

HRC

Situation of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

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ATAYURT
MODEL UN CLUB

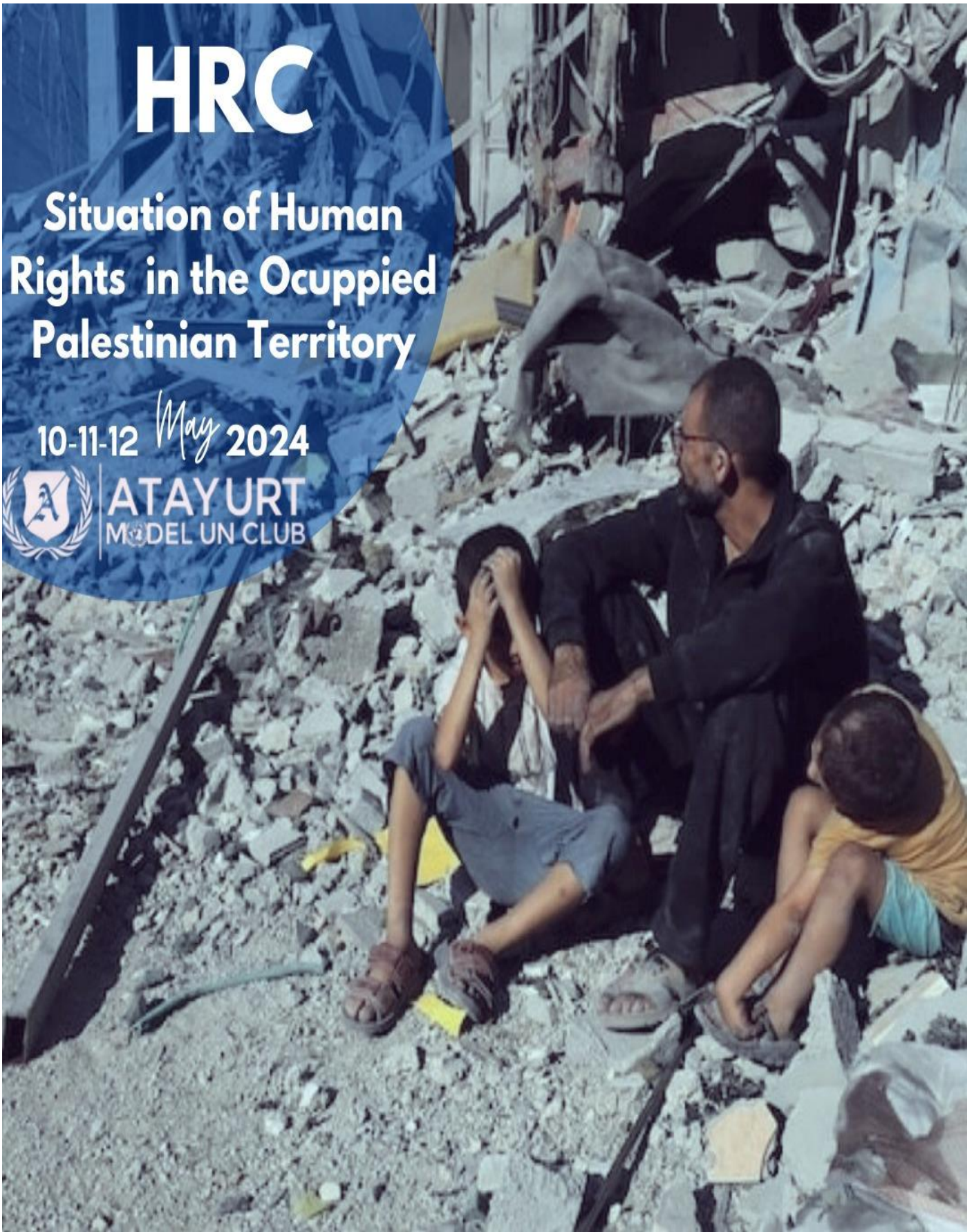


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Letter from Secretaries-General

Most distinguished participants,

It is our privilege to serve you as Secretaries-General of this year's ATAMUN and we are thrilled to announce our upcoming conference, ATAMUN'24.

