

# PNC

# PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL



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## **PNC Addresses the Parliamentary Unions on Taxes Imposed by The Israeli Occupation on Properties Owned by Churches**

The Palestine National Council (PNC) addressed the regional and international Parliamentary associations on the decision of Israeli's Jerusalem municipality to collect

and Islamic presence in the occupied city of Jerusalem.

The Council calls on the international community to pressure the Israeli government to abolish and not just freeze this



property taxes from the churches in the occupied city of Jerusalem and from monasteries, religious shrines, institutions, real estate and land owned by churches and the UN in the occupied Jerusalem, to be applied retroactively from 1967. This came in the framework of the insistence of the occupation authorities to continue their plans to Judaize, to end the Palestinian Christian

false measure which violates agreements and the historic status quo that has existed since the Ottoman period in the holy city, as symbol of coexistence and tolerance of the Christian-Islamic religions.

The Council also warns of the approval of the Knesset Ministerial Committee for legislation of the church land bill that would

allow Israel, the occupying power, to expropriate land in the occupied city, and therefore demands that the IPU take decisive action before it is too late.

The Council appeals to the Vatican and the world to intervene quickly to force the Israeli occupation to stop the harassment and persecution of churches to seize their property.

The occupation municipality of Jerusalem announced that it will collect about 191 million US dollars from 887 assets and properties owned by these churches including hospitals, schools, homes and residences of monks, priests and bishops, and end the tax exemptions for church-owned properties existed since Ottoman times. The occupation municipality threatened to put liens on churches bank accounts and confiscate their properties if taxes were not paid, In addition, the decision will burden churches and their property in the occupied city, especially since these institutions do not receive any compensation from government agencies or from the Palestinian National Authority. But manage their financial affairs by themselves and provide many services, which include not only religions but also social ones to those in need of the community of occupied Jerusalem.

The Palestine National Council affirms that the Israeli occupation authority with this arbitrary and illegitimate measure has flagrantly violated all existing international conventions, historical customs and obligations guaranteeing the rights and privileges of the Churches, with the aim of changing the historical and legal status of the Holy Places, including Christian religious institutions through ending the tax exemptions for church-owned properties and through the issuance of laws granting the occupying power the right to confiscate or purchase or, at least, cement its grip on church properties in the occupied city.

The Council considers that the Israeli measures to impose taxes on churches, an aggression against Jerusalem, its Christian and Islamic sanctities, which are invalid, since they stem from an illegal occupation. This is an attempt to pressure the Christian religious institutions to leave the city of Jerusalem and cut their religious, humanitarian and spiritual role in the service of the Palestinian Jerusalemite community.

## **The law of “academic institutions” is part of a plan to annex settlements under Israeli sovereignty**

The Palestinian National Council (PNC) said that a bill to include higher education institutions in Israeli settlements in the West Bank under Israeli sovereignty is part of a plan to annex settlements in the West Bank, which the Knesset is expected to ratify soon. This comes a long side with the practical application of the decision of the ruling Likud Party to annex the West Bank to Israeli sovereignty.

international legitimacy resolutions, the latest of which is resolution 2334 where it considered the settlement in all its forms is illegal, and called on Israel to immediately cease all its settlement policies in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, including the city of Jerusalem.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, in particular, and other regional parliamentary associations, called for the rejection and



The PNC said in a statement issued by its speaker Saleem Al-Zanoon on Wednesday that Israel is continuing its policy of defying the will of the international community, the international law and violating

condemnation of this racist law that falls within the settlement policy led by the occupation government and aimed at preventing the establishment of a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, as well

as violating the Geneva Conventions which considers settlements are a crime and perpetrators must be held accountable.

He called on the United Nations to bear its' responsibilities and work to confront the Israeli flagrant challenges to its resolutions, save the two-state solution, take steps to stop Israel's violations of the rights of the Palestinian people and stop the policy of ignoring the occupation and its racism which is destroying any possibility of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian cause.

The bill calls for the abolition of the Council of Higher Education in charge of Israeli academic institutions in the settlements established in the 1967 occupied territories and transferring the responsibility to the Israeli Ministry of Education. These institutions include: Ariel University, Elkana College (Salfit District), Alon Shabot College Jerusalem) and the Herzog College in Alon Shvut settlement near the Bethlehem and Jerusalem Governorates



## **Statement by the Palestine national council on the grave developments of The United Nations Relief and Works Agency's Services**

**The Trump Administration informed the United Nations that it had frozen \$65 million to be paid earlier this year and decided not to pay \$45 million worth of food aid to Palestinian refugees, all this in the context of its blackmail and punitive measures against the Palestinian Arab people and their leadership. This Trump's behavior comes in full unison and concord with the Israeli policies.**

**Works Agency's Services UNRWA came on the background of the catastrophic repercussions of the Catastrophe (Nakba) of 1948, which led to ethnic cleansing that led to the displacement of more than three quarters of a million Palestinian who were scattered, in that period, in the countries surrounding Palestine, beside the part unoccupied of Palestine, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These repercussions led the international community to adopt Resolution 194, which was rejected by Israel. Followed by Resolution 302 (4) of December 8, 1949, which established UNRWA as interim measure pending implementation of the abovementioned Resolution 194.**

