2026-2027
Model Arab League
BACKGROUND GUIDE

COUNCIL ON PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

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National Council on US-Arab Relations

Original draft by Deena Alanabtawi, Chair of the Council on Palestinian Affairs at the 2027 National University Model Arab League, with contributions from the dedicated staff and volunteers at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations

Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the 2027 Model Arab League Council on Palestinian Affairs! My name is Deena Alanabtawi, and I will have the privilege of serving as your Chair for this committee. I am a senior at Georgia State University, majoring in Philosophy with a Pre-Law concentration and a minor in Political Science, and I am looking forward to facilitating thoughtful discussion and productive debate as we discuss some of the most pressing challenges facing Palestine and the Palestinian people today.

The Council on Palestinian Affairs is especially meaningful to me because it addresses issues that continue to shape the lives of millions of people across the SWANA region. Behind every decision and discussion on the various issues that plague Palestine, there are real individuals, families, and communities who are affected in real time. The Palestinian people represent a resilient population that continues to face real challenges that deserve careful consideration, meaningful dialogue, and beneficial solutions.

As you prepare for committee, I encourage you all to thoroughly research your country's foreign policy, previous Arab League initiatives, and the work of any other regional and international organizations involved in these issues. However, as delegates, you must remember that your role is not only to represent the interests of your assigned Member State but also to respectfully engage with differing perspectives and work toward a common goal. A strong delegate will not only understand each topic thoroughly but will also arrive prepared with realistic proposals and a willingness to collaborate with fellow Member States. Remember that the purpose of Model Arab League is to engage in diplomacy and produce resolutions that reflect the interests of the Arab world.

I hope this background guide is a useful starting point for your research and preparation. If any of you have any questions, please feel free to email me at dalanabtawi1@gmail.com. I am excited to see all the thoughtful discussion, diplomacy, and creativity that each of you will bring to committee. I wish you the best of luck in your preparation and look forward to welcoming you to the Council on Palestinian Affairs.

Sincerely,
Deena Alanabtawi
Chair, Council on Palestinian Affairs

Topic I: Examining public health issues and the spread of diseases within densely populated areas in Palestine.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

Due to the genocide in Palestine, specifically Gaza, there has been a major public health crisis.[1] The Gaza Strip, which is home to over two million people living in approximately 365 square kilometers, is one of the most densely populated areas in the world.[2] Combined with Israel's deliberate attack on the Gaza Strip's healthcare system, sanitation systems, and clean water, these factors breed an environment where infectious diseases can spread rapidly.[3] It was reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) that of the 36 functioning hospitals in the Gaza Strip, 34 of them (94%) were damaged, and after August 2025, only 18 (50%) hospitals were partially functioning.[4] The West Bank also faces many of these issues, although conditions vary due to differences in infrastructure and restrictions on movement.[5]

Since October 2023, the humanitarian crisis has deteriorated considerably. Damage to hospitals, shortages of fuel and medical supplies, interruptions to vaccination campaigns, and especially the displacement of Gaza's population have placed strain on the healthcare system.[6] The WHO has also documented increases in respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, skin infections, hepatitis A, and other diseases due to contaminated water sources, damaged sewage systems, waste accumulation, and insufficient vaccination coverage.[7] As of May 2026, infectious diseases are the leading cause of morbidity, accounting for 48% of the cases in Gaza.[8] It is also reported that children and

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[1] Israel Has Committed Genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission Finds | Ohchr, www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/israel-has-committed-genocide-gaza-strip-un-commission-finds. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[2] "Gaza, Gaza Strip Facts, Map, Population, GDP." The World Factbook, theworldfactbook.org/country/gaza-gaza-strip.html. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[3] Harb, Ali. "How Israel Destroyed Gaza's Health System 'Deliberately and Methodically.'" Al Jazeera, www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/2/4/how-israel-destroyed-gazas-health-system-deliberately-and-methodically. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026..
[4] *Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, ...*, apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB158/B158_25-en.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[5] Ibid.
[6] "Gaza Health System 'catastrophic' with Hospitals Overwhelmed and Medicines Running out, Who Warns | UN News." United Nations, United Nations, news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165631. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[7] "Challenges and Risk Factors for Infectious Diseases in Gaza Due to the Current Conflict." World Health Organization, World Health Organization, www.emro.who.int/emhj-volume-31-2025/volume-31-issue-2/challenges-and-risk-factors-for-infectious-diseases-in-gaza-due-to-the-current-conflict.html. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[8] 1 72 941 Fatalities OPT Emergency Situation Update 172 967 Injuries 13 1 1 HPF, www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/Sitrep_70b_latest_1.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

pregnant women are individuals who are the most vulnerable and susceptible to these public health threats.[9]

