a "courageous, intelligent and eloquent Israeli leader", presents herself as an "alternative."²⁸ Her political discourse is revolutionary yet non-radical as she emphasizes the need for consensus between Palestinians and Israelis through dialogue and compromise.²⁹ While not everything has been easy for Aghbaria-Zahalka, as one of six children born under the structure of a conservative Muslim family, she has chosen to challenge both Islamic and Jewish-Israeli traditionalist societies.³⁰

Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center (PWRDC)

The Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center (PWRDC), founded in 2005 under the realm of the Social and Human Sciences Sector of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was created as a means to promote "women's rights and activating the roles of Palestinian women in the economic, political, and cultural domains."³¹ Hence, the organization's main objective is to promote the empowerment of women and their representation within Palestinian society, especially in decision-making bodies, by:

- Providing technical support and training to gender advocates;

²⁰ Abdalla, *Palestinian Women look to Bethlehem to boost their role*, 2012.

²¹ Kuttab, *Bethlehem has new female mayor, yet same old problems*, 2012.

²² Kuttab, *Bethlehem has new female mayor, yet same old problems*, 2012.

²³ APA, *New female mayor gears Bethlehem up for Christmas*, 2012.

²⁴ APA, *New female mayor gears Bethlehem up for Christmas*, 2012.

²⁵ Abu Aker and Rudoren, *Mixed results for Fatah amid low turnout in Municipal Elections in West Bank*, 2012.

²⁶ Haaretz, *All-female party to run in Palestinian elections*, 2012.

²⁷ Hadid, *Azma Aghbaria-Zahalka, leader of Daam Jewish-Arab party, makes long-shot election bid in Israel*, 2013.

²⁸ Cohen, *In an Arab woman, a new hope for Israel's left*, 2013.

²⁹ Peace Women, *Israel: Arab woman leads Israeli Daam Party*, 2013.

³⁰ Hadid, *Azma Aghbaria-Zahalka, leader of Daam Jewish-Arab party, makes long-shot election bid in Israel*, 2013.

³¹ *Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center*, 2013.

- Promoting the capacity of the Ministry of Labor in the protection of women in their workplace; and
- Guarantee that women's role in decision-making processes is enhanced, implemented, and monitored.³²

Conclusion

Though Palestinian women currently hold a quarter of the total of seats in the PNA cabinet and compromise 16.6% of the workforce; yet, even if the 26% average of Palestinian women political participation show an improvement, it still falls short by 10 points in comparison to those in other Middle Eastern and North African countries.³³ In this regard, Abir Kopty, a Palestinian activist considers that females “face patriarchal patterns also through activism, as in society in general”.³⁴ However, she, as many other Palestinian women, feel that Palestinian society as a whole is experiencing a “revival of women's activism and leadership” as part of the Palestinian resistance, a fact that will enforce the Palestinian struggle and that, for many, stands as an open door for change in women's status.³⁵ Female political activism in the oPt is not new: out of the 132-member, 17 women hold a seat as lawmakers at the Palestinian legislative council.³⁶ For some, women are still far behind in the political realm, for others, political female activism is rising both as a tool to enhance Palestinian national liberation, as well as to “challenge gender subordination and entrenched stereotypes.”³⁷

³² *Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center*, 2013.

³³ Abdalla, *Palestinian Women look to Bethlehem to boost their role*, 2012.

³⁴ Musleh, *Women's activism in Palestine*, 2012.

³⁵ Musleh, *Women's activism in Palestine*, 2012.

³⁶ Haaretz, *All-female party to run in Palestinian elections*, 2012.

³⁷ Musleh, *Women's activism in Palestine*, 2012.

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Abdalla, J. (2012). Palestinian Women look to Bethlehem to boost their role. *Al Arabiya News*. Retrieved January 3, 2013 from: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/14/243618.html>.

Abdalla's article on the election of Vera Baboun as the first-ever female mayor of the holiest city in the oPt's, Bethlehem is of great relevance as it describes the immediate effects of her election within Palestinian public. Furthermore, this article gives proof of women's rights violations as it describes practices that involve the stabbing of women charged of adultery. Delegates will find this article suitable in analyzing and acknowledging women's role in Palestinian society.

Haaretz. (2012). All-female party to run in Palestinian elections. Retrieved January 12, 2013, from: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/all-female-party-to-run-in-palestinian-elections-1.465204>.

