

## Committee Overview

### *Introduction*

Since the publication of the background guide, the General Assembly as well as the Security Council considered the 2014 report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, CEIRPP organized activities in the scope of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>2</sup> However, the severe and ongoing conflicts since summer 2014 hindered the full potential of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>3</sup> This update will provide a detailed overview of recent developments relevant to CEIRPP's work.

### *Recent Activities*

Since September 2014, CEIRPP has held three events.<sup>4</sup> In October 2014, CEIRPP invited Professor Noam Chomsky to speak in front of the General Assembly.<sup>5</sup> He discussed possible solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and subsequently participated in a question-and-answer session moderated by Amy Goodman.<sup>6</sup> He emphasized the Security Council's solution presented in 1976 and expressed his support for the two-state solution.<sup>7</sup>

In November 2014, CEIRPP hosted the United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace at the United Nations headquarters in New York.<sup>8</sup> The main aim was to emphasize the involvement of international law and human rights law in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>9</sup> Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized the important role of international law and the involvement of parliamentarians from all over the world, which are crucial to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.<sup>10</sup>

In December 2014, CEIRPP organized the International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights.<sup>11</sup> The conference was held in Spain and had five main topics, namely: decentralized and local cooperation for development, humanitarian assistance and political actions; breaking the cycle of impunity; campaigning for peace and justice for the Palestinian people; the plight of Palestinian political prisoners and detainees including women and children; and Palestine and the media.<sup>12</sup>

2014 was the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>13</sup> As described above, many activities were held under the auspices of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>14</sup> However, in summer 2014, the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians collapsed, which restricted the potential of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, CEIRPP plans to hold a seminar on

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<sup>1</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Question of Palestine – UN Resolutions*, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Calendar of Events*, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> UN DPI, *In Year of Solidarity, Hope for Palestinian Statehood Dashed Due to Peace Process Collapse, Israel's Acts against Gaza, Speakers Tell General Assembly*, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Calendar of Events*, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Lecture by Prof. Noam Chomsky*, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*; Democracy Now, *Noam Chomsky and Amy Goodman at the United Nations*, 2014; UN web TV, *365th Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Lecture by Prof. Noam Chomsky*, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> UN CEIRPP, *United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace*, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> UN DPI, *International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace Considers Lawmakers' Role in Upholding Respect for International Law*, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> UN CEIRPP, *International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights*, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> UN General Assembly, *Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/RES/68/12)*, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> UN CEIRPP, *International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights*, 2015; UN CEIRPP, *Lecture by Prof. Noam Chomsky*, 2015; UN CEIRPP, *United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace*, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> UN DPI, *In Year of Solidarity, Hope for Palestinian Statehood Dashed Due to Peace Process Collapse, Israel's Acts against Gaza, Speakers Tell General Assembly*, 2014.

Assistance to the Palestinian People at the end of February 2015.<sup>16</sup> The seminar shall focus on how the international community can support post-war Gaza in terms of “relief, recovery and reconstruction.”<sup>17</sup> The Division for Palestinian Rights will support CEIRPP in planning the seminar.<sup>18</sup>

Topics concerning CEIRPP were discussed at the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council based on CEIRPP’s 2014 report.<sup>19</sup> The General Assembly expressed its appreciation for CEIRPP’s work in resolution 69/20 and requested CEIRPP to continue working towards ensuring the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and ongoing conflicts.<sup>20</sup> Further, the General Assembly commended efforts associated with the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.<sup>21</sup> In resolutions 69/21 and 69/22, the General Assembly encouraged cooperation between CEIRPP, the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, the Department of Public Information, and civil society organizations.<sup>22</sup> Resolution 69/23 reemphasizes the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine.<sup>23</sup> Resolution 69/24 focuses on Jerusalem and emphasizes that both parties, Israel and Palestine, shall respect each other’s religious sites in Jerusalem.<sup>24</sup> In resolution 69/25, the General Assembly demands that Israeli military forces leave the occupied Syrian Golan, which belongs to Palestinian territory.<sup>25</sup> In resolution 69/86, the General Assembly considers assistance to Palestinian refugees, while resolution 69/89 addresses properties and revenues of Palestinian refugees.<sup>26</sup> Resolution 69/90 by the General Assembly considers the investigation of continuous human rights violations to Palestinians and residents of other Arab occupied territories.<sup>27</sup> The General Assembly reiterates continuous support for Palestinians and demands that Israel implement resolutions by the Security Council and General Assembly.<sup>28</sup> In particular, the General Assembly emphasizes the need to respect Palestinian borders.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the General Assembly, the Security Council considered Palestine.<sup>30</sup> The Security Council considered but eventually rejected a controversial draft resolution explicitly stating that Israel has 12 months left to leave the Occupied Palestinian Territory and accept the two-state solution introduced in 1967.<sup>31</sup> The rejected draft also affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to independence, anticipated the inclusion of Palestine as a full Member State of the UN, and called for further humanitarian assistance to civilians in the Gaza Strip.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Recent Policy Outcomes***

In October 2014, CEIRPP submitted its 2014 report to the General Assembly.<sup>33</sup> In the report, which corresponds to the period from 7 October 2013 to 6 October 2014, CEIRPP presents observations, conclusions, and recommendations for previous and future activities on the topic of Palestine.<sup>34</sup> The committee emphasizes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the occupation of Palestinian territory must end with the establishment of Palestine as

<sup>16</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Calendar of Events*, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Division for Palestinian Rights*, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Question of Palestine – UN Resolutions*, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> UN General Assembly, *Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/RES/69/20)*, 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> UN General Assembly, *Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (A/RES/69/21)*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat (A/RES/69/22)*, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> UN General Assembly, *Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine (A/RES/69/23)*, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> UN General Assembly, *Jerusalem (A/RES/69/24)*, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Syrian Golan (A/RES/69/25)*, 2014.