**For more them sixty-five years, the United States has been the largest single donor to UBRWA and has consistently praised UNRWA's quality, transparent and accountable services. In early 2017, with the arrival of President Trump, the Israeli entity requested the US administration cut its financial contributions to UNRWA. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu personally asked US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley to do her best to dismantle UNRWA and transfer of its services to the UNHCR, the main UN refugee agency.**



**The Palestine National Council would like to recall that the establishment of The United Nations Relief and**

The US administration has required the Agency to change the curriculum of its schools in order to write off all its assets related to the right of return and the Palestinian refugees issue, to relinquish the identity of Jerusalem as the capital of the desired Palestinian state, to renounce the struggle against the occupation, or the expression of Palestinian Intifada (uprising) and the cancellation of activities and festivals related to special events of the Palestinian cause, all these American requirements should be met in order to ensure the continuation of US support for UNRWA, which will be confined only to the regions of Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories, excluding Syria and Lebanon, from the five areas of operation.

The main objective of these great pressures is to efface the Palestinian identity and to falsify the history and facts on which the Palestinian generation has been raised, and has become well aware of it, and has even influenced its behavior with the Israeli occupier. There have been explicit American and Israeli call for the amendment of the Palestinian curriculum, because it succeeded in establishing and raising generations capable of standing up, challenging, facing the occupation and adhering to national principles. The Palestinian curricula are based on international educational laws. The general principles of the Palestinian curriculum are derived

from the General philosophy of the Palestinian Arab society and derive its principles from its heritage, religion, values, customs, traditions and the aspiration of the Palestinian people towards the future.

The Palestine National Council affirms that these steps conceal an Israeli-American goal that seeks to get rid of the most important issues embodied and bearing the Palestinian issue, namely the Palestinian refugee issue, through several steps, most notably, the freezing of financial allocations to the agency with the aim of reducing and paralyzing its services, dismantling and emptying it of all political implications, as the survival of its existence means the continuation of issue of refugees and Palestinian camps as witnesses to the Nakba, as well as what is related to this issue of international resolutions such as Resolution 194, which calls for the return of refugees. These steps will be followed by an attempt to dispose of and dismantle the Palestinian camps, to resettle and absorb the refugees living there.

The Palestine National Council warns of the grave consequences of the Trump administration decisions on Palestinian refugees. Which will put them at risk in all of the five areas of UNRWA operations in which it provides its services, increase the funding crisis and reduce the basic services that have already been reduced in the health and education sectors. This will also

**endanger the lives of about 75% of the refugees. The suffering and crisis will affect the camps in the Gaza strip, the West Bank and the diaspora, including more than 1 million Gazans living on relief assistance provided by UNRWA, which will lead to a real humanitarian disaster.**

**UNRWA faces a formidable challenge in upholding its mandate and preserving key services like education and health care for Palestine Refugees. This reduced contribution threatens one of the most successful and innovative human development endeavors on the Middle-East. At stake is the access of 525'000 boys and girls in 700 UNRWA schools, and their future. At stake is the dignity and human security of millions of Palestine refugees, in need of emergency food assistance and other support in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. At stake is the access of refugees to primary health care, including pre-natal care and other life-saving services. At stake are the rights and dignity of an entire community. The reduced contribution also impacts regional security at a time when the Middle East faces multiple risks and threats, notably that of further radicalization and terrorism.**

**Based on all of the above, the Palestine National Council calls on you and appeals to you to :**

**First : Refusing to harm the UNRWA Agency, insisting on maintaining its mission, linking the termination of its work with the implementation of Resolution 194 which calls for refugees return and compensation in accordance with the Agency's founding decision.**

**And refusing all attempts to transfer its functions to host countries.**

**Second : calling on all partners-host Arab countries and donors- to further increase their mobilization in support of the Agency's services, which must continue until the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, recalling the profound responsibility by the international community of states to assist the Palestine refugees, and continue UNRWA services of education, health care, relief and social services, which must continue until a just and lasting solution has been found.**



## **A memorandum on the laws of the Israeli Knesset in violation of international law and human rights charter**

The Palestinian National Council would like to put you in the picture and the point out the extent to which the Israeli Knesset has deeply enacted laws that can be called racist and even fascist laws against our Palestinian people.

Since 2014, more than 160 laws and bills have been brought before the Knesset, violating human rights, international treaties and the foundations of fair legislation, which are supposed to be consistent with international law.

