

GPUNW No.11 explores how the **question of Palestine** has been taken up by Member States across a range of UNHQ processes. The selection from recent deliberations is presented in two parts:

Part 1

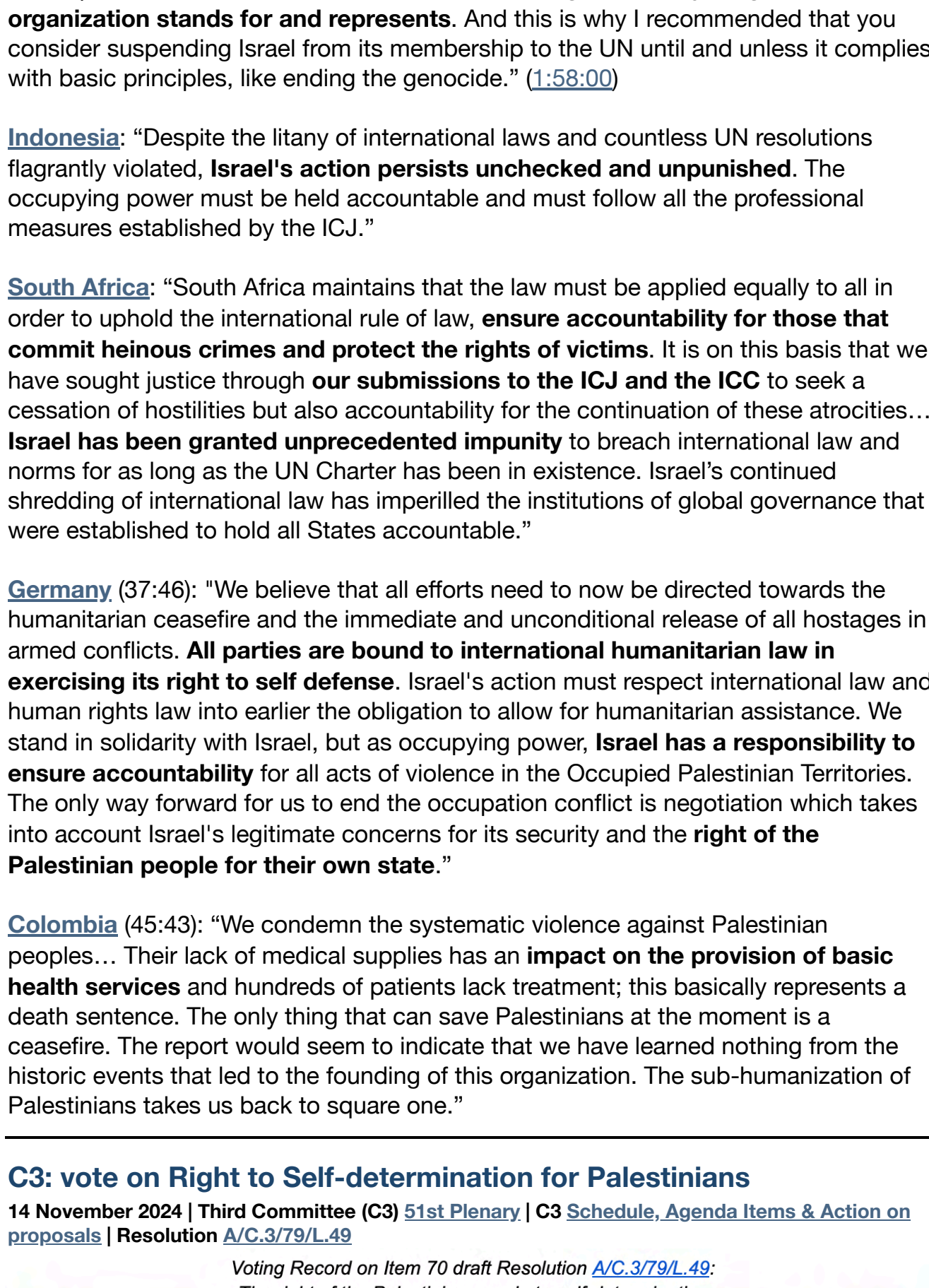
- **UN General Assembly** main session (plenary and committees) resolutions – see GPWF Factsheet No.7, “[79th UN General Assembly: Committees 2 & 3](#)” for background on C2 & C3;
- Member State reactions to **legislation barring UNRWA** from operating in areas under Israeli control;
- Call for the **suspension of Israel** from the UN;