<sup>26</sup> UN General Assembly, *Assistance to Palestine refugees (A/RES/69/86)*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Palestine refugees’ properties and their revenues (A/RES/69/89)*, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> UN General Assembly, *Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/RES/69/90)*, 2014.

<sup>28</sup> UN General Assembly, *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/RES/69/93)*, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Question of Palestine – UN Resolutions*, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> UN Security Council, *Jordan: Draft Resolution (S/RES/2014/916)*, 2014.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

a sovereign state.<sup>35</sup> The committee notes the accession of Palestine to a number of international treaties and conventions, including the *Geneva Conventions*.<sup>36</sup> CEIRPP calls for the protection of the inalienable rights of Palestinians have to be protected and the release of Palestinian political prisoners.<sup>37</sup> CEIRPP suggests that round-table meetings are a successful method for resolving conflict.<sup>38</sup> CEIRPP is eager to cooperate with parliamentarians from all over the world to promote issues related to Palestine on a governmental level.<sup>39</sup> CEIRPP and the Division for Palestinian Rights want to increase the international community's awareness of issues relating to the Question of Palestine and the inalienable rights of Palestinian people by cooperating with well-known personalities and disseminating information through social media platforms.<sup>40</sup> To achieve its goals, CEIRPP is eager to maintain cooperation with partners such as the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), who support the work and goals of CEIRPP financially, logistically, and substantively.<sup>41</sup> CEIRPP also calls for financial aid in general and emphasizes its reliance on continued financial support from donors.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Implementation of CEIRPP Outcomes***

CEIRPP is supported by the Division for Palestinian Rights (DPR) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA).<sup>43</sup> The DPA belongs to the Secretariat and follows, monitors and evaluates global political developments to detect potential causes of crisis before a situation escalates.<sup>44</sup> To receive all relevant information, the DPA cooperates closely with UN Member States.<sup>45</sup> Regional and international cooperation is of utmost importance with respect to the Middle East, where the DPA works “to defuse tensions, encourage improvements on the ground, and advance political negotiations toward a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”<sup>46</sup> The DPR, which is a subdivision of the DPA, was founded by General Assembly resolution 32/40 and its mandate has been continually extended and expanded.<sup>47</sup> Currently, the main functions of the DPR are supporting CEIRPP substantively and administratively, as well as “assisting [CEIRPP] in the exercise of its mandate and the promotion and implementation of its commendations.”<sup>48</sup>

At the national level, CEIRPP works with parliamentarians from different countries all over the world.<sup>49</sup> Through cooperation, CEIRPP aims to raise awareness for Palestine-related issues and generate financial and substantive support from governments.<sup>50</sup>

CEIRPP also engages in cooperation with the African Union, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and OIC.<sup>51</sup> CEIRPP works closely with the Department of Public Information, which frequently updates social media platforms and multimedia channels; it also offers a tour through UN headquarters, always stopping at the exhibition on “The question of Palestine and the United Nations.”<sup>52</sup> In addition, CEIRPP partners with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Office for

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<sup>35</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> UN Department of Political Affairs, *Role of the Department of Political Affairs*, 2015; UN CEIRPP, *Division for Palestinian Rights*, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> UN Department of Political Affairs, *Role of the Department of Political Affairs*, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> UN Department of Political Affairs, *Activities by Region - Middle East and West Asia*, 2015.

<sup>47</sup> UN CEIRPP, *Division for Palestinian Rights*, 2015.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and other UN and civil society organizations worldwide, which engage actively in the promotion of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.<sup>53</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Due to the severe conflicts since summer 2014, conflict resolution took precedence over CEIRPP's other efforts. Although the full potential of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People could not be realized, many topics concerned with Palestinian rights were considered within the UN. In 2015, CEIRPP's work to promote the "comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine" will remain essential to the international community's efforts toward achieving peace in the Middle East, particularly in light of "the many difficulties facing the Palestinian people and their leadership and besetting the peace process."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

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*This video is a webcast of the lecture held by Professor Noam Chomsky at the General Assembly Hall in support of the International Year of Solidarity with Palestinian People. As he is one of the best-known experts on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the opinion and speech of Chomsky might be of interest for delegates. Furthermore, delegates are able to view a real event organized by CEIRPP and get a better understanding of the Committee's work.*

United Nations, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. (2015). *The Question of Palestine – UN Resolutions* [Website]. Retrieved 6 January 2015 from: <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/res.htm>

*Delegates should use this website as a key source for their research. CEIRPP presents all relevant resolutions and draft resolutions by UN organizations that are concerned with Palestine. Consequently, it is much easier to get an overview on recent outcomes within the UN system. Additionally, delegates gain insight into how the information provided by CEIRPP influences the decision of other UN bodies.*

United Nations, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. (2015). *United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace* [Website]. Retrieved 8 January 2015 from:

<http://unispal.un.org/databases/dprtest/ngoweb.nsf/f12fded4d0597000852573fc005b9471/b9202b4b45da6fa085257d6d006a008e?OpenDocument>

*The website considers one of the activities held under the auspices of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In contrast to other activities, which were usually related to the impact of civil society, this particular activity considers the legal aspect of possible solutions to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. As international law forms the basis for many decisions and defines the scope of actions possible, delegates should familiarize themselves with the meeting to get an understanding of another perspective on the conflict.*

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2014, November 24). *In Year of Solidarity, Hope for Palestinian Statehood Dashed Due to Peace Process Collapse, Israel's Acts against Gaza, Speakers Tell General Assembly* [Press Release]. Retrieved 6 January 2015 from:

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/1a411d623e29d5e585256c380070fd35/288361f039e4c5b885257d9b005254df?OpenDocument>

*This source discusses the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. As a consequence of recent and severe conflict and the collapse of the peace process between Israel and Palestine, many activities under the auspices of the International Year were not held or did not meet expectations. The press release summarizes what has happened to the ambitious initiative and presents several opinions of ambassadors from different countries. Delegates have the chance to see different points of view from different countries, which may assist them with position papers. Additionally, delegates may draw inspiration from how ambassadors present their ideas.*