Since the first committees were made and the first conference was shaped, our conference strives to amplify the voices of the global youth on our beloved planet, we aim to unite the fragmented cultural aspects of humanity. Our essential objective is to embrace the diverse ideas put forth by the youth without imposing judgment based on individual perspectives.

After many years of participation in Model United Nations and accumulating valuable experience, we now find ourselves organizing a conference. Our journey within the MUN community has provided insights into the dedicated efforts of the MUN team working tirelessly every year, in order to make the conference better than the previous years and to continue this tradition, we are pleased to declare our commitment to uphold and enhance this year's oncoming conference.

We are working continuously to make our upcoming conference an admirable attendance for everyone taking place. Our magnificent academic team has chosen topics for 2 joint Crisis committees, 3 junior committees, and 7 various committees, which we believe will make certain delegates enhance themselves and also kindle a heightened interest in global affairs. We aim to encourage participants to contribute their problem-solving skills and explore solutions from unconventional perspectives. Additionally, our exceptional organizing team is planning enjoyable events, ensuring a harmonious blend of fun and the creation of unforgettable memories.

Finally, to wrap things up, as Secretaries-General of this splendid conference, we extend a warm welcome to participants of ATAMUN'24.

Yours sincerely,

Salih Gülbenim

Zeynep Mina Yolaçan.

Introduction to HRC and Topic

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is a vital organ of the United Nations dedicated to safeguarding human rights globally. Formed in 2006 to enhance the UN's human rights mechanisms, the HRC comprises 47 member states elected by the UN General Assembly. It convenes regular sessions in Geneva, Switzerland, to address human rights issues through dialogue, cooperation, and action.

With a mandate to examine human rights situations worldwide, the HRC serves as a platform for states, civil society, and other stakeholders to discuss concerns, share best practices, and collaborate on initiatives. Its work includes thematic studies, issuing recommendations, and monitoring human rights situations in conflict zones and regions facing repression.

Through rigorous debate and decision-making, the HRC strives to uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, promote accountability, and address violations. Delegates engage in dialogue, negotiation, and advocacy to advance human dignity, equality, and justice for all individuals, regardless of background or identity.

As delegates to the HRC, our responsibility is to uphold the highest standards of human rights and work towards tangible progress in protecting and promoting the rights of all people worldwide. Through collective action and unwavering commitment, we can contribute to building a more just and equitable world for present and future generations.

Introduction to the Topic

The situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) stands as a complex and deeply entrenched issue within the broader context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Spanning decades of tension, this conflict has resulted in profound human suffering and violations of fundamental rights on both sides. The OPT, comprising the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, remains a focal point of international concern due to ongoing violations and humanitarian crises.

The essence of the matter lies in the clash between the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, dignity, and security, and Israel's security concerns and right to exist in peace. Within this context, human rights violations are rife, including restrictions on freedom of movement, discrimination, violence against civilians, and the expansion of Israeli settlements in contravention of international law.

The international community, through bodies such as the United Nations and its Human Rights Council, has repeatedly addressed the situation in the OPT, issuing resolutions and reports condemning violations and calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. However, finding a lasting solution remains elusive, as political, historical, and socio-economic factors continue to fuel tensions and impede progress towards peace.

This study guide aims to delve into the complexities of the human rights situation in the OPT, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by Palestinians and Israelis alike. Through exploration of historical context, legal frameworks, human rights violations, and the impact on vulnerable groups, delegates will gain insight into the multifaceted nature of the issue and be equipped to engage in constructive dialogue and advocacy for meaningful change during the Model United Nations Human Rights Council session.

Historical Background of Occupied Palestinian Territory

The situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) is deeply rooted in the historical and ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a complex and protracted struggle over land, sovereignty, and identity. Understanding the context requires tracing back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Jewish immigration to Palestine, then under Ottoman and later British rule, intensified amid Zionist aspirations for a national homeland. This period saw the emergence of competing nationalisms – Palestinian Arab and Jewish – setting the stage for future discord.

Following World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Britain assumed control of Palestine under the League of Nations Mandate. The 1947 United Nations Partition Plan proposed dividing the territory into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international enclave. While the Jewish leadership accepted the plan, Arab leaders rejected it, leading to armed conflict.