Haaretz's article on the first ever all-women Palestinian movement will be of great reference for delegates to understand the current changes that the Palestinian political system is undergoing, especially taking into account that Hebron, the city where the all-women movement appeared is one, if not the most conservative Muslim cities in the West Bank. It will further delegate's knowledge on the cultural and religious obstacles Palestinian women encounter in their path to political activism.

Hadid, D. (2013). Azma Aghbaria-Zahalka, leader of Daam Jewish-Arab party, makes long-shot election bid in Israel. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/17/asma-aghbaria-zahalka-daam-jewish-arab-party-israel-election_n_2499122.html.

As shocking as it may appear for some, Hadid's article on a Palestinian-Israeli woman leading a Jewish-mainly political party within Israel's political system is of great relevance for two major reasons. For once, it presents the fact that a non-Israeli woman is the leading figure of a long-existent political party. The of course, there is the fact of Palestinian woman empowerment not only in Palestinian politics but also in Israeli ones, which opens the door for news studies on the role of Palestinian women in resolving the conflict between Palestine and Israel.

Musleh, M. (2012). *Women's activism in Palestine*. Retrieved January 3, 2013 from: <http://www.deliberation.info/women-activism-in-palestine/>.

Maath Musleh's "Women's activism in Palestine" is, as its title conveys, a rather brief account on current women's Palestinian activism. It will provide delegates with life experiences from Palestinian women devoted to fight for the Palestinian cause, their thoughts, needs, and dangers. It also provides a brief historical background on the matter.

Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center. (2013). Retrieved January 12, from: <http://www.pwrdc.ps/newsite/index.php?langid=2>.

The official site of the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center (PWRDC) is the perfect site for delegates to look further into projects and programmes being developed in the oPts in order to enhance Palestinian women participation. It also provides facts on the number of women statistics.

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APA. (2012). New female mayor gears Bethlehem up for Christmas. Retrieved January 3, 2013, from: http://en.apa.az/news_new_female_mayor_Ngears_bethlehem_up_for_184920.html.

Cohen, A. (2013). In an Arab woman a new hope for Israel's left. *Haaretz*. Retrieved February 1, 2013, from: <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/in-an-arab-woman-a-new-hope-for-israel-s-left.premium-1.492287>.

Haaretz. (2012). All-female party to run in Palestinian elections. Retrieved January 12, 2013, from: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/all-female-party-to-run-in-palestinian-elections-1.465204>.

Hadid, D. (2013). Azma Aghbaria-Zahalka, leader of Daam Jewish-Arab party, makes long-shot election bid in Israel. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/17/asma-aghbaria-zahalka-daam-jewish-arab-party-israel-election_n_2499122.html.

Kuttab, D. (2012). Bethlehem has new female mayor, yet same old problems. *Al Monitor*. Retrieved January 12, 2013 from: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2012/al-monitor/christmas-bethlehem-palestine.html>.

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Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center. (2013). Retrieved January 12, from: <http://www.pwrdc.ps/newsite/index.php?langid=2>.

Peace Women. (2013). *Israel: Arab woman leads Israeli Daam Party*. Retrieved January 12, from: http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=5670&type=news.

II. The Reconciliation of Stateless Palestinian Refugees in Neighboring Countries

Recent Developments

On November 29, 2012, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 67/19, by an overwhelming majority (138 to 9, with 41 abstentions), according Palestine the status of non-member Observer State at the United Nations³⁸. In a meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) preceding the vote, in which upgrading Palestine's status was strongly recommended,³⁹ Permanent Observer of Palestine, Riyad Mansour, said that the upgraded status would "open the doors for them to defend themselves better, legally and diplomatically."⁴⁰ This move, placing Palestine on equal footing with the Holy See at the UN, is symbolic and would give them access to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), where only states can be parties.⁴¹ Riad Malki, the Palestinian Foreign Minister, has already threatened to take Israel to the court over the planned E1 settlement construction.⁴² Resolution 67/19 also calls on "[a]ll states [...] of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination, independence and freedom."⁴³