Part 2 (coming soon)

- [Resolution ES-10/24](#) on the **Advisory Opinion issued by the ICJ** regarding the legality of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, 18 September 2024;
- **Security Council resolution** on Israel/Palestine co-sponsored by the 10 elected Council members, approved by 14 of the 15-member body, vetoed by USA;
- 52-country [call to halt provision or transfer of arms](#) to Israel if there is reason to believe they may be used in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

UN Special Rapporteur calls on Member States to consider suspending Israel from the UN

30 October 2024 | [C3 36th Plenary](#) | [Anatomy of a Genocide \(A/HRC/55/73\)](#)



Falcescia Albanese ([UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories occupied since 1967](#)) addressed the UN’s Third Committee to discuss recommendations put forth in her latest report, “**Anatomy of a Genocide (A/HRC/55/73)**.” Albanese proposed, inter alia, that **Member States consider suspending Israel’s status as a member of the UN**: “What Israel has done this year alone, put aside the Palestinians, is untenable. It’s against everything this organization stands for and represents. And this is why I recommended that you consider suspending Israel from its membership to the UN until and unless it complies with basic principles, like ending the genocide.” (1:58:00)

Indonesia (1:58:00): “Despite the litany of international laws and countless UN resolutions flagrantly violated, **Israel’s action persists unchecked and unpunished**. The occupying power must be held accountable and must follow all the professional measures established by the ICJ.”

South Africa (1:58:00): “South Africa maintains that the law must be applied equally to all in order to uphold the international rule of law, **ensure accountability for those that commit heinous crimes and protect the rights of victims**. It is on this basis that we have sought justice through our **submissions to the ICJ and the ICC** to seek a cessation of hostilities but also accountability for the continuation of these atrocities... **Israel has been granted unprecedented impunity** to breach international law and norms for as long as the UN Charter has been in existence. Israel’s continued shredding of international law has imperilled the institutions of global governance that were established to hold all States accountable.”

Germany (37:46): “We believe that all efforts need to now be directed towards the humanitarian ceasefire and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages in armed conflicts. **All parties are bound to international humanitarian law in exercising its right to self defense**. Israel’s action must respect international law and human rights law into earlier the obligation to allow for humanitarian assistance. We stand in solidarity with Israel, but as occupying power, **Israel has a responsibility to ensure accountability** for all acts of violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The only way forward for us to end the occupation conflict is negotiation which takes into account Israel’s legitimate concerns for its security and the **right of the Palestinian people for their own state**.”

Colombia (45:43): “We condemn the systematic violence against Palestinian peoples... Their lack of medical supplies has an **impact on the provision of basic health services** and hundreds of patients lack treatment; this basically represents a death sentence. The only thing that can save Palestinians at the moment is a ceasefire. The report would seem to indicate that we have learned nothing from the historic events that led to the founding of this organization. The sub-humanization of Palestinians takes us back to square one.”

C3: vote on Right to Self-determination for Palestinians

14 November 2024 | **Third Committee (C3) 51st Plenary** | [C3 Schedule, Agenda Items & Action on proposals](#) | [Resolution A/C.3/79/L.49](#)

Voting Record on Item 70 draft Resolution A/C.3/79/L.49: The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

Voting Endes	11/14/2024	4:07:36 PM
Item 70 draft resolution A/C.3/79/L.49, "The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination"		
IN FAVOUR: 170	AGAINST: 6	ABSTENTION: 9