United Nations, Security Council. (2014, December 30). *Jordan: Draft Resolution (S/RES/2014/916)* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 6 January 2015 from:

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/d744b47860e5c97e85256c40005d01d6/a12252711015996d85257dbf00536b1c?OpenDocument>

*The severe conflicts between Israel and Palestine have been addressed at the Security Council as well. The draft resolution introduced by Jordan represents one of the possible reactions towards the ongoing conflicts by the UN. Although the draft was not adopted, delegates should consider the provided ideas to find solutions for the conflict and should keep an eye on future developments. The draft shows the actions that some Member States would undertake to stabilize the region.*

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United Nations web TV. (2014, October 14). *365th Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People* [Video]. Retrieved 8 January 2015 from: <http://webtv.un.org/watch/365th-meeting-of-the-committee-on-the-exercise-of-the-inalienable-rights-of-the-palestinian-people/3840311209001>

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## I. International Action for the Release of all Palestinian Political Prisoners

### *Introduction*

According to human rights advocacy group Addameer, there are currently 6500 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli detention as of 1 October 2014.<sup>55</sup> This represents a significant jump from the first half of 2014 where the number of prisoners had hovered at just over 5000.<sup>56</sup> The figure of 6500 includes 19 female prisoners, and 182 children.<sup>57</sup> This is the highest number of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention since 2009.<sup>58</sup>

In the last quarter, Addameer, along with the UK based Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR) have filed 3 new complaints to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.<sup>59</sup> The complaints relate to the detention of an activist, a journalist, and a human rights lawyer, all of whom have been detained for several months.<sup>60</sup> One activist, Abdallah Abu Rahma, who runs the Popular Committee Against the Wall in his local village of Bil'in, was in December convicted by an Israeli military court for his part in a peaceful 2012 protest, and faces up to five years in jail.<sup>61</sup>

On 5 December 2014, the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/69/93, *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*.<sup>62</sup> This resolution expressed “grave concern” at the “arbitrary detention and imprisonment” of Palestinians.<sup>63</sup> The resolution also called for “urgent attention” to be paid to Palestinian prisoners and their lack of rights.<sup>64</sup> All sides were urged to work together to secure the release of further prisoners.<sup>65</sup>

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP), as part of a statement issued on 17 December 2014 welcoming the announcement of a conference on Palestine, for parties to the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention, reinforced its position that the transfer of prisoners from Palestine to Israel, the occupying power, is illegal.<sup>66</sup>

CEIRPP also supported the convening of the International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, a 2-day conference that took place in Seville, Spain in December 2014.<sup>67</sup> The conference culminated in the Olive Declaration, which calls for an end to the practice of Administrative Detention and for the release of all Palestinian political prisoners.<sup>68</sup> Further, an entire session of the conference was devoted to “the plight of Palestinian political prisoners and detainees including women and children.”<sup>69</sup> During the discussions and in the Olive Declaration, “all levels of the international community,” including local government and civil society, were urged to increase the pressure on Israel to release all political prisoners.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Addameer, *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – October 2014*, 2014.

<sup>56</sup> Addameer, *Statistics*, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Addameer, *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – October 2014*, 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Addameer, *Quarterly Newsletter July – September 2014*.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Amnesty International, *Urgent Action: Activist facing jail for peaceful protest*, 19 December 2014.

<sup>62</sup> UN General Assembly, *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/RES69/93)*, December 5, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> UN General Assembly, *Bureau of Committee on Palestinian Rights Welcomes Declaration of Conference of High Contracting Parties to Fourth Geneva Convention on 17 December 2014*, December 18 2014.

<sup>67</sup> International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, *Olive Declaration*, 2014.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

## ***Recent Developments***

### *Background and Process of Detention*

The spike in number of detailed Palestinians comes as a result of several factors. Following Operation Cast Lead, Israel's July offensive in Gaza, widespread protests erupted throughout Palestine, leading to 3500 additional arrests.<sup>71</sup> There were further mass demonstrations, and arrests, following the murder of 16 year old Mohammed Abu Khdir.<sup>72</sup>

Additionally, an increasing number of Palestinians are held under Administrative Detention laws, where they are held indefinitely, without charge, based on evidence that is secret.<sup>73</sup> The total number of Palestinians currently held under Administrative Detention laws is 500, including 18 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).<sup>74</sup> This is the highest number in Administrative Detention for five years, and the increase is described by Addameer as a "statement of [Israel's] power and control in the West Bank."<sup>75</sup>

In January, Palestine acceded to the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and accepted the court's jurisdiction over crimes committed "in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, since June 13, 2014."<sup>76</sup> The chief prosecutor of the court announced a fortnight later that she would be proceeding with a preliminary examination of the situation in Palestine.<sup>77</sup> A preliminary examination is not the same as a full investigation; rather, it is a fact-finding exercise to establish whether there are reasonable grounds to initiate a full ICC investigation, which could implicate both Israeli and Palestinian actors over their behavior since June 2014.<sup>78</sup>

### *Palestinian Children in Israeli Detention*

The reported number of Palestinian children in Israeli detention in late 2014 stood at 182, 19 of which were under the age of 16.<sup>79</sup> The number of Palestinian children detained represents a fall from the early 2014 high of 220, in March, which is also a significant fall from 2010 and earlier, when more than 300 children were detained.<sup>80</sup> Since 2000, more than 8000 Palestinian children have been detained, usually for throwing stones at the Israeli army, an offence that can be punished by up to 20 years in jail.<sup>81</sup> It is important to note that Palestinian children age 16 and above are tried as adults, unlike Israeli children, who are not tried as adults until they are 18.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, a Palestinian's sentence depends on their age at the time of sentencing, not when the offence was committed.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, a Palestinian child arrested at 15 could still be sentenced as an adult if they turn 16 while in custody.<sup>84</sup>

## ***Conclusion***

The United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/93, *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*,<sup>85</sup> is arguably the most significant recent document relating to Palestinian prisoners adopted by the United Nations. Further, the most recent action by CEIRPP on the subject of Palestinian prisoners was its discussion at the Seville conference with local government, where representatives called for the immediate end of the use of Administrative Detention, and the

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<sup>71</sup> Addameer, *Quarterly Newsletter July – September 2014*.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Addameer, *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – October 2014*, 2014.