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is currently most preoccupied by the escalating civil war in Syria, which hosts over 525,000 Palestinian Refugees, of which around 80% live in the greater Damascus area.⁴⁴ UNRWA is reporting that the demand for their assistance has increased exponentially since the conflict began.⁴⁵ Many Palestinian refugees have fled Syria altogether, with 10,000 being forced into Lebanon to escape the violence⁴⁶. Five UNRWA staff members have been killed, as well as an increasing number of refugees.⁴⁷ In addition, in the last quarter of 2012, the conflict began to intrude into Palestinian refugee communities inside Syria, with their neutrality coming under "huge pressure."⁴⁸ It is UNRWA's position that maintaining a neutral stance is of paramount importance.⁴⁹ On January 16, 2013, UNRWA released a statement appealing to all parties in the Syrian conflict "to ensure the protection of Palestine refugees, other civilians and their property and to comply with their obligations under international law."⁵⁰ The statement went on to remind combatants that "the integrity, inviolability and neutrality of United Nations premises, vehicles and other assets must be respected and safeguarded by all."⁵¹

Work to secure the human rights of Palestinian refugees, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, may be complicated by the decision of Israel on January 29, 2013, to boycott its Universal Periodic Review by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).⁵² Council spokesman Rolando Gomez told the Associated Press that

³⁸ BBC News, *Palestinians win upgraded UN Status by wide margin*, 2012

³⁹ Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, *International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People press release*, 2012.

⁴⁰ Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, *International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People press release*, 2012.

⁴¹ United Nations Charter, Statute of the International Court of Justice, *Article 34*, 1945.

⁴² McGreal, Chris, *International Criminal Court is a lever for Palestinians on Israeli settlements*, 2013.

⁴³ United Nations General Assembly, *Status of Palestine in the United Nations (A/RES/67/19)*, 2012.

⁴⁴ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*, 2012.

⁴⁵ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*, 2012.

⁴⁶ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*, 2012.

⁴⁷ Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People, *Palestinian rights committee approves four draft resolutions as it considers latest hostilities in Gaza strip*, 2012.

⁴⁸ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*, 2012

⁴⁹ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *UNRWA's Commissioner-General visits Syria*, 2012.

⁵⁰ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *UNRWA calls on all sides in Syria not to take up positions in refugee camps and to respect civilian areas*, 2013.

⁵¹ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *UNRWA calls on all sides in Syria not to take up positions in refugee camps and to respect civilian areas*, 2013.

⁵² BBC News, *Israel boycotts UN rights council in unprecedented move*, 2013.

Israel's unprecedented absence had put the council in “new territory” because attendance of the Universal Periodic Review was mandatory.⁵³ Israel had announced that it would stop working with the UNHRC in March 2012 following its decision to investigate Jewish settlements in the West Bank.⁵⁴

⁵³ BBC News, *Israel boycotts UN rights council in unprecedented move*, 2013.

⁵⁴ BBC News, *Israel ends contact with UN Human Rights Council*, 2012.

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United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (2012). *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from:

<http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012122163648.pdf>

The following press release gives a detailed summary of the current situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria, as well as a summary of the work done in the region by the UNRWA so far. Especially important is the detailed information regarding the budgetary requirements of the UNRWA in the coming months, including a breakdown of expenditure. It also gives a brief overview and some statistical information regarding the conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (2012) *UNRWA's Commissioner-General visits Syria*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from:

<http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=1545>

The following press release details the visit to Syria by Commissioner-General Filippo Grandi. He observed humanitarian operations and expressed sorrow at the death of Palestinian civilians and UNRWA staff. The visit is notable because he used it to reaffirm the UNRWA's advice that the Palestinians remain neutral in the Syrian conflict. This press release also highlights to progress UNRWA has made in these Syrian and Palestinian communities, such as providing welfare services and education even in areas of conflict.

Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People (CEIRPP) (2012). *Statement by bureau of Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People on Israel's settlement activity in occupied Palestinian territory*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from:

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/1a411d623e29d5e585256c380070fd35/70d4e7a4cb59ffd085257acd0049db1c?OpenDocument>

The following statement, released by the CEIRPP, refers to the decision by Israel to approve 3000 new housing units in the controversial E1 area. The statement condemns the move in the strongest terms, alleging that they are in breach of international law and threaten the viability of the two-state solution, as the E1 settlement complicates the territorial integrity of any potential Palestinian state, as well as complicating Palestinian access to East Jerusalem.

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). *International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People press release*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from:

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/gapal1250.doc.htm>,

The following press release by the CEIRPP details the meeting held on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. It contains transcripts remarks made to the meeting by most members of the committee, as well as an address by Vuk Jeremic, the President of the General Assembly and Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. It pre-empts the vote on upgrading Palestinian statehood that took place later that day, and many speakers voice their approval of this move.

