

The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

News

2nd Edition Newsletter
July 2020

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Ambassador's Foreword:

De-facto annexation, the incremental procurement of Palestinian land



The responses by the Australian, New Zealand and international community against the Israeli plans to *de-jure* annex significant parts of the West Bank, has been effective and was a necessary step for Palestinians to achieve their right to self-determination. The announcement of *de-jure* annexation was Israel's formal declaration of permanent sovereignty over significant parts of Palestinian land. However, underlying this is Israel's gradualist approach, often turned a blind eye by the international community and governments, which continues in the form of *de-facto*

annexation, by means of the incremental procurement of Palestinian land. Yet, while the Israeli government has seemingly postponed its annexation plan, which was set to begin on 1st July, *de-facto* annexation continues, to illegally steal Palestinian land within the West Bank and East Jerusalem, to make way for, in particular, settlement expansion regarded entirely illegal by International Law and UN Resolutions.

Whether *de-jure* annexation proceeds or not, Israel continues to enjoy impunity and largely remains free from accountability, while endorsing systematic discrimination and apartheid realities on Palestinians, by utilizing a gradualist approach to impose its colonial-settlement agenda. Since 1967, Israel has implemented this *de-facto* annexation process to feed its expanding colonial-settlement agenda and in doing so, has attempted to normalize this process and gain legitimacy based on power and naked power.

Whether it is *de-facto* or *de-jure* annexation, Israel's end goal remains the same, to establishing an exclusive and independent Jewish State, based on their recently approved Jewish Nation-State Law, in which Palestinians are denied their inalienable right to self-determination and right to return.

Yet, the significant response by the international community against *de-jure* annexation and in comparison, the general silence with regards to *de-facto* annexation, highlights the attempted normalization of Israel's expansionist policies over Palestinian territory.

It is time for the Australian and New Zealand governments and international community to call out Israel on its systematic discriminatory actions and hold Israel accountable for its normalized and gradualist colonial project, whether implemented as *de-jure* or *de-facto* annexation, both remain an entirely flagrant violation of International Law.

Izzat Abdulhadi

Ambassador of the State of Palestine

Head of the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific



This month at the Delegation

Consular services provided to the Palestinian community

The General Delegation of Palestine (GDOP) continued to provide consular services to the Palestinian community and respond to any emergencies. The GDOP remained up to date on the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic, especially relating to health and safety issues for the Palestinian community, in addition to providing them with the necessary information, following up on Palestinian scholarship students and enquiries about their situation and responding to any concerns.

The GDOP continues to provide support and assistance to Palestinian community members during COVID-19 who are stranded and wish to travel back to Palestine.

During this month many Palestinians were able to return back to Palestine through coordinated efforts of the GDOP and relevant parties.



The GDOP continued its counter Annexation Advocacy Campaign

During the past month, the GDOP continued its advocacy campaign against the Israeli annexation plan.

The Heads of Mission Group of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) presented its Aide-Memoire to the Deputy Secretary of DFAT, Mr Tony Sheehan, to present to Foreign Minister Marise Payne. The Aide Memoire called on the Australian government to adopt the following positions:

- 1. Not to recognise the status of Israeli settlements, which are illegal by international law, on the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, nor help to sustain it in any way.**
- 2. To ensure accountability measures for Israel, with a view to ending the Israeli colonial occupation and realizing national independence of the State of Palestine on 4th June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem/Al Quds al-Sharif as its Capital.**





3. To reject the Israeli future plans to annex West Bank settlements, Jordan Valley and North of the Dead Sea, as a violation of international law, various UN Security Council Resolutions, and the human rights of the Palestinian people.

4. To support self-determination for the Palestinian people including the establishment of a sovereign, independent and contiguous Palestinian State on 4th June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

5. To work with the international community, Arab League, Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), European Union (EU), United Nations (UN) and others, to support a multilateral approach to solve the Israel-Palestine conflict on international law and UN Resolutions.

6. Finally, to recognise the State of Palestine, as soon as possible, based on the 4th of June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital to save the two-state solution.

The GDOP continued issuing letters to raise awareness about the Israeli annexation plan.



Ambassador Abdulhadi met with NSW parliamentarians and former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bob Carr

On 11th July, Ambassador Abdulhadi traveled to Sydney where he met with the leader of the opposition, the Labor Party, in New South Wales, Mrs Judy McCain, and a number of opposition Labor Party representatives at a working dinner at the home of Mr. Qasim Shalaby, an activist in the Palestinian community.