<sup>75</sup> Addameer, *Quarterly Newsletter July – September 2014*.

<sup>76</sup> International Criminal Court, *The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, opens a preliminary investigation of the situation in Palestine*, 16 January 2015.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Addameer, *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – October 2014*, 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Addameer, *Key Issues: Children*, 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> UN General Assembly, *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/RES69/93)*, December 5, 2014.

release of all political prisoners.<sup>86</sup> Further, there has been progress in favour of Palestine rights, most significantly the continuing fall in the number of child and adolescent prisoners.<sup>87</sup> However, the overall picture has arguably deteriorated in recent months, with a spike in the number of total prisoners, and the number of Administrative Detainees the highest they have been for years.<sup>88</sup> These facts reinforce how continually important it is for CEIRPP to address this topic. CEIRPP delegates should focus on finding innovative ways to maintain as much national, international attention on this issue and continue to support civil society efforts to highlight human rights abuses. Finally, the ICC fact-finding mission aimed at accessing 2014 conflict is also an important aspect to consider the status of political prisoners and the protection of their rights.

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<sup>86</sup> International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, *Program*, 2014.

<sup>87</sup> Addameer, *Key Issues: Children*, 2014.

<sup>88</sup> Addameer, *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – October 2014*, 2014.

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Addameer. (2014). *Addameer Monthly Detention Report – 1 October 2014*. Retrieved 30 December 2014 from: <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=729>

*This report presents the latest verified prisoner statistics from Addameer, an NGO that works to support Palestinian political prisoners by offering free legal aid, lobbying at a national level and organizing solidarity campaigns. These statistics, verified at the end of October 2014, detail the exact number of Palestinians in detention, the demographic breakdown of the prisoners, including the number of women and children and how many members of the PLC are detained. Also included are details of detention, such as how many prisoners are in Administrative Detention, and how many long-term detainees there are. Delegates will find these figures useful and should research more recent verified statistics in early 2015.*

Addameer. (2014). *Quarterly Newsletter July – September*. Retrieved 2 December 2014 from: <http://www.addameer.org/files/Quart%20Newsletter%202014%203%20QTR.pdf>

*This is Addameer's most recent quarterly newsletter, covering the period July-September 2014. It discusses how tension and then violence escalated in this period, including Israel's offensive in the Gaza strip, as well as mass protests in Jerusalem and the rest of Israel. It details broad trends, such as the increasing use of Administrative Detention, as well as attacks on the organization of Addameer itself. It details the complaints Addameer has made recently to the UN, as well as the stories of a few individual Palestinians who have been detained.*

International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights. (2014). *Olive Declaration*. Retrieved 4/1/2015 from:

<http://www.un.org/depts/dpa/qpal/docs/2014Seville/olivedeclaration.pdf>

*The International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights was a two day conference organized by CEIRPP and a number of Andalusian local government organizations. Their final statement, the 'Olive Declaration,' is a broad document, calling for Palestinian rights in a number of areas, as well as a peaceful end to the conflict. The document also calls on local governments not to support the occupation in any way, for instance through twinning arrangements, or through commercial partnerships with companies that support the occupation. This conference is a good example of the work CEIRPP does to engage with the parts of civil society in the pursuit of Palestinian human rights.*

United Nations, General Assembly. (December 18, 2014). *Bureau of Committee on Palestinian Rights Welcomes Declaration of Conference of High Contracting Parties to Fourth Geneva Convention on 17 December 2014*. [Press Release]. Retrieved 4/1/2015 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gapal1323.doc.htm>

*This press release by CEIRPP expresses the committee's support for the convening of a conference relating to the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention, relating to the protection of civilians in a time of war, focusing on the situation in Palestine. In particular, this conference is in response to 'Operation Protective Edge,' the recent Israeli offensive in Gaza. The statement refers to the plight of Palestinian prisoners, particularly the practice of transferring them to prisons inside the State of Israel proper, which runs contrary to international law.*

United Nations, General Assembly. Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/RES/69/93)*. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from:

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/a06f2943c226015c85256c40005d359c/429cf0e483a5cfec85257db2006e5fae?OpenDocument>

*This is the most recent General Assembly resolution concerning Palestine. It details the current concerns of the international community, including a condemnation of the violence of summer 2014. This is the most significant decision document adopted by the UN relating to Palestine since September 2014. It relates particularly to the topic of political prisoners because it specifically condemns the arbitrary detention of Palestinians, as well as calls for the release of all political prisoners.*

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## II. Strengthening Partnership with Civil Society

### *Introduction*

The United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestine People (CEIRPP) works with national parliamentarians as well as local politicians to raise awareness of the struggle for Palestinian human rights. On 12 November 2014, CEIRPP organized the United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace, at the UN headquarters in New York.<sup>89</sup> The event brought together national politicians and civil society from around the world, and focused on the work that parliamentarians can do to support human rights and international humanitarian law for Palestinians.<sup>90</sup>