Palestine (50:38): “This draft resolution is presented annually, not because there is a dispute as to the Palestinian people’s right of self-determination or as to our existence as people, but it is presented **because our ability to exercise our right to self-determination is systematically violated and suppressed by Israel’s prolonged unlawful occupation**, which is what the ICJ also concluded, and I quote, ‘continued frustration of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination violates fundamental principles of international law and renders Israel’s presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory unlawful.’ The ICJ also dismissed the argument that somehow our right to self-determination is conditional upon matters of security of the occupying power... the Israeli government claims a right to occupy, build settlements, annex our land, forcibly displace our people and declare unlawful sovereignty over our territory... **This draft does not cancel out any State, but rather protects our State from cancellation.**”

IN FAVOUR

Jordan (1:07:22): “The targeting of hospitals, schools and vital infrastructure, alongside the obstruction of essential humanitarian aid, demonstrates a grave disregard for the basic rights and dignity of the Palestinian people... acts of settler terrorism and practices that issued ethnic cleansing only worsen these dire conditions. **Statements by Israeli officials calling for Gaza to be reduced to rubble, is an alarming absence of intent for peace**. These actions contradict any commitment to a peaceful resolution and cast doubt on which side will try to achieve a just and lasting solution.”

Cuba (1:02:38): “Why should Palestine continue to have to wait to be a full member of the UN when Israel did so 75 years ago under a resolution which provided for the establishment of two states? This resolution has always been opportune, but today it is of particular relevance. **Genocide and indiscriminate massacres against the heroic people of Palestine by Israel**, in our view, with the complicity of the United States, must cease. It is unacceptable for Israel to have assassinated 46,600 Palestinians and wounded many more, most of them women and children in Gaza, and they prevent the entry of 65% of humanitarian missions into the strip... Cuba reaffirms its historic support for a broad, just and comprehensive solution on the basis of the establishment of two states, which allows for the self-determination of the Palestinian people and the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state within the borders prior to 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and also that it guarantees the right to the return of refugees.”

Egypt on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (45:30): “The draft resolution, consistent with previous years, calls for ending the Israeli occupation of the territories it occupied since 1967 towards the **fulfilment of the two-State solution based on internationally agreed terms of reference**, and therefore the achievement of the just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. This year, the group of OIC Member States underscores the **historic ICJ advisory opinion** issued in July 2024, which has determined that Israel must bring an end to its continued unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as rapidly as possible, and calls on Member States to comply with their obligations as reflected in the opinion, and ensure compliance by Israel, the occupying power.”

Iran (56:37): “The world is witnessing the intensification of the Israeli regime’s violence and their blatant use of force leading to the death of thousands of Palestinians, including women, children, the elderly, as well as journalists and medical workers. Each day, which continues unabated and with no accountability, the Israeli regime commits its atrocities in full view of the international community... The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to support the Palestinian people in their struggle against occupation and in exercising their annual inalienable right to self-determination through the **establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State**... [and] strongly supports the draft resolution on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and encourages other delegations to do the same to show their **opposition to the Israeli apartheid regime crimes against humanity and atrocities** in the Palestinian territories. However, [the] voting in favour of Islamic Republic of Iran shall not be construed in any way directly or implicitly, the recognition of the Israeli regime.”

AGAINST

Israel (53:25): “The motivation of having a separate resolution on self-determination, such as the one we are discussing today, is undeniably political in nature... Let us examine the October 7th attack. It was neither an act of resistance nor an act of self-determination, but rather acts of savagery by a genocidal terrorist organization which not only denies Israel’s sovereignty, but openly calls for destruction. The Palestinian delegation has not condemned Hamas, not once; not once saying that innocent Israeli civilians should not be targeted, not once stating that Hamas’ refusal to recognize Israel’s right to exist harms the prospect of peace in the region.”

United States (1:05:28): “The United States has been clear that we are committed to the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination. Regrettably, however, this resolution does not represent an effective step towards achieving that goal. The hard work of direct negotiations between the parties in order to arrive at a durable two state solution remains the best path, we believe, toward a durable peace. The United States is committed to that goal and will continue to work with all Member States to chart a future where Palestinians realize their legitimate right to self-determination and a state of their own.”