The meeting was attended virtually by the former Secretary of State, Senator Bob Carr, who delivered a speech condemning the Israeli annexation plans for important parts of the West Bank. The Palestinian Ambassador also explained to the attendees the dangers of the Israeli annexation on the future of the two-state solution, stability and security in the Middle East region.

All expressed their opposition to the annexation plans and urged that the Palestinian Ambassador to communicate with them regularly to put them in the latest developments in this regard.



Ambassador Abdulhadi met with the President of the Boycott, Divestments and Sanctions (BDS) movement

The Palestinian Ambassador met on 7th July with the president of the BDS movement, Mr Hilmi Dabbagh where the president of the group briefed the Palestinian Ambassador on the group's strategy and activities and the challenges it faces.

It has been agreed to continue the discussion through constant and regular consultations.



Ambassador Abdulhadi met with the President of the Australian National Imams Council (ANIC), Sheikh Shadi Suleiman

The Palestinian Ambassador also met with the President of the Council of Imams, Sheikh Shadi Suleiman, in the city of Sydney on 20 July, where the two parties discussed the Israeli annexation plans and the responses of the Islamic communities regarding this issue.

Sheikh Shadi Suleiman expressed full response to this demand and promised to join this campaign. It was also the first visit of the Palestinian Ambassador to the United Muslims of Australia (UMA) Center headed by Sheikh Shadi Suleiman, where the Ambassador viewed the center's facilities and its role in serving the Islamic community.



Ambassador Abdulhadi met with Maria Vamvakinou and Senator Kim Carr

Further, The Palestinian Ambassador met the chairperson of the Australian-Palestinian Parliamentary Friendship Committee Maria Vamvakinou at a working dinner on 13th July in the presence of Senator Kim Carr, one of the most important leaders of the opposition Labor Party.

The meeting discussed the Israeli annexation plans and their effects on the two-state solution and the Middle East Peace Process, as well as the two sides discussed Australia's position on the annexation process.

Ambassador Abdulhadi met with His Eminence the Grand Mufti of Australia and New Zealand

The Palestinian Ambassador met on 27 July in Sydney with His Eminence the Grand Mufti of Australia and New Zealand Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed on a working lunch, where the Ambassador Abdulhadi laid out the current situation, especially the Israeli plans to annex important parts of the West Bank to Israel.

His Eminence has shown a great interest in the issue and stated his complete opposition and condemnation of these plans. Other issues related to the Muslim community were also discussed during this meeting.



Venezuela National Day Celebrations

Celebrated on 3rd July at the Venezuelan Embassy, Ambassador Abdulhadi attended the annual Venezuela National Day.

This event was celebrated by many Ambassadors and their partners in Canberra.

Ambassador Abdulhadi and GDOP staff also attended the Venezuela flag raising ceremony.

Eid Al-Adha Greetings

Ambassador Abdulhadi sent his congratulations to the Australian and New Zealand communities on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.





The continued Palestinian Leadership’s response to the Israeli Annexation Plan

The PLO Negotiations Affairs Department (NAD) continued to implement its Advocacy Campaign

The Advocacy Campaign entitled: “One Voice Against Israel’s Annexation” continued throughout this month.

Presented this month from Australia was Dr Peter Slezak, Associate Professor of Philosophy at UNSW. During his video he highlighted that “Annexation is designed to entrench the existing systematic discrimination against Palestinians, which is defined as a crime of apartheid”.

Palestine PLO-NAD  @na... · 07 Jul. 

Dr. @SlezakPeter, Associate Professor of Philosophy at #UNSW in #Australia: Annexation is designed to entrench the existing systematic discrimination against Palestinians, which is defined as the crime of #apartheid. #Palestine #OneVoiceAgainstIsraelAnnexation #53YearsOccupation

#53YEARS OCCUPATION  NADPLO

ONE VOICE AGAINST ISRAEL'S ANNEXATION



Peter Slezak

Find Dr Peter Slezak’s video and the PLONAD Advocacy Campaign on the Twitter link below:

<https://twitter.com/nadplo?lang=en>

Palestinian Leadership issued a Thank You Media Release

Due to the wave of positive support for the Palestinian people by the international community, in response to the Israeli annexation plan, the Palestinian Leadership issued a Thank You Media Release.