Additionally, the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People came to a close in December 2014. In honor of the international focus the Palestinian rights, world-renowned linguist and intellectual, Noam Chomsky, gave a lecture to the United Nations General Assembly in October, promoting international cooperation on the issue.<sup>91</sup> Inviting Chomsky to address the GA is an example of the UN encouraging input from civil society, a key part of CEIRPP's mandate.<sup>92</sup> Chomsky has been a publicly engaged intellectual and influential advocate for Palestine for decades.<sup>93</sup> In his statement to the GA in its sixty-ninth session, he particularly questioned Israel's commitment to the two-state solution and praised the actions of European countries like Sweden, who have recently recognized the State of Palestine.<sup>94</sup> Further, Chomsky encouraged delegates to commit to a solution, despite the numerous obstacles.<sup>95</sup> The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was commemorated on 24 November 2014, where Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addressed the General Assembly.<sup>96</sup> In his address, he recalled the sentiment behind the GA declaration of 2014 as the Year of International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and expressed his disappointment with the year's continuation of a "mindless cycle of destruction" in the region.<sup>97</sup> Condemning violence on all sides, Ban Ki-moon also urged member states to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) financially in order to fulfill its mandate.<sup>98</sup>

Major civil society actors came together in Seville, Spain in December 2014 to align strategies for promoting Palestinian rights in the upcoming year. The International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights was a 2-day conference that brought together the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI), along with the Andalusian Parliament and other representatives of local government, as well as delegations from CEIRPP and Palestine, to discuss the situation in Palestine.<sup>99</sup> The outcome document, the Olive Declaration, affirms much of the existing international discourse on Palestine, voices support for the two state solution, and condemns violence in the region.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, it includes several proposals specifically tailored for local and municipal government.<sup>101</sup> These included calls for more municipal engagement with Palestinian towns and cities, for instance through twinning arrangements, and calls to avoid partnering with companies or cities that profit from or support the Israeli occupation.<sup>102</sup> The conference is a prime example of engagement CEIRPP's mandated to encourage cross-sectoral collaboration on the promotion of Palestinian rights and justice.

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<sup>89</sup> UN, DPR, *International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace: Program*, 2014.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> UN General Assembly, *United States Youth Could Alter United States Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict, Noam Chomsky Tells Palestinian Rights Committee, Saying Crisis Not Intractable*, 2014.

<sup>92</sup> UN General Assembly, *Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/RES/68/12)*, 2013.

<sup>93</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, *Noam Chomsky: Politics*, 2015.

<sup>94</sup> UN General Assembly, *United States Youth Could Alter United States Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict, Noam Chomsky Tells Palestinian Rights Committee, Saying Crisis Not Intractable*, 2014.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Department of Public Information, *Israelis, Palestinians Must Find Path to Peace 'Before Hope and Time Run Out', Says Secretary-General at Meeting to Observe Day of Solidarity*, 2014.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, *Olive Declaration*, 2014.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

In upcoming months, March 2015 will see the Middle East and North Africa Regional Consultation, a key meeting in preparation for the first ever World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in 2016.<sup>103</sup> In preparation for this event, over 60 Palestinian civil society organizations, including The Humanitarian Forum (THF) and the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), as well as the Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) met in the West Bank and Gaza for preliminary discussions in preparation for the consultation in December 2014.<sup>104</sup> Areas under discussion included ‘humanitarian effectiveness, reducing vulnerability and managing risk, transformation through innovation and serving the needs of people in conflict.’<sup>105</sup>

### ***Encouraging Youth Engagement***

In his October speech to the GA, Chomsky declared that young people in the United States are more engaged than ever before in the struggle for Palestinian rights and could one day alter US foreign policy in the region.<sup>106</sup> Further, The Olive Declaration called for more youth exchanges to Palestine, as part of a more involved relationship between supportive governments and Palestine.<sup>107</sup> An example of exchanges that occurred in 2014 is the Yasser Arafat 2014 program, which in November helped 100 Palestinian students travel to Venezuela to study medicine.<sup>108</sup>

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has set a goal to increase Palestinian children’s access to education through an improved learning environment by 2016.<sup>109</sup> UNESCO will focus on tangible changes to address issues such as large classes sizes, currently with an average size of 37.3 students.<sup>110</sup> These programs will be necessary in response to Gaza’s young, rapidly growing population and projected increase in student population by 4% every year.<sup>111</sup> Current estimates say another 190 schools will need to be built by 2020 in order to match demand.<sup>112</sup> Further, the existing system is straining under the pressure, with 79% of government schools and 88% of UNRWA run schools operating on a double shift system.<sup>113</sup> Improving this situation will require cooperation with civil society, for instance through helping communities set up and maintain pre and after school extracurricular activities, and working with Palestinian universities to improve teacher training standards.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Enhancing the Participation of Women***

In October 2014, the United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published *Civil Society Space and the United Nations Human Rights System: A Practical Guide for Civil Society*.<sup>115</sup> This report drew attention to the fact that women who work to defend the human rights of themselves and others not only suffer the same risks and reprisals of their male counterparts, but also face gender-specific intimidation and violence.<sup>116</sup> Women who participate in human rights programs can often be seen to be challenging traditional concepts of family or gender.<sup>117</sup> The report drew attention to A/RES/68/181, *Promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: protecting women human rights defenders*, which calls on states to take all measures necessary to address discrimination and violence faced by female human rights workers, as well as calling

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<sup>103</sup> United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Palestinian Civil Society Calls For Enhanced Protection And Access Ahead Of World Humanitarian Summit*, 2014.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *United States Youth Could Alter United States Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict, Noam Chomsky Tells Palestinian Rights Committee, Saying Crisis Not Intractable*, 2014.

<sup>107</sup> International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, *Olive Declaration*, 2014.

<sup>108</sup> UN Platform for Palestine, *News*, 7 November 2014.

<sup>109</sup> UNESCO, *Country Programming Document for Palestine, 2014 – 2017*, 2014.

<sup>110</sup> State of Palestine, *The National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza*, 2014.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> UNESCO, *Country Programming Document for Palestine, 2014 – 2017*, 2014.