The Knesset has become one of the most prominent systems of legitimizing the occupation and its crimes, such as a bill to apply Israeli law to academic institutions in the West Bank settlements as part of a plan to annex it to Israeli sovereignty and a bill to deduct the Palestinian tax revenues on the pretext of supporting the families of pris-

oners, the murdered and the wounded. The draft law calling for the execution of Palestinian prisoners, the Law on the Withdrawal of Jerusalemites' residency, the Law of Detaining the Bodies of the murdered on 24 January, which restricts the handover of the bodies of the murdered to their family unless conditions are met such as not performing funerals and burial services, the laws of the arrest of children and sentencing them. In addition to other unfair laws that bluntly violate the principles and rules of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and United Nations resolutions, and put all the crimes of the occupation under the guise of the so-called law.

The Palestinian National Council reaffirms that the extension of the legislative mandate of the Israeli Knesset to the territory of the State of Palestine under occupation is a grave violation



of all international legitimacy resolutions, the latest of which is UN Security Council Resolution 2334 of December 2016 and the violation of all international normative treaties of international humanitarian law, of 1907, which obliges the authorities of the occupying power to respect the legal regime prevailing in the occupied territory. The Knesset, through its legislation, exercises de jure for the territory of the State of Palestine and seeks to colonize the land of the Palestinians by force and occupation.

In the context of the legislative enactment of the Israeli Knesset, the Legislative Committee of the Israeli Occupation Government approved yesterday a bill to deduct funds paid by the Palestinian Authority as allocations for the families of prisoners and the murdered to protect them and provide them with the basic necessities of life. A move Israel exercised before to cease funds from the Palestinian people and an attempt that falls within the framework of pressure to link the Palestinian struggle to terrorism, and to mix the issue with the so-called war on terrorism and include the Palestinian killed and prisoners, who fought for freedom and freedom from occupation, that exercise the right to self-determination to establish their independent State, in accordance with the principles and norms of international law and the resolutions of

international legality.

In the opinion of the National Council, the tsunami of racist legislation falls in the context of double standards adopted by the Knesset of the Occupying Power. For example, After Yoram Shakolnik, who killed Palestinian prisoner Musa Suleiman Abu Sabha on 23/3/1993 who was handcuffed (hands and feet), he received higher monthly salary from the Israeli government and salaries from the National Insurance Institute. After his release, he received government assistance to open an commercial project. Shkolnick is a model and example of the Israeli government's encouragement to execute detainees, commit war crimes and provide protection to criminals. The support of the Israeli killers by the Israeli government, also by Israeli governmental organizations and other organizations, to secure their release from prison and the provision of monthly salaries, comes in light of the rise of racism and fascism in the Israeli society and support of extremism and terrorism against the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian National Council would like to point out that 99% of the Jewish murderers who committed crimes against Palestinians have been released, legally and socially supported, shielded

**and protected by Israeli government and extremist organizations in Israel. This confirms that the Israeli occupation and Knesset support organized crime and both act as a shield for it sympathizing with the killers and issuing superficial judgments against them.**

**The Palestinian National Council appeals to regional and international parliamentary associations and unions, in accordance with its objectives and membership conditions, to accelerate:**

**First: Taking action against the series of laws and legislations enacted by the Israeli Parliament and against the human rights and rights of the Palestinian people that is based on racism and hatred, and should enlist the Israeli Parliament as racist, anti-democratic and anti-human rights.**

**Second: To request that the Israeli Knesset stop immediately the development of such racist and fascist legislation against our people, as they constitute a grave violation of the objectives and missions of the parliamentary associations and societies and the conditions of membership therein, and to consider such legislation null and void.**

**Third: To circulate this memorandum to member parliaments and to invite them to join efforts to stop the legitimization of the Israeli Knesset and its crimes. Looking forward to your input on this, with best wishes.**

## **Al-Za'anoun Congratulates Palestinian Women on their International Day Appreciates their struggle against the Occupation**



**PNC Speaker Saleem Al-Za'anoun congratulated Palestinian woman and women in general on their international day which falls on Thursday, 8 March each year.**

**On the occasion of International Women's day, which the world celebrates its women, that the patient, faithful, struggling Palestinian woman is a genuine partner of the Palestinian man, who gave her life not only to her family but to build her society and contribute to raising it; Speaker**

**Al-Za'anoun said in a press statement issued on Monday.**

**Al-Za'anoun saluted the struggle of the Palestinian woman who is resisting the Israeli occupation, praising her steadfastness and sacrifices. She is the martyr, prisoner, wounded and the minister. She is not only a housewife but bears the burden of arresting the father, brother and husband to defend her identity and protect her country.**

**Al-Za'anoun confirmed that Palestinian women are being subjected to detention by the Israeli occupation forces. Since 1967, about 15,000 Palestinian women have been arrested, and 62 Palestinian women are still being held in jails, among them the girl child Ahad Al-Tamimi and Isra Al-Jabbais.**

**Al-Za'anoun called on the Palestinian government and institutions to provide more care and attention to Palestinian women's affairs, calling on the relevant human rights institutions and international organization to stand by the Palestinian women in their suffering as a result of the continuing violations of their basic rights, from this abhorrent occupation and put pressure on the occupation to have all women prisoners freed, ridding them from this abominable occupation to live in their homeland in freedom and dignity.**

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