In 1948, the State of Israel was established, resulting in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in what they call the "Nakba," or catastrophe. Many became refugees, their plight unresolved to this day. The 1948 Arab-Israeli War further deepened divisions and laid the groundwork for subsequent conflicts.

The 1967 Six-Day War marked a pivotal moment in the conflict's trajectory, as Israel captured the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, among other territories. This occupation of Palestinian lands has since endured, shaping the OPT's socio-political landscape and profoundly impacting human rights.

In response to ongoing tensions and violence, numerous peace initiatives and negotiations have been pursued, including the Oslo Accords of the 1990s, aimed at achieving a two-state solution. However, these efforts have faced significant obstacles, including settlement expansion, security concerns, and disagreements over borders and refugees.

Today, the OPT remains marked by a complex web of political, legal, and humanitarian challenges, with Palestinians facing myriad human rights violations, including restrictions on movement, land confiscation, settler violence, and lack of access to basic services. These issues persist amid international calls for dialogue, negotiation, and respect for human rights, underscoring the urgent need for a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Human Rights Violations

Human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) are pervasive and multifaceted, impacting the lives of Palestinians on a daily basis. These violations occur in various forms and are often interconnected, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the region. Some of the most notable violations include:

Restrictions on Freedom of Movement: Palestinians in the OPT face severe limitations on their freedom of movement due to Israeli checkpoints, roadblocks, and the separation barrier. These restrictions impede access to healthcare, education, employment, and essential services, resulting in economic hardship and social isolation.

Settlement Expansion: The construction and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are considered serious violations of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. These settlements not only infringe upon Palestinian land and property rights but also contribute to the forcible displacement of Palestinian communities and the fragmentation of Palestinian territory.

Violence and Abuse: Palestinian civilians, including children, are subjected to various forms of violence and abuse by Israeli security forces and settlers. This includes arbitrary arrests and detentions, physical assault, torture, and extrajudicial killings. The lack of accountability for such abuses perpetuates a cycle of impunity and undermines trust in the rule of law.

Demolition of Homes and Property: Palestinian homes and structures in the OPT are frequently demolished by Israeli authorities, often under the pretext of lacking proper permits. These demolitions not only result in the displacement of families but also contribute to the destruction of livelihoods and communal infrastructure, further exacerbating poverty and vulnerability.

Access to Basic Services: Palestinians in the OPT face significant challenges in accessing basic services such as water, electricity, and sanitation. Discriminatory policies and practices, including resource allocation favoring Israeli settlements, exacerbate disparities in access and quality of services, disproportionately affecting Palestinian communities.

Blockade of Gaza: The Gaza Strip, home to nearly two million Palestinians, has been subjected to a prolonged blockade by Israel, severely restricting the movement of people and goods in and out of the territory. This blockade has resulted in dire humanitarian conditions, including widespread poverty, food insecurity, and inadequate access to healthcare and education.

These violations not only undermine the dignity and rights of Palestinians but also hinder prospects for a just and lasting peace in the region. Addressing these violations requires a concerted effort by the international community to uphold human rights principles, promote accountability, and advance a comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Access to Resources and Services

Access to basic services in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) is a fundamental human right that is consistently undermined by a range of factors, including restrictions on movement, discriminatory policies, and the ongoing conflict. The provision of essential services such as water, electricity, healthcare, and education is essential for ensuring the well-being and dignity of Palestinian communities. However, Palestinians face significant challenges in accessing these services, which exacerbate socio-economic disparities and perpetuate cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

Water and Sanitation: Access to clean and safe water is a pressing concern for Palestinians in the OPT, particularly in Gaza, where the water infrastructure has been severely damaged by years of conflict and the blockade. Palestinians face water shortages, contamination, and restrictions on water usage imposed by Israeli authorities, leading to inadequate hygiene and sanitation conditions. The lack of access to proper sanitation facilities poses serious health risks, including the spread of waterborne diseases.

Electricity: Palestinians in the OPT experience frequent power outages due to shortages in electricity supply and infrastructure damage. The Gaza Strip, in particular, faces chronic electricity shortages, with power cuts lasting for many hours each day. These outages disrupt daily life, impact economic activities, and hinder the functioning of essential services such as hospitals, schools, and water treatment plants.