This Thank You Media Release highlighted the significant and heartening support and solidarity by the international community. This included by States, parliamentarians, intergovernmental and civil society organisations, religious leaders and institutions, law scholars and experts as well as friends and peace-loving peoples around the world.

It advocated for the importance that this support remains ongoing. To stand firmly and to maintain this pressure.

“Together, we can elevate our joint and intersectional struggle for universal human rights, social justice and freedom. Together, we can charter a better future for all our peoples and ensure that no crime goes unpunished and that colonial aspirations and apartheid are forever banished from our world.”



PLO-NAD: The Threat of Annexation: Israel's Acquisition of Lands, Belonging to the State of Palestine, by Force

Has Annexation Already Happened?

The people of Palestine are already denied access and control over their land, borders, and natural resources, including water. Today's reality of *de facto* annexation is mainly defined through Israel's colonial settlements and Annexation Wall that carve up Palestinian cities, villages, and towns, and its military checkpoints that cut through and divide the Palestinian landscape and restrict the movement of people and goods. Israel's current plans which aim to formally declare its permanent sovereignty over Palestinian land is defined as *de jure* annexation. It's an assertion of the already existing one-state reality with two legal systems; where Israeli law applies to Israeli settlers and military orders to Palestinians. Israel's assertion of full control over lands belonging to the State of Palestine, recognized by 139 countries worldwide, negates the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. It establishes a reality of full-fledged and open-ended apartheid, where the Palestinian people will further endure violence, incitement, injustice, racism, and institutional discrimination.



Does it Matter What Part(s) of Occupied Palestine is Threatened by Israel's Annexation Plans?

It does not matter. Regardless of the scale, small or large land areas, and the designed process, gradual or sudden, to further annex Palestinian lands. Israel's colonial settlement enterprise is a testament to Israel's plan to extend its sovereignty over all of Mandatory Palestine. The mere principle of annexation is a threat to a rules-based international order. Israel's consistent violations of international law unmistakably express Israel's blatant denial of the right of the people of Palestine to exist on their land. Israel's land theft of any further part of occupied Palestine is rejected irrespective of the possible annexation scenarios: the Jordan Valley (Palestine's Eastern Gateway), all of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the settlements around Jerusalem (for the realization of its Greater Jerusalem colonial project), the settlements surrounding Bethlehem, or its settlements in Hebron.



Palestine in the news

Statement: Artists and Academics Against Annexation

Over 900 artists and academics signed a statement condemning the Israeli annexation plan and calling for action by the Australian government.

Three main points:

1. Publicly condemn the Israeli government's unilateral, unlawful annexation plans.
 2. Demand the Australian government publicly oppose the Israeli government's annexation plans and cease greenlighting Israel's violations of human rights and fundamental principles of international law.
 3. Call on people of conscience everywhere to continue to support the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination and their aspirations for freedom, justice, dignity and equality for all.
- * *See statement on following page.*

World Population Day

On the occasion of World Population Day on 11th July 2020, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics issued a factsheet of population statistics on Palestine.

Based on PCBS estimates, there are about 13.5 million Palestinians in the world, of whom about 5.1 million in the State of Palestine; 2.59 million males and 2.51 million females. The estimated population of the West Bank was 3.05 million; of which 1.55 million males and 1.50 million females. While the estimated population of Gaza Strip was 2.05 million; of which 1.04 million males and 1.01 thousand females.



Response to the Israeli annexation plan by the civil society in New Zealand

The Palestine Solidarity Network, "Aotearoa" welcomed the statement of Foreign Minister Winston Peters, in which he expressed his deep concern over the Israeli plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank. However, the statement indicated that the New Zealand government had failed to use any influence to make Israel abide by the rules of international law.

Steps that New Zealand should take to support its criticism of Israel, according to Aotearoa, include:

- * Suspend bilateral agreements with Israel.
- * A ban on the import of illegal settlement products produced in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- * The pension fund has not invested in any Israeli company that is complicit in settlement activities or land confiscation in the occupied Palestinian territories.
- * End the purchase of weapons and military equipment from Israeli companies.
- * Close the Israeli embassy (as New Zealand did when Mossad agents stole New Zealand passports in another breach of international law).

The impact of COVID-19 on Palestine

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), There has been a devastating impact on the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a result of a second wave of Coronavirus. In particular, the Hebron region has been heavily affected.