The spread of disease is not solely the result of medical shortages but also reflects broader challenges involving water, sanitation, nutrition, and housing. These issues are also intensified due to the restrictions Israel has placed on humanitarian aid to limit the assistance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), or Doctors Without Borders, in supplying Gazan hospitals with fuel that is essential to run generators.[10] Without electricity, hospitals are unable to operate essential medical equipment, preserve medicines and vaccines that require refrigeration, maintain intensive care units, and more. Frequent power outages can also disrupt water and sanitation systems, therefore increasing the risk of infectious disease outbreaks.

B. History in the Arab World

For many years, Arab countries have provided humanitarian and medical assistance to Palestinians during times of major conflict. For example, following the 2014 conflict, Qatar pledged $1 billion toward Gaza's reconstruction, while Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates pledged $200 million at the Cairo Donor Conference.[11] Egypt also played an important role by hosting the Cairo Donor Conference and facilitating the delivery of medical supplies through the Rafah crossing. However, much of the assistance given focused on responding to immediate crises rather than improving Palestine's healthcare system long term.

Arab countries have also worked with organizations such as the WHO, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to deliver vaccines, medical equipment, and humanitarian aid. A WHO report from January 2009 states that 203 tonnes of medical supplies and five ambulances entered Gaza through Rafah. The donations came from several countries, including Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.[12] These efforts show that Arab countries had already been supporting Gaza's healthcare system and providing medical assistance years before the 2014 conflict. The Palestinian Ministry of Health had already reported critical shortages of medicine and medical supplies in Gaza. In response to

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[9] *2026 Revision 1 (February 2026) Www.Unicef.Org/Appeals/State-of-Palestine*, www.unicef.org/media/179101/file/2026-HAC-State-of-Palestine-Revision1.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[10] "Al-Shifa Hospital: Still Standing, but Barely Functioning." Doctors Without Borders - USA, www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/al-shifa-hospital-still-standing-barely-functioning. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[11] "$5.4 Billion Pledged at International Donor Conference for Gaza and Palestine Held in Cairo - Norway Mofa Press Release/Non-UN Document - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-210362/. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[12] "Recent News from WHO." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, World Health Organization, pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2636183/. Accessed 1 Sept. 2026.

these shortages, Arab countries worked with the WHO to donate and distribute medical supplies to Palestinians.[13] While these efforts have saved lives, hospitals and healthcare infrastructure have repeatedly been damaged during conflicts, forcing reconstruction efforts to begin repeatedly.

Although Arab countries generally agree on the importance of supporting Palestinian healthcare, they take different approaches to solving the problem. Some countries have focused on providing humanitarian aid and funding reconstruction projects, while others have concentrated on diplomatic efforts through international organizations. These different priorities, along with political disagreements and limited regional coordination, have made it difficult to develop a long-term strategy for improving public health in Palestine.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

Addressing public health problems in densely populated areas of Palestine requires both immediate assistance and long-term planning. Emergency aid is still necessary to provide medicines, vaccines, medical workers, clean water, and sanitation. However, emergency aid alone cannot solve the larger problems that continue to make disease outbreaks more likely.

Long-term solutions should focus on improving hospitals and healthcare facilities, preventing the spread of disease, and increasing cooperation between Arab countries. Investing in hospitals, laboratories, vaccination efforts, health education, clean water, and sanitation can help prevent future outbreaks. Investing in education for Palestinians could also help build the next generation of healthcare professionals by expanding access to medical education, scholarships, and training opportunities. Developing more Palestinian doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other healthcare workers would help create a stronger and more self-sufficient healthcare system in the future.

Arab states can also work more closely with Palestinian institutions and international organizations to improve the delivery of healthcare. This could include creating regional emergency response plans, improving the supply of medicines and medical equipment, and providing more consistent funding for healthcare.