<sup>115</sup> United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Civil Society Space and the United Nations Human Rights System: A Practical Guide for Civil Society*, 2014.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

on states to integrate a gender perspective into their human rights programs.<sup>118</sup> This report relates to the inclusion of women led civil society organization and protection of Palestinian women activists in their participation in international dialogue and collaboration with the UN agencies.

### ***Conclusion***

2014, the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, saw a number of occasions where CEIRPP worked closely with civil society. CEIRPP should take the successes of events like the Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, and the United Nations International Meeting of Parliamentarians in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and build on them in 2015. Further the focus on participation of youth and women and the protection of their safety and interests as human rights defenders and members of civil society is important to consider as further efforts for civil society engagement are developed.

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<sup>118</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: protecting women human rights defenders (A/RES/61/181)*, 2014.

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*This press release covers the Secretary General's speech to the General Assembly to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. As he addressed the meeting, organized by CEIRPP, he warned against political discourse that can be seen as "papering over the cracks" of the differences between the two sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His speech highlights the of a lack of progress and increase in violence that occurred 2014, despite the international community's commitment to the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Delegates should look at specific points in his speech to reference and build further action.*

United Nations, General Assembly. (2014). *United States Youth Could Alter United States Policy on Israel-Palestine Conflict, Noam Chomsky Tells Palestinian Rights Committee, Saying Crisis Not Intractable*. [Press Release]. Retrieved 6 January 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gapal1314.doc.htm>

*This press release details the speech given by academic and linguist Noam Chomsky to the UN. While strongly critical of US and Israeli policy towards the conflict, the underlying of tone of the speech is that of cautious optimism. Other speakers, including the chair of CEIRPP and the Permanent observer for the State of Palestine, also made remarks. This event is a good example of CEIRPP engaging members of civil society, in this case of academia, with members of the UN.*

United Nations, General Assembly. Sixty-eighth session. (2014). *Promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: protecting women human rights defenders (A/RES/61/181)*. Retrieved 9 January 2015 from: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/181](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/181)

*This resolution focuses on recognizing, encouraging, and defending the work of female human rights activists or workers, who often face even more hostility than their male colleagues. It contains a detailed series of recommendations that are directly relevant to enhancing the participation of women in human rights activism. There is a particular focus on raising awareness of gender-specific issues, and of fostering accountability when abuses occur. This resolution is highly relevant to the 'enhancing participation of women' subsection of this topic.*

United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2014). *Palestinian Civil Society Calls For Enhanced Protection And Access Ahead Of World Humanitarian Summit*. [Press Release]. Retrieved 7 January 2015 from: [http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/statement\\_pr-opt\\_national-consultations-whs-15\\_16\\_dec\\_2014-en.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/statement_pr-opt_national-consultations-whs-15_16_dec_2014-en.pdf)

*This press release serves as an introduction to both the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the 2015 Middle East and North Africa Regional Consultation, and the preliminary meeting held in Palestine to discuss the most pressing humanitarian challenges to be addressed at these conferences. The Humanitarian coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territories draw attention to the importance of the free movement of goods and people, stressing that the lack of these rights had led to two separate meetings having to be held in Palestine, one in the West Bank, and one in Gaza.*

United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2014). *Civil Society Space and the United Nations Human Rights System: A Practical Guide for Civil Society*. Retrieved 9 January 2015 from:

[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/CivilSociety/CS\\_space\\_UNHRSystem\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/CivilSociety/CS_space_UNHRSystem_Guide.pdf)

*The guide serves as a guide for civil society organizations working around and within the United Nations system. As such it is directly relevant to the work of CEIRPP. It contains an overview of the UN human rights system, and a series of sections on the conditions requiring a free and independent civil society work, such as a supportive regulatory environment, and long-term financial support. It also details some of the challenges facing civil society actors, such as legal harassment, arbitrary measures and extra-legal intimidation.*

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### III. Promoting Cooperation through Shared Water Resources

#### *Introduction*

In 2010, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly “[recognized] the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights.”<sup>119</sup> Additionally, the General Assembly emphasized the need to share water resources peacefully.<sup>120</sup> The Middle East region suffers from a lack of clean drinking water as rivers and underground water resources are scarce, which has led to conflict over the use of the fresh water.<sup>121</sup> Many civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories routinely lack access to sanitation and potable water due to resource scarcity and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has intensified since June 2014.<sup>122</sup> 27,000 Palestinian homes and 96,000 Palestinian refugee dwellings were destroyed between June and December 2014.<sup>123</sup> Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasizes that the conflict needs to be resolved, as its detrimental effects on the living conditions of Palestinians as well as Israelis are no longer bearable.<sup>124</sup>

In October 2014, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) submitted its report to the General Assembly.<sup>125</sup> In the report, the committee promotes the support of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and other UN and civil society organizations that have engaged in restructuring and rebuilding sanitation and electricity sites, many of which were destroyed during the summer 2014 conflict.<sup>126</sup> The General Assembly generally criticized Israeli forces for denying Palestinians the access to water and for the arbitrary detention of Palestinians.<sup>127</sup> Furthermore, the General Assembly emphasized that the goals established under the International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015 still need to be achieved.<sup>128</sup> The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Council (HRC) also considered the humanitarian situation in Palestine in December 2014.<sup>129</sup> In particular, both UN bodies considered the massive destruction of civilian objects, such as water and sanitation supplies, and emphasized that international humanitarian law protects civilian objects.<sup>130</sup>

In addition to the General Assembly, OHCHR, and the HRC, the Palestinian Water Authority, OCHA, and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility considered the topic of water resources in Palestine.<sup>131</sup> Within the UN system, UNRWA and UNICEF were the main bodies engaging in restructuring and rebuilding destroyed water and sanitation facilities after the severe conflict in summer 2014.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> UN General Assembly, *The human right to water and sanitation (A/RES/64/292)*, 2010.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Wolf & Ross, *The Impact of Scarce Water Resources on the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1992, pp. 919-958.