Healthcare: Palestinians encounter barriers in accessing quality healthcare services due to restrictions on movement, shortages of medical supplies, and the destruction of healthcare infrastructure. The blockade of Gaza exacerbates these challenges, leading to overcrowded hospitals, inadequate medical treatment, and preventable deaths. Palestinians requiring specialized medical care often face lengthy delays and bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining permits to travel outside the OPT for treatment.

Education: Palestinian children in the OPT confront obstacles in accessing quality education due to restrictions on movement, attacks on schools, and lack of resources. Students often face harassment and violence on their way to school, while educational facilities are frequently targeted by Israeli forces, disrupting learning and causing trauma. The limited availability of educational resources and qualified teachers further undermines the quality of education.

Housing and Infrastructure: Palestinians in the OPT face difficulties in obtaining permits for construction and infrastructure development, leading to overcrowded housing conditions and inadequate infrastructure. Israeli policies, including home demolitions and land confiscations, exacerbate housing shortages and displacement, particularly in areas designated for settlement expansion. The destruction of infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and utilities, further impedes access to basic services and economic opportunities.

Discrimination against Palestinians

Legal and Institutional Discrimination: Discriminatory laws and institutional practices severely limit the rights and freedoms of Palestinians in the OPT. For instance, Palestinians living in East Jerusalem often struggle to obtain residency permits or face revocation of their residency status, leading to forced displacement and family separation. Moreover, Palestinians in the OPT are subject to military courts, where they are often denied fair trials and due process rights, while Israeli settlers enjoy the protections of civilian courts.

Access to Land and Housing: Discriminatory land policies and practices systematically disadvantage Palestinians in the OPT. Israeli authorities frequently demolish Palestinian homes and structures, citing lack of permits, while facilitating the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements. Palestinians are subjected to discriminatory zoning regulations and restricted access to agricultural land, leading to loss of livelihoods and perpetuating economic disparities.

Employment Discrimination: Palestinians face discrimination in the labor market, where they are often relegated to low-paying jobs with little job security or benefits. Palestinians employed in Israeli settlements face exploitation and abuse, with few legal protections. Moreover, Palestinian professionals encounter obstacles in obtaining professional licenses and accreditation, limiting their career advancement opportunities.

Educational Discrimination: Discrimination in the education sector manifests in disparities in funding, resources, and quality of education between Palestinian and Israeli schools. Palestinian students in the OPT often face overcrowded classrooms, outdated textbooks, and inadequate facilities, hindering their academic development. Additionally, Palestinian universities and educational institutions face restrictions on academic freedom and funding, limiting research and intellectual exchange.

Healthcare Disparities: Palestinians in the OPT experience disparities in access to healthcare services, exacerbated by discriminatory policies and practices. Israeli restrictions on the importation of medical supplies and equipment into Gaza have resulted in chronic shortages and inadequate medical care. Moreover, Palestinian patients requiring medical treatment outside the OPT encounter bureaucratic obstacles, delays, and denials of permits by Israeli authorities, impeding access to life-saving treatment.

Social and Cultural Discrimination: Palestinians in the OPT face social and cultural discrimination, perpetuated by stereotypes, prejudices, and stigmatization. Israeli media often portrays Palestinians in a negative light, reinforcing stereotypes of violence and extremism. Palestinian cultural events and expressions are marginalized and suppressed, while Israeli cultural institutions receive state support and recognition.

Environmental Injustice: Palestinians in the OPT are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and pollution, stemming from Israeli policies and practices. Israeli settlements and industrial zones often dump waste and pollutants onto Palestinian land, contaminating water sources and agricultural land. Palestinians also face restrictions on access to natural resources, such as water and land, exacerbating environmental injustices and perpetuating economic inequalities.

Addressing discrimination against Palestinians in the OPT requires comprehensive and concerted efforts to dismantle discriminatory policies and practices, promote equality and inclusion, and uphold the principles of human rights and justice. It is imperative to challenge systemic discrimination through legal reforms, awareness-raising campaigns, and initiatives to foster dialogue and understanding between Palestinian and Israeli communities. Only by confronting discrimination in all its forms can we build a society that respects the rights and dignity of all its members, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

International Response

The international response to the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) has been varied, ranging from diplomatic initiatives to humanitarian aid efforts and calls for accountability. While there have been numerous resolutions and statements condemning human rights violations in the OPT, translating international concern into concrete action remains a challenge due to political divisions and power dynamics within the United Nations and other international bodies.