C2: impacts of the Israeli occupation & ongoing military attacks on Palestinians’ development goals

16 October 2024 | [C2 15th Plenary](#) | [Report by the SG: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan \(A/79/187-E/2024/68\)](#) | [Protecting sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources \(A/C.2/79/L.40\)](#)

The UNGA Second Committee addressed the meaning of “**leaving no one behind**” in the context of Palestine, with emphasis on how the impacts of the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories on implementing the [2030 Agenda](#).

Palestine: “The root cause of this injustice did not begin last year, in the last decade, or even within the lifetime of anyone present here today. This **injustice stems from 76 years of an ongoing Nakba, 57 years of settler colonial occupation, decades of blockade and apartheid, and now a live-streamed genocide**... The solution is clear: **impunity must end**. The genocide must end. The occupation must be dismantled. Justice must prevail, with the principle of leaving no one and no country behind must be the foundation of our collective action. From General Assembly to Security Council resolutions, and from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to the 2030 Agenda, the entire world recognizes the need to end these injustices... ICJ rulings are not just documents; they carry the weight of legal responsibility. ‘Leaving no one behind’ is not just a slogan; it is a moral and collective commitment to action and accountability.”

Qatar on behalf of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (26:22): “We are extremely concerned that the increasing deterioration of the Palestinian situation as a result of the barbaric Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip... **All basic services are lacking**. There’s a lack of drinking water. Health infrastructure has been destroyed. There’s pollution affecting the air, the soil [and] chemical pollution... This has a terrible impact on men and women, as well as on the agricultural sector and food security. Moreover, the Palestinians are subject to collective repression and reprisals and murder murder, as well as these flagrant violations of human rights. **We observe that humanitarian aid is hampered by the points of passage and its military inspection points being closed**... UNRWA is a life belt for millions, of thousands of Palestinians, as well as for citizens in the Gaza Strip... We call upon everyone to support not just UNRWA, but all specialized agencies working in the Palestinian territories.”

Namibia: “Namibia’s liberation was born from the same desire for freedom, justice, and sovereignty that the Palestinian people continue to fight for today. We understand the sacredness of land, the significance of natural resources, and the inalienable rights of a people to control their own destiny. **The resources of Palestine belong to the Palestinian people**, their continued exploitation and demolition by the occupying power remains illegal and unjust. Namibia remains steadfast in its support for a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and urges all Member States to abide by the ESS 10/24 which gives clear guidelines on how to end the occupation... Namibia once again calls for the full implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions, especially Resolution 73/255, which reaffirms the Palestinian people’s permanent sovereignty over their resources. Furthermore, the illegal settlements must end. These settlements deprive the Palestinian people of their land, their dignity, and their future.”

Malaysia: “While we are actively pursuing the 2030 Agenda and implementing its SDGs, **how can we turn a blind eye on the situation in Gaza and choose to leave the Palestinian people behind?** Israeli forces have continued to destroy civilian infrastructure such as roads, major water pipes, electricity network, hospitals and schools. The UN reported that it would take approximately 80 years to reconstruct housing units that were fully destroyed... we can deduce that what we see in Gaza today is not merely a humanitarian crisis; it is a systemic collapse. The region is left without what could be described as an ‘economy’. The means of production have been decimated, self-sustainability is nearly impossible, and employment opportunities have dwindled to a bare minimum. The violence and destruction perpetrated by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Syrian Golan must stop. Malaysia calls for an immediate ceasefire... **The natural resources of the occupied territories belong to the Palestinian population**, and their rightful access to these resources must be recognized and restored. We also welcome the recent Advisory Opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July. We commend the successful adoption of Resolution ES-10/24, which sets forth a clear timeline for ending its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to halt the expansion of settlements that further entrench this occupation.”

Member States react to Israeli legislation banning UNRWA

6 November 2024 | [GA Informal Plenary 1](#) | [GA Informal Plenary 2](#) | [C4 24th meeting](#) | [C4 25th meeting](#) | [C4 26th meeting](#)

The [Inter Agency Standing Committee](#) (composed of 15 UN humanitarian organizations) has recently called Israeli Knesset’s 28 October legislation targeting UNRWA “**apocalyptic**”, as it has the potential, if implemented, to halt UNRWA’s operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the already limited passage of aid into Gaza and the West Bank.