Statement: Artists and Academics Against Annexation

ADVERTISEMENT

We are deeply concerned by the Australian government's complicity in enabling the Israeli state to suppress the aspiration of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Last month, Australia was one of only two countries to vote against a UN Human Rights Council resolution condemning the illegal annexation of significant parts of the occupied Palestinian West Bank by Israel. From Minneapolis to Jerusalem to Gadigal land, all sites of recent state-sanctioned violence, we affirm the critical ongoing and historic solidarities between different movements against systemic and institutionalised state violence, systemic oppression, and brutality. Palestinians continue to resist occupation, apartheid, dispossession, and racist political domination in a struggle to secure their inalienable rights to justice, dignity, and freedom. We the Undersigned:

- Publicly condemn the Israeli government's unilateral, unlawful annexation plans.
- Demand the Australian government publicly oppose the Israeli government's annexation plans and cease greenlighting Israel's violations of human rights and fundamental principles of international law.
- Call on people of conscience everywhere to continue to support the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination and their aspirations for freedom, justice, dignity, and equality for all.

SIGNATORIES

Randa Abdel-Fattah, Sara M. Saleh, Micaela Sahhar, Alexis Wright, Gary Foley, Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Melissa Lucashenko, Tony Birch, Elias Jahshan, Amy McQuire, Ellen van Neervan, Samah Sabawi, Chelsea Bond, Crystal McKinnon, Bronwyn Carlson, Irene Watson, Ghassan Hage, Aamer Rahman, Vanessa Turnbull-Roberts, Yassmin Abdel-Magied, Celeste Liddle, Martin Hodgson, Lana Tatour, Alison Whittaker, Maher Mughrabi, Eugenia Flynn, Meriki Onus, Madeline Hayman-Reber, Lou Bennett AM, Tarneen Onus Williams, Evelyn Araluen Corr, Joseph Pugliese, Suvendrini Perera, Alana Lentin, Jumana Bayeh, Paula Abood, Jordana Silverstein, Lynda-June Coe, Nazeem Hussain, Christos Tsiolkas, Mohamad Abdalla, Maxine Beneba Clarke, Judith Beveridge, Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Omar Sakr, Ruby Hamad, Amani Haydar, Karen Wyld, Giovanni Tiso, Toby Fitch, Abdul Abdullah, Benjamin Law, Nazeem Hussein, Michelle de Kretser, Susan Carland, Antony Loewenstein, Osman Faruqi, Tom Ballard, Sukhdeep Singh/L-FRESH The LION.

Please note: Over 900 signatories have signed this statement. The full statement and list can be found here:
<https://overland.org.au/2020/07/statement-artists-and-academics-against-annexation/>

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Embassy of the State of Palestine

The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

Additional information and sources

Dr. Ashrawi welcomes global call by international women leaders against Israeli annexation:

<http://www.dci.plo.ps/en/article/15716/Dr-Ashrawi-welcomes-global-call-by-international-women-leaders-against-Israeli-annexation->

Quick Facts: Israeli Annexation of Occupied Land and International Law, by the Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU):

<https://imeu.org/article/quick-facts-israeli-annexation-of-occupied-land-international-law>

The Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS):

<http://www.palestine-australia.com/assets/Uploads/World-Population-Day-Palestinian-Central-Bureau-of-Statistics.pdf>

Debunking Israel's Talking Points on its Plan of Annexation: "Annexation is illegal. Period": <https://www.nad.ps/en/media-room/media-briefs/debunking-israel%e2%80%99s-talking-points-its-plan-annexation-%e2%80%9cannexation-illegal>

WHO Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the occupied Palestinian territory:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjojODJlYWM1YTEtNDAxZS00OTFILThkZjktNDA1ODY2OGQ3NGJkIiwidCI6ImY2MTBjMGI3LWJkMjQtNGIzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOjh9>

Statement: Artists and Academics Against Annexation: <https://overland.org.au/2020/07/statement-artists-and-academics-against-annexation>

Dr. Ashrawi: Israeli theft of historical baptismal font is an act of colonial plunder:

<http://www.dci.plo.ps/en/article/15865/Dr-Ashrawi-Israeli-theft-of-historical-baptismal-font-is-an-act-of-colonial-plunder-->

"It's Like George Floyd. We Have Our Knee on the Palestinians' Necks":

<http://www.palestine-australia.com/assets/Uploads/Hagai-Elad-Haaretz-Interview.pdf>



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- **Instagram:** palestiniandelegation_au_nz

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