<sup>122</sup> Bromberg, *Water Cannot Wait: A New Road Map to Mideast Peace*, 2014; EcoPeace Middle East, *Gaza Water Crisis - Emergency Appeal for Abasan Municipality, Gaza Water and Sanitation Needs*, 2015; UNRWA, *UNRWA expresses deep concern on water situation in Yarmouk*, 2014; UN DPI, *UN urges ‘maximum restraint’ as tensions rise after missing Israeli teens found dead*, 2014.

<sup>123</sup> UNRWA, *Gaza Situation Report 74*, 2014.

<sup>124</sup> UN DPI, *As latest ceasefire holds in Gaza, Ban urges both sides to address root causes of conflict*, 2014.

<sup>125</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> UN DPI, *Aligning with Fourth Committee, General Assembly Adopts 28 Texts across Sweeping Political, Decolonization Agenda, with Several Requiring Recorded Votes*, 2014.

<sup>128</sup> UN DPI, *Acting upon Recommendation by Second Committee, General Assembly Adopts 43 Texts, Defers Action on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Framework Draft*, 2014.

<sup>129</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Addendum to the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1*, 2014.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Addendum to the Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1*, 2014.

<sup>132</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Addendum to the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1*, 2014.

The key documents that continue to underpin this topic include the *Oslo Accords* (1993 and 1995); the *Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes* (1992); and the *Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses* (1997).<sup>133</sup>

Other donors have contributed to the repair and reconstruction of water and sanitation infrastructure in Palestine. In October 2014, the European Union stated that it would continue to support the Palestinian Authority through the PEGASE mechanism and UNRWA according to the new Single Support Framework (SSF), which focuses on governance, economic development, and land and water development.<sup>134</sup> Also in October 2014, the Regional Government of Castilla de la Mancha, Spain contributed \$320,000 to rebuild destroyed water and sanitation installments.<sup>135</sup> The German Development Bank (KfW) contributed \$31.3 million and the United Kingdom contributed \$4.7 million to fund the reconstruction and repair of Palestinian homes.<sup>136</sup>

### **Recent Developments**

#### *The State of Water Resources in Palestine*

Severe flooding in November 2014 devastated the Gaza Strip, leading UNRWA to declare a temporary state of emergency.<sup>137</sup> In December 2014, UNRWA published its 74<sup>th</sup> Gaza Situation Report, which focuses on recent developments, the conflict and UNRWA's work.<sup>138</sup> UNRWA has established Collective Centers, which provide shelter, drinking water, and non-potable water to internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>139</sup> UNRWA distributes 4 liters of potable water per day per person and offers hygiene programs to achieve healthier living conditions.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, UNRWA offers training to managers of refugee camps about water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues to improve living conditions.<sup>141</sup> UNRWA has also launched its 2015 Emergency Appeal for the occupied Palestinian territories, requesting \$414 million to assist Palestine refugees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.<sup>142</sup>

The management of critical water resources has been addressed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>143</sup> SDG 6 calls explicitly for sustainable water management and promotes the universal availability of water.<sup>144</sup> In addition, SDGs on food and energy security implicitly concern the sustainable use of scarce water resources.<sup>145</sup> The goal is “to use natural resources in smart, efficient and productive ways, while protecting ecosystems.”<sup>146</sup>

#### *The Impact of Israeli Action on Palestinian Water Supply*

The Palestinian Water Authority stated that damages concerning water access and supply to Palestinians after summer 2014 amounted to \$34.4 million.<sup>147</sup> Israel's blockade of Gaza continues to effect “a disastrous impact on the health and wellbeing of Gaza's civilians” by limiting access to food, water, and other essentials.<sup>148</sup> OCHA estimates

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<sup>133</sup> *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements*, 1993; *Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip*, 1995; UNECE, *Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes*, 1992; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses*, 1997.

<sup>134</sup> European Union, *Single Support Framework 2014-2015: The EU and Palestine sign new multi-annual programming document*, 2014.

<sup>135</sup> UNRWA, *Castilla La Mancha contributes to improved environmental health in the West Bank*, 2014.

<sup>136</sup> UNRWA, *German Development Bank and UNRWA sign EUR 25M in agreements to support Palestine refugees in Gaza and Lebanon*, 2014; UNRWA, *UK gives US \$4.7 million to meet Gaza shelter needs through UNRWA*, 2014.

<sup>137</sup> UNRWA, *Gaza Situation Report 72*, 2014.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> UNRWA, *UNRWA emergency appeal calls for US 414 million to support refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory*, 2014.

<sup>143</sup> International Water Management Institute, *Sustainable Development Goals Offer Unique Opportunity to Transform Management of Critical Water Resources*, 2014.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>148</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Gaza: Donors, UN Should Press Israel on Blockade*, 2014.

that 70% of Palestinians are currently depending on water tanks and have no access to the water network.<sup>149</sup> Coastal Municipalities Water Utility has reported that 63 water facilities were destroyed.<sup>150</sup> To tackle the issue of water supply, UNICEF supports Community Health Workers employed by the Ministry of Health who are working on repairing destroyed water and sanitation networks.<sup>151</sup> In addition, UNICEF supports the acquisition of heavy machinery and equipment to rebuild water and sanitation networks.<sup>152</sup>

An example of how the continued failing of the Joint Water Commission to function impacts development opportunities for Palestinians is the new Palestinian city of Rawabi. It is being built built by Bashar Masri, a wealthy Palestinian American, jointly funded by the Qatar Investment Authority, and could house up to 25,000 people.<sup>153</sup> The first stage of building is complete, and families could start to move in, but Rawabi has no water supply. Rawabi needs a water pipeline, but one cannot be built without the approval of the JWC, which has not met in years.<sup>154</sup> Until there is running water for the development, it will remain empty. Despite the project having the official support of both Israel and Palestine, no progress has been made.