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United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (2012). *Syria crisis response January-June 2013*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from: <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012122163648.pdf>

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (2012) *UNRWA's Commissioner-General visits Syria*. Retrieved January 28, 2013 from: <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=1545>

III. The Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Particularly in and around East Jerusalem

*“Settlement activity is a major obstacle to the two-State solution and must cease immediately. I repeat that all settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are illegal under international law and cannot prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations.”*⁵⁵

Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine

In the latest meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) in November 2012, the Palestinian Rights Committee approved four draft resolutions.⁵⁶ The first of these resolutions, *Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine A/RES/67/23* (2012), directly focused on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), particularly in and around East Jerusalem.⁵⁷ The resolution emphasized the importance of the free movement of people and goods as well as the need to preserve the “territorial unity, contiguity, and integrity.”⁵⁸ To this effect, the resolution stressed the “need for the removal of checkpoints and other obstructions” and the “need for an immediate and complete cessation of all acts of violence, including military attacks, destruction and acts of terror.”⁵⁹

Construction of Israel Settlements in E-1 area

The recognition of Palestine as a non-Member Observer State of the United Nations (UN) on November 29th, 2012 was an incomplete yet critical step in the tumultuous process toward full membership and statehood.⁶⁰ However, little changed for the people in the oPt, as Palestinian activists continued to protest at new settlement locations, such as the Bab al-Shams tent camp representing a “nonviolent popular struggle” against the recent E-1 Israeli settlement construction site.⁶¹ The “preliminary zoning and planning preparations” were announced the day after the UN General Assembly (GA) voted to upgrade the status of Palestine.⁶² Israel also delayed more than 100 million USD worth of tax revenue transfers to the National Palestinian Authority (NPA), which is heavily dependent on the funds.⁶³

The 12 square kilometers of land sanctioned as E-1 by the Israeli government is particularly controversial due to its critical location between the West Bank and East Jerusalem.⁶⁴ Many states and organizations expressed their support for the Palestinians regarding Israeli’s settlement plans, as even the United States acknowledged that the construction there would “partially separate the northern and southern West Bank, harming the prospects of a viable contiguous Palestinian state in that territory.”⁶⁵ Construction in the E-1 area had been halted since the previous administration’s agreements with former U.S. President George W. Bush.⁶⁶ However, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu declared that those years were a part of the gradual planning process.⁶⁷ Once the planning was completed, Netanyahu sealed off the area to prevent disorder and publicly stated, “we will not let anyone harm the contiguity between Jerusalem and Ma’aleh Adumim,” authorizing 3,500 units for construction in E-1.⁶⁸ He also ascertained that any Palestinian state must first recognize Israel as a Jewish state, declare an end to the conflict, and demilitarize with security arrangements that meet Israel’s approval.⁶⁹

⁵⁵ UNISPAL. *Secretary-General SG/SM/14796 GA/PAL/1254*. 2013.

⁵⁶ UNISPAL. *Palestinian Rights Committee Approves four draft resolutions as it considers latest hostilities in Gaza Strip*. 2012.

⁵⁷ UNGA. *Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine (A/RES/67/23)*. 2012.

⁵⁸ UNISPAL. *Palestinian Rights Committee Approves four draft resolutions as it considers latest hostilities in Gaza Strip*. 2012.

⁵⁹ UNISPAL. *Palestinian Rights Committee Approves four draft resolutions as it considers latest hostilities in Gaza Strip*. 2012.

⁶⁰ New York Times. *Israelis Evict Palestinians From a Site for Housing*. 2013.

⁶¹ New York Times. *Israelis Evict Palestinians From a Site for Housing*. 2013.

⁶² New York Times. *Israelis Evict Palestinians From a Site for Housing*. 2013.

⁶³ UNDP. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁶⁴ Haaretz. *Netanyahu on evacuating Palestinian protest tents: Nobody will block E-1 corridor*. 2013.

⁶⁵ New York Times. *Israelis Evict Palestinians From a Site for Housing*. 2013.

⁶⁶ Haaretz. *Netanyahu on evacuating Palestinian protest tents: Nobody will block E-1 corridor*. 2013.

⁶⁷ Haaretz. *Netanyahu on evacuating Palestinian protest tents: Nobody will block E-1 corridor*. 2013.

⁶⁸ Haaretz. *Netanyahu on evacuating Palestinian protest tents: Nobody will block E-1 corridor*. 2013.

⁶⁹ Times of Israel. *Netanyahu says he will ‘never divide Jerusalem,’ could accept a centrist coalition*. 2013.

