**NGO Action News – 24 February 2017**

United Nations

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https://www.un.org/unispal/ngo-action-news-24-february-2017/

**Middle East**

A new [report by B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/20170222_roads_to_azzun_blocked) says that the Israeli military has engaged in the collective punishment of 10,000 residents of the Palestinian village of ‘Azzun by closing the main entrance to the village for more than two weeks.

On 23 February activists hoisted Palestinian flags at the entrance of Shuhada Street – the main commercial thoroughfare of Hebron closed by Israeli forces– as part of a week of action entitled [“Dismantle the Ghetto, Take the Settlers out of Hebron.”](http://alternativenews.org/index.php/features-02/360-flags-spirits-high-as-week-of-action-in-hebron-comes-to-climax)

BADIL has partnered with [Oakland Institute](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/86-2017/4735-pr-en-190217-14.html), a California-based policy think tank specializing in global land grab situations, in connection with a new report on Palestine due to be published in the summer of 2017.

**Europe**

[· Amnesty International’s 2016/17 Annual Report](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/) indicates,*inter alia*, that over the past year Israeli forces have engaged in unlawful killings of Palestinian civilians, including children, illegal detentions of thousands of Palestinians, torture and other ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees, expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank and the retroactive “legalization” of illegal settlements built on private Palestinian land, and collective punishment of 1.9 million Palestinians in Gaza resulting from the decade-long blockade.

**North America**

The Centre for Palestine Studies at Columbia University’s Middle East Institute is accepting applications for the seventh annual [Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Award](http://www.palestine.mei.columbia.edu/cps-news-spring-2017/2017/2/23/call-for-applications-columbia-university-seventh-annual-post-doctoral-fellowship-in-palestinian-studies), a post-doctoral fellowship in Palestinian Studies.

Israeli authorities denied Human Rights Watch’s application for a work permit for its Israel and Palestine director on the grounds that it is not a real human rights group, the organization said.

**United Nations**

On 22 February, the UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid and Development Activities for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Robert Piper, and Director of UNRWA Operations in the West Bank, Scott Anderson, visited the Palestinian Bedouin community of [Khan al Ahmar](https://www.ochaopt.org/content/un-officials-visit-palestinian-community-under-transfer-threat-call-israel-respect) and spoke out against Israeli plans to forcibly transfer the community to a planned relocation site. On the same day the EU Representative and the EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah also issued a [statement](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/21143/local-statement-israeli-demolitions-palestinian-structures-area-c_en) deploring the continuing demolitions of Palestinian structures in Area C and Israel’s stop work orders on Palestinian structures in Khan al-Ahmar.

On 10 March, the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) is convening a meeting [of DPI-NGO Youth Representatives](https://twitter.com/UNDPINGO?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw).

The 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at the UN Headquarters in New York from 13 to 24 March 2017. Representatives of UN Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs are invited to attend the session. See more at:<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw61-2017>