In the Fourth Committee (C4), [UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini](#) addressed the Member States on the crucial work of UNRWA, followed by Member State responses.

Philippe Lazzarini (UNRWA): “In open defiance of the United Nations Charter, the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, and the binding orders of the International Court of Justice, the State of Israel is working to unilaterally shift the long-established parameters for resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. Last month, the Israeli parliament passed legislation that could end UNRWA’s operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in less than three months. This would fulfill an explicitly stated objective of the war in Gaza... **UNRWA is a soft target for warring parties that view its presence and activities as a threat**. Hamas has repeatedly and publicly accused UNRWA, especially its senior management, of colluding with the Israeli occupation. For many years, Hamas has strongly opposed UNRWA’s education programme, challenging our commitment to gender equality and neutrality... Let me state the obvious – **UNRWA is not a party to this conflict**. It is a United Nations agency. It is the mechanism through which the United Nations is tasked – by the General Assembly – to assist Palestine Refugees.

All parties to the conflict must allow UNRWA to fulfil its mandate. If the Agency cannot operate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the responsibility for providing services to Palestinians – and for bearing the cost of these services – will lie not with the United Nations, but with Israel as the occupying power... The implementation of the Knesset legislation will have catastrophic consequences. In Gaza, **dismantling UNRWA will collapse the United Nations humanitarian response**, which relies heavily on the Agency’s infrastructure. Glaringly absent from discussions about Gaza without UNRWA, is education. Palestinians value education highly – it is the only asset from which they have not, until now, been dispossessed... In the absence of a capable public administration or state, only UNRWA can deliver education to more than 660,000 girls and boys across Gaza... The United Nations and its staff are in an increasingly untenable position – if the legal and political framework within which we operate does not hold, we cannot stay and deliver.”

Bangladesh: “It cannot be acceptable in any way – the passing of the two unjustified bills evicting UNRWA from its premises, revoking its privileges and immunities and labelling it a terrorist organization. It is clearly **sheer disrespect to and undermining of the UN’s work and contribution by Member States of the UN**. We urge to immediately stop killing UN personnel, attacks against them, destruction of UN agency premises, violations of privileges and immunities, restrictions on movement, denial of visa and all other forms of harassment.”

Maldives: “The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza reflects the collective failure of the international community to prevent mass atrocities and uphold the principles enshrined in the UN Charter. The death toll in Gaza has now surpassed 42,000, with the majority being innocent women and children. Moreover, the recent attacks on Lebanon have unleashed a new wave of fear and uncertainty across the region and beyond... UNRWA was never meant to operate for this long. **Its prolonged mandate is a reflection of our collective failures in resolving this ongoing genocide**. It is therefore our collective responsibility not only to provide financial assistance but also to stand firmly with UNRWA and the people of Palestine ensuring that they receive adequate humanitarian aid and most vitally, the lasting peace they rightfully deserve.”

Norway: “Once again, we see efforts to undermine the foundation for a two-State solution and diminish hopes for a long-term peaceful resolution to the conflict. The laws adopted by the Knesset, if implemented, would have devastating consequences. They are aimed at UNRWA’s ability to perform its core duties, including our shared commitment to Palestine refugees until a political solution is found. If implemented, we would see a very **dangerous precedent for the UN and the multilateral system as a whole**... On behalf of a group of concerned member states, Norway has taken steps to initiate a resolution before the Assembly, requesting the **ICJ to provide an advisory opinion on Israel’s obligations in relation to the activities of the UN** and other international organizations and third states that provide humanitarian and development assistance to the Palestinian population.”

Egypt (54:42): “**The occupying power doesn’t have the right to change or cancel this mandate provided exclusively by the GA**. Second, over the past centuries, UNRWA has been providing relief, work opportunities, educational and health services and other services to Palestinian refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in Gaza, with the West Bank and East Jerusalem and other areas of operation for a very clear reason, which is the **absence of a political solution and the deprivation of the Palestinian people of the right to live in its independent land**. We should not fall into the trap of Israeli false allegations aiming to stigmatize UNRWA and describe it as a terrorist organisation. The agency has dealt very professionally and in a neutral way with these allegations, and we commend the implementation by UNRWA of the recommendations of the [Colonna report](#), which shed light on the professionalism and the neutrality of the agency... We warn that condoning this decision by Israel would be **a precedent as a Member State of the United Nations is prohibiting the work of one of the UN agencies**... We fear that it would be followed by similar decisions by other Member States following this precedent, decisions that would end, ultimately to dismantling the whole of the United Nations... Some have started to question the legitimacy of Israel sitting at the GA following these violations.”