United Nations: The United Nations, through its various bodies and agencies, plays a central role in addressing human rights violations in the OPT. The UN General Assembly and Security Council have issued resolutions calling for an end to the Israeli occupation, the dismantlement of settlements, and the recognition of Palestinian rights. The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) regularly examines the human rights situation in the OPT, conducting fact-finding missions, issuing reports, and establishing commissions of inquiry to investigate alleged violations.

International Law: The international community has reaffirmed the applicability of international humanitarian law and human rights law to the situation in the OPT, emphasizing the need for compliance with legal obligations and accountability for violations. Resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council, and the International Court of Justice have condemned violations such as settlement expansion, home demolitions, and attacks on civilians as illegal under international law.

Diplomatic Efforts: Diplomatic initiatives aimed at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and addressing human rights concerns in the OPT have been pursued by various actors, including the United States, the European Union, and regional organizations such as the Arab League. Efforts to revive peace negotiations and promote a two-state solution have been ongoing, although progress has been hindered by political obstacles and the absence of meaningful dialogue between the parties.

Humanitarian Aid: Humanitarian organizations and donor countries provide vital assistance to Palestinians in the OPT, addressing urgent humanitarian needs such as food security, healthcare, and shelter.

Organizations such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) provide education, healthcare, and social services to Palestinian refugees, while international NGOs deliver emergency aid and development assistance to vulnerable communities.

Civil Society and Advocacy: Civil society organizations, human rights activists, and grassroots movements play a crucial role in raising awareness about human rights violations in the OPT and advocating for justice and accountability. Campaigns such as the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement aim to pressure Israel to comply with international law and respect Palestinian rights through non-violent means.

Despite these efforts, the human rights situation in the OPT remains dire, with ongoing violations and impunity for perpetrators. The international community must continue to prioritize the protection of human rights in the OPT, uphold the principles of international law, and work towards a just and sustainable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that respects the rights and dignity of all parties involved.

Resolution Should Cover

Recognition of Human Rights: The resolution should acknowledge that everyone, regardless of their background, deserves basic human rights like safety, freedom, and dignity.

Solutions for Discrimination: Solution for ending unfair treatment of people in the affected area

Access to Basic Needs: How Palestinians can get access to basic necessities

Solutions to Settlement Expansion: Solutions for the expanding Israeli settlements replacing Palestinians

Solutions for the Blockade: How the people in the conflict zone can get access to goods and services blocked from the blockade

International Support: How other countries and organizations can provide support and assistance to people effected by the conflict

Peace Negotiations: How peace can be achieved to stop further conflict

Protection of Refugees: How refugees who left their homes due to the conflict can get protection and support

Keywords

Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT): This means areas like the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, which are controlled by Israel but are supposed to be part of a future Palestinian state.

Human Rights: These are basic rights that every person should have, like the right to life, freedom, and safety, regardless of where they're from or who they are.

Discrimination: This is treating people unfairly because of things like their race, religion, or where they come from. In this case, it's treating Palestinians unfairly compared to Israelis.

Access to Basic Services: This means things like clean water, electricity, healthcare, and education that everyone needs to live a decent life.

Settlement Expansion: This is when Israel builds new neighborhoods or towns on land in the occupied territory, which makes it harder for Palestinians to live there and can cause conflicts.

Blockade of Gaza: Gaza is a small area where a lot of Palestinians live. The blockade means Israel controls what goes in and out, which makes it hard for people to get things like food, medicine, and building materials.

International Response: This is what other countries and organizations around the world do or say about the situation. It includes things like making statements, sending aid, or trying to negotiate peace.

Peace Negotiations: This is when different groups try to talk and come to an agreement to end the conflict and make life better for everyone involved.

Refugees: These are people who have been forced to leave their homes because of war or persecution. In this case, many Palestinians had to leave their homes and live in other places because of the conflict with Israel.

Blockade: This means stopping people or things from moving in or out of an area. In this case, it's about Israel controlling what gets into and out of Gaza, which affects the lives of the people living there.

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