On December 6th, 2012, the Bureau of the CEIRPP “forcefully condemn[ed] these acts and call[ed] for them to be reversed immediately,” reminding Israel that all settlement activities are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and once more citing past resolutions of the GA, Security Council (SC), and International Court of Justice (ICJ).⁷⁰ Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits occupying powers from transferring its own civilians into occupied territories. The CEIRPP also expressed its concern regarding the authorization of 3,000 new units to be built in the settlements of Gilo, Pisgat Ze’ev, Ariel, and Gush Etzion, which are located in and around East Jerusalem.⁷¹ In total, the building tenders that have been approved in 2012 amount to more than 6,000, exponentially more than the 2,512 units approved in the past decade under former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.⁷²

Conclusion

In a public statement, the CEIRPP urges the international community to mobilize and prevent the construction plans for the E-1 area, while also calling upon UN organs such as the SC and the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to address Israel’s “continued violation of its provisions.”⁷³ The CEIRPP believes the escalation of Israel’s illegal settlement campaign to be a rejection of the Two-State Solution on the basis of pre-1967 borders.⁷⁴ In response the Palestinian foreign minister Riad Malki stated there was no choice but to proceed legally at the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Israel.⁷⁵ Grave violations of the Geneva Conventions may be prosecuted as war crimes through the Rome Statue of the ICC, Article 8.⁷⁶ Consequently, several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty International and the European Union have released statements denouncing the new settlement plans, noting “settlement construction is the cause of forced displacement, a myriad of human rights violations and a flagrant violation of international law.”⁷⁷

⁷⁰ UNDPI. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁷¹ UNDPI. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁷² UNDPI. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁷³ UNDPI. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁷⁴ UNDPI. *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel’s Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. 2012.

⁷⁵ New York Times. *Why Palestine Should Take Israel to Court in The Hague*. 2013.

⁷⁶ ICRC. *Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court*. 1998.

⁷⁷ Amnesty International. *Israel must halt construction of West Bank settlements*. December 3, 2012.

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Amnesty International's statement is a proof that a non-governmental organization can take part in the dialogue with states and intergovernmental organizations. It also provides objective information about the E-1 settlement in the past few months, such as the international laws that it violates. Amnesty International has urged Israel to lift its blockade on Gaza, and called upon the UN to refer Fact-Finding Mission results of the 2008-2009 Gaza-Israeli conflict to the SC so that international crimes committed by both parties can be investigated by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Tepper, G. (2013). Netanyahu says he will 'never divide Jerusalem,' could accept a centrist coalition. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-would-never-divide-jerusalem-but-would-accept-a-centrist-coalition/>.

This is one of the rare news articles that quotes more than a sentence from Prime Minister Netanyahu and delves into the political situation in Israel, since it is written domestically. The article also links to other news on the left "More On This Story" regarding the E-1 settlements, Netanyahu's preconditions for a Palestinian state, and the upcoming Israeli elections. The elections this year will have a significant impact on the future of a Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, which Netanyahu does not believe is an aspect of a viable solution.

United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI). (2012). *Statement by Bureau of CEIRPP on Israel's Settlement Activity in Occupied Palestinian Territories*. Retrieved January 12, 2013 from: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/gapal1252.doc.htm>.

This statement released by the CEIRPP is an important example of the Bureau's work, and demonstrates how it communicates with the public. The CEIRPP announces its regret for the construction of new settlements right after the GA granted Palestine the status of a non-Member Observer State on November 29, 2012. Delegates should take note of the tone and language used by the CEIRPP in addressing Israel's obstruction of international efforts.

United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI). (2012). *Palestinian Rights Committee Approves Four Draft Resolutions As It Considers Latest Hostilities in Gaza Strip*. Retrieved January 12, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/310C683DE369D32485257ABD0047C080>.

The four latest resolutions of the CEIRPP are all available here. The statement is further informative as it stresses the important clauses and context of each resolution, and also summarizes the 346th Meeting in which the discussions took place. The statements made by the Committee Chair Abdou Salam Diallo, representatives of Member States, and the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNWRA) are detailed here.

United Nations General Assembly. (2012). *A/RES/67/23 (2012)*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/00EABD1DC168954385257AC400547D43>.

Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine is one of the four resolutions passed by the GA and the most relevant to topic 3. The resolution references important past treaties, documents, and resolutions, and calls for the cessation of all provocations in East Jerusalem and around religious sites, and is more substantive than some of the previous resolutions. Delegates may consider how aspects of the clauses can be translated into viable action; for example, what "confidence-building measures" could look like.

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