Switzerland (1:26:22): “[T]he laws, if they are implemented, and to **undermine the ability of the United Nations to fulfil its various mandates** and to act in favour of peace and stability in the region. There is currently no alternative to UNRWA while the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is worsening by the day, and as we have heard, the situation is becoming increasingly apocalyptic... **Within the Security Council, we are committed to an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate release of hostages, and to ensuring that the parties respect to their obligations under international humanitarian law**, particularly with regard to the delivery of aid to civilians in need... **UNRWA was created in anticipation of a political solution to the Palestine refugee question**. Seventy-five years later, in the absence of such a solution, the agency continues to provide vital services to a population facing immense needs.”

Chile (1:29:36): “[W]e appeal for the laws that have been adopted by that legislative body not to enter into force... There is no doubt whatsoever that such laws will further **undermine the international community’s quest for a just and lasting peace** in the region on the basis of the two-State solution.”

Belgium on behalf of the Core Group of Shared Commitments in support of UNRWA (Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Guyana, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain and the State of Palestine): “Such unprecedented measures would also constitute **violations of international humanitarian law**, and in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the obligations of Israel, as the occupying power, to ensure the welfare of the civilian population under its occupation... The eviction of a UN agency by the decision of one single UN Member State would set an alarming precedent globally and would constitute a grave violation of the UN Charter. It would **undermine the multilateral system**, significantly compromise the rule of law and could have broader implications for the work of the UN System across the globe, potentially impacting the ability of other UN Agencies to fulfill their mandates.”

Malaysia: “This is yet another deliberate confrontation by Israel against the United Nations, and it must be met with a decisive response. It is extremely vital that the **international community unite and defend the United Nations**, which is instrumental for the maintenance of the rules-based international order. Malaysia thus lends its **support for the resumption of the 10th Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly**. Member States who have so far felt compelled to defend Israel despite the obvious gross violations it commits, must reconsider their positions. Failure to do so can make them complicit in the crimes perpetrated by Israel.”

China (1:10:48): “Preventing UNRWA from delivering assistance will, as a direct consequence, aggravate the hunger, disease and suffering of the people in Gaza. **It is typical collective punishment and a violation of international humanitarian law**... The Independent Review Group appointed by the Secretary-General has issued its report and has made clear that UNRWA has in place a significant number of sound mechanisms to ensure its neutrality and to ensure that it’s capable of timely responses to and accountability for any breaches... UNRWA is not and should not be a permanent agency. Yet, pending the realisation of Palestine national self-determination and the actual implementation of the two-State solution, **UNRWA remains indispensable**. A growing number of analyses point out that in escalating pressure against and attempting to shut down UNRWA, Israel’s true intention is to change the social, economic status quo in Gaza and the West Bank, to completely end the prospects of the two-State solution in the face of such deliberate sabotage of the two state solution.”

UNGA C4 adopts four resolutions on Palestine

20 November 2024 | [C4 29th plenary](#)

[A/C.4/79/L.13](#) – Assistance to Palestine refugees (In Favour: 165 / Abstain: 9 / Against: 3)

[A/C.4/79/L.14](#) – Palestine refugees’ properties and their revenues (In Favour: 162 / Abstain: 10 / Against: 6)

[A/C.4/79/L.15](#) – The occupied Syrian Golan (In Favour: 152 / Abstain: 23 / Against: 5)

[A/C.4/79/L.16](#) – Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (In Favour: 152 / Abstain: 19 / Against: 9)

See the voting record for each resolution [here](#).

[See previous editions of GPUNW](#)

Contact the Editors: [Barbara Adams](#) & [Julie Kim](#)