### *Promoting Shared Resources*

In November 2014, a reverse osmosis water plant was inaugurated in a Beirut refugee camp that houses many Palestine refugees.<sup>155</sup> Through the generous financial support of Switzerland, potable water is now available in the refugee camp.<sup>156</sup> The Palestinian ambassador to Lebanon, Ashraf Dabbour, describes the project as “the embodiment of the concept of partnership and cooperation.”<sup>157</sup> Additionally, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) donated 137 cubic meters of chlorine to improve the water and sanitation situation in Palestine.<sup>158</sup>

During the summer 2014 conflicts, two communities located in the Eshkol region of Israel and Abasan Al Kabireh municipality in Gaza, both of which took part in the Good Water Neighbors project, were destroyed.<sup>159</sup> One of the communities currently needs financial support of \$10,000 per month to be able to provide the 21,000 inhabitants with drinking water.<sup>160</sup> In December 2014, EcoPeace, Sister Cities International, and Citizen Diplomacy Initiatives decided to cooperate and expand Good Water Neighbors.<sup>161</sup> The project, which already promoted cooperation on water issues between Palestinians, Israelis and Jordanians, has now extended its scope to include American counterparts.<sup>162</sup> The expectation is to create long-term relationships, enhance the settlement of conflicts, and promote innovation in environmental sustainability.<sup>163</sup>

### *Conclusion*

In the latter half of 2014, the situation of Palestinians worsened; many Palestinians are internally displaced or live as refugees in camps outside of Palestine.<sup>164</sup> Due to the ongoing conflict, many water resources and sanitation mechanisms have been destroyed.<sup>165</sup> Currently, the renovation and restructure of destroyed homes and sanitation and

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<sup>149</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/69/35)*, 2014.

<sup>150</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Addendum to the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1*, 2014.

<sup>151</sup> UNICEF, *Humanitarian Situation Report*, 2014.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Doucet & McMullen, *The new Palestinian city that lacks only one thing*, 2015.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> UNRWA, *Reverse osmosis water plant inaugurated in Burj Barajneh camp*, 2014.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> UNRWA, *JICA supports sanitation for internally-displaced persons in Gaza*, 2014.

<sup>159</sup> EcoPeace Middle East, *Gaza Water Crisis - Emergency Appeal for Abasan Municipality, Gaza Water and Sanitation Needs*, 2015.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> Jackson, *A Sister Cities Coalition Builds Peace Through Water in the Lower Jordan Valley*, 2014; Jackson, *Building Peace Over Water in the Lower Jordan Valley: A Sister Cities Coalition*, 2014.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> Bromberg, *Water Cannot Wait: A New Road Map to Mideast Peace*, 2014; EcoPeace Middle East, *Gaza Water Crisis - Emergency Appeal for Abasan Municipality, Gaza Water and Sanitation Needs*, 2015; UNRWA, *UNRWA expresses deep concern on water situation in Yarmouk*, 2014.

<sup>165</sup> UNRWA, *Gaza Situation Report 74*, 2014.



water supply mechanisms are of high priority. Distribution of potable water is essential to ensuring healthy living conditions for refugees and IDPs. Donations as well as partnerships and support from the international community are important means through which help is provided. As water resources are still scarce and access to water is more difficult than ever, promoting cooperation through shared water resources is still a pressing topic for CEIRPP.

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*Bromberg presents a roadmap for future steps towards a more peaceful Mideast region. The article identifies scarcity of water as the main issue behind conflict in the region. Bromberg explains which organizations are tackling the issues and delegates can use this information to start with their research. Furthermore, advantages to solving water conflicts are named.*

International Water Management Institute. (2014, October 20). *Sustainable Development Goals Offer Unique Opportunity to Transform Management of Critical Water Resources*. Retrieved 6 January 2014 from: <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/2014/10/on-target-for-people-and-planet/>

*The article discusses water management in the context of the SDGs. As access to water is included in the SDGs, the topic of shared water resources in the Middle East will become more prominent. Delegates should consider how the international community will address SDG 6 and how it will affect the management of water in Palestine.*

Jackson, M. (2014, December 4). *Building Peace Over Water in the Lower Jordan Valley: A Sister Cities Coalition*. Retrieved 7 January 2015 from: <http://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2014/12/sister-cities-coalition-builds-peace-water-jordan-valley/>

*The background guide presented several good programs that are addressing water-related issues in Palestine, including the Good Water Neighbors program. Recently, EcoPeace, formerly Friends of the Earth Middle East, expanded the scope of the program. Their idea is to promote global cooperation between American, Palestinian, Israeli, and Jordanian cities, which will exchange information on economic use of water resources. The article gives delegates an example of an approach to sharing water resources and water-related expertise that fosters greater cooperation between parties.*

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. (2014, November 28). *Reverse osmosis water plant inaugurated in Burj Barajneh camp* [Press Release]. Retrieved 5 January 2015 from: <http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/reverse-osmosis-water-plant-inaugurated-burj-barajneh-camp>

*The source presents another example of a solution to water scarcity. Refugee camps must tackle the issue of scarce water resources to achieve healthy living conditions for refugees. Consequently, the Burj Barajneh camp received financial support for an osmosis water plant that can generate drinking water out of seawater. This method is a good way by which the access to drinking water can be improved. Delegates should use this article to learn about technical improvements that are able to help Palestine refugees in refugee camps.*

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. (2014, December 18). *Gaza Situation Report 74*. Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: <http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports/gaza-situation-report-74>

*This report provided by UNRWA summarizes what has happened since summer 2014. It describes what has been destroyed and shows important numbers related to those affected. The report also considers the water situation in Palestine and emphasizes that water and sanitation mechanisms are urgently needed. Furthermore, it names measures that have been implemented by UNRWA to tackle the water and sanitation problems. Delegates might use this report to better understand what has happened during the last months. Additionally, it is a good starting point to get an overall idea on the severe outcomes of the ongoing conflicts.*

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