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**September 29, 2017**

**NGO ACTION NEWS**

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         On the occasion of the World Week for Peace for Palestine and Israel, [Pax Christi International](http://www.paxchristi.net/news/world-week-peace-palestine-and-israel-pax-christi-international-sends-letters-vatican-and" \l "sthash.tbDs7wqC.tiMJ6skL.dpbs) wrote to the Vatican, calling on the Catholic Church to discuss possible action on the basis of the Open Letter of 12 June sent by [The National Coalition of Christian Organizations in Palestine](http://www.paxchristi.net/sites/default/files/open_letter_from_the_national_coalition_of_christian_organizations_in_palestine.pdf) to the World Council of Churches.

**Middle East**

         In a statement issued on 28 September, Raji Sourani, director of the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](http://pchrgaza.org/en/?p=9507) (PCHR), expressed confidence in recent intra-Palestinian reconciliation efforts. Civil society was monitoring the process, he added, hoping that it would lead to an end to the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.  
   
         On 27 September, [Badil](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/86-2017/4817-pr-en-270917-49.html) warned that the implementation of Israeli plans for the Palestinian Bedouin villages of Khan al-Ahmar and Susiya in the West Bank would constitute forcible population transfer amounting to a war crime. Further information on the case is available on the websites of [B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/area_c/khan_al_ahmar) and [Jahalin Solidarity](https://www.jahalin.org/category/news/).  
   
         Following the three death sentences issued on 26 September by a court in Gaza, [Al Mezan](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/22081/Three+Men+Sentenced+to+Death+in+Gaza) Center for Human Rights called for an immediate halt to the death penalty and the unification of the Palestinian judicial system on the basis of human rights principles.

**North America**

         [New York University](http://as.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/as/research-centers/neareaststudies.html)’s Hagop Kevorkian Centre for Near East Studies is inviting to a lecture by Prof. Shira Robinson *“Past as Present: Reflections on the 70th Anniversary of 1948”* on 10 October.  
   
         From 20 to 29 October, the [Boston Palestine Film Festival](http://www.bostonpalestinefilmfest.org/) is scheduled to take place, featuring cinema, narratives and culture.  
   
         The 7th [DC Palestinian Film & Arts Festival](https://www.dcpfaf.org/) (5 to 8 October) will offer films, storytelling and *dabke* dance. Prior to that, on 2 October a special free Palestinian showcase will take place on the Kennedy Center’s Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C.  
  
  
         On 5 October, Member of the Knesset Haneen Zoabi (Joint List) will make a presentation at The Palestine Center of [The Jerusalem Fund](http://www.thejerusalemfund.org/events/upcoming/save-date-presentation-mk-haneen-al-zoubi) in Washington, D.C.  
  
  
         On 2 October, Yousef Munayyer, executive director of the [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](https://www.facebook.com/endthe0ccupation/), will speak in Washington, D.C., with Issa Amro, coordinator of the Hebron-based nonviolent action group Youth against Settlements, on “*Palestine to Diaspora: The Movement for Palestinian Liberation*”. On 27 September, [Issa Amro](https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/1.814892) met with Members of the US Congress and had an Op-Ed article published in [The Forward](http://forward.com/opinion/383573/israel-has-created-a-palestinian-ghetto-in-hebron-and-it-has-nothing-to-do/) *“Israel has Created a Palestinian Ghetto in Hebron”*.  
  
  
         As part of a new campaign *“Peace in Palestine”*, [Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East](http://ppen-cjpme.nationbuilder.com/about) (CJPME) is collecting signatures for a Parliamentary ePetition calling on the Government of Canada to demand, in line with Security Council resolution 2334, the cessation of all settlement activity in the West Bank including East Jerusalem.  
   
         In support of the *“No Way to Treat a Child”* campaign led by Defence for Children International (DCI)-Palestine, the [Mennonite Central Committee](https://mccottawaoffice.wordpress.com/2017/09/27/no-way-to-treat-a-child/)(MCC) Ottawa Office is inviting citizens to sign a petition calling on the Government of Canada to promote greater respect for human rights, child protection and accountability.

**Europe**

         Events to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration will be hosted in London on 31 October by [Balfour Project](http://www.balfourproject.org/) (“*Britain’s Broken Promise: Time for a New Approach*”) and on 7 October by [Middle East Monitor](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/palestine-britain-the-balfour-declaration-tickets-36745476710?aff=memsite) (“*Palestine, Britain & the Balfour Declaration 100 Years On*”).

**United Nations**

         From 5 to 6 October, the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) will hold its annual International [Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East](http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/pressrels/2017/unisma181.html) under the theme *“The question of Palestine: media narratives and public perspectives”* in Vienna. The event is organized in cooperation with the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue, with the support of the United Nations Information Service in Vienna. Civil society organizations are welcome to register at <http://bit.ly/2wgSGsY> (the registration deadline will be extended).  
   
         Reporting on its attendance of the 336th session of the UN [Human Rights Council](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session36/Pages/36RegularSession.aspx) (11 to 29 September) in Geneva, [Al Haq](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/targets/united-nations/1144-al-haq-attends-36th-session-of-the-un-human-rights-council) expressed concern about US and EU absence in the General Debate under the Council’s agenda item seven *“Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories”*. Arguing that human rights violations resulting from a prolonged occupation and settler colonialism rendered the situation in the OPT exceptional, Al Haq called on the international community to respect the significance of agenda item seven, comply with its obligations under international law and work to achieve an end to the occupation.

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