Improving public health in Palestine requires more than responding to emergencies as they happen. Long-term investment, regional cooperation, and stronger healthcare systems are necessary to prevent future disease outbreaks and ensure that Palestinians have reliable access to healthcare.

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[13] "Urgently Needed Health Supplies Arrive in Gaza." World Health Organization, World Health Organization, www.emro.who.int/media/news/urgently-needed-health-supplies-arrive-in-gaza.html. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- How have restrictions on the movement of people, medical personnel, and humanitarian aid affected healthcare delivery in Palestine?
- What efforts have Arab states and international organizations undertaken to improve healthcare access and public health conditions in Palestine?
- How can regional cooperation strengthen disease surveillance, emergency preparedness, and healthcare resilience?
- What responsibilities do governments, humanitarian organizations, and international institutions have in protecting public health during armed conflict?
- What measures are to be taken in areas where disease has already spread rampantly?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- What measures can the Arab League implement to strengthen public health systems and disease prevention efforts in Palestine?
- What long-term solutions can be implemented to prevent future disease outbreaks?
- How can Palestinian healthcare facilities become self-sufficient and less dependent on international assistance?
- What strategies can reduce the public health risks caused by overcrowding and displacement?
- What measures can be taken to protect healthcare workers and medical facilities during periods of conflict?

IV. Additional Resources

World Bank - Health System Efficiency and Resilience Project

The World Bank is an international financial institution that provides funding, research, and technical assistance to support economic and social development around the world. This World Bank project focuses on the long-term development of the Palestinian healthcare system rather than only emergency humanitarian assistance. It examines ways to improve healthcare quality, efficiency, emergency preparedness, and the overall resilience of Palestinian health services.

MSF - Displaced People Struggle without Sanitation Services in Gaza

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), also known as Doctors Without Borders, is an international humanitarian organization that provides medical care to people affected by conflict, disease outbreaks, and other emergencies. This MSF report focuses on displaced Palestinians living in overcrowded areas of Khan Younis and the lack of access they have to toilets, clean water, and sanitation services. It also discusses practical responses such as solar-powered water pumps and water treatment facilities.

UNICEF - WASH in Gaza

UNICEF is an international organization that works to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children, particularly in areas affected by conflict and humanitarian crises. This 2026 UNICEF report provides current information about access to clean water and sanitation in Gaza. It reported that as of May 2026, many families remained water insecure and struggled to obtain water for drinking and cooking. This source is useful for understanding the connection between water insecurity, sanitation, and the risk of waterborne diseases, as well as the challenges humanitarian organizations face when providing Palestinians with clean water.

WHO - HeRAMS: West Bank infographics

The World Health Organization is an agency of the United Nations responsible for promoting global public health and strengthening healthcare systems. The WHO uses its Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS) to track the availability and condition of healthcare services during emergencies. This report is especially useful because it focuses on the West Bank and examines the availability of public health services and the barriers that are preventing those services from being provided.

Topic II: Strengthening rehabilitation and reintegration programs for former Palestinian prisoners.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

For many Palestinian prisoners, the effects of torture experienced during detention can continue long after they are released. In 2026, the UN Special Rapporteur reported that the use of torture against Palestinian detainees had significantly intensified since October 2023.[14] The report described physical and psychological abuse, starvation, sexual violence, humiliation, and other forms of torture. These experiences can have lasting effects on former prisoners, making it difficult for them to adjust to everyday life after their release. Studies have also found that Palestinian prisoners report feeling emotional numbness, detachment, and social isolation.[15] Former prisoners also struggle to reconnect with their families and communities, especially Palestinians who spend longer periods in detention.

Employment and education can also make reintegration difficult. Palestinians who spend long periods in prison may miss years of school, job training, and work experience, leaving them with fewer opportunities when they are released. Therefore, education has become an important part of previous rehabilitation efforts. The Rehabilitation Programme within the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs in Ramallah has reported that a Palestinian rehabilitation program had assisted around 6,000 detainees in getting a university education.[16] Employment has also become an integral part of reintegration programs for former Palestinian prisoners. At a 2012 United Nations conference on the Question of Palestine, employment was identified as one of the main challenges facing former Palestinian prisoners.[17] They also discussed supporting former Palestinian detainees by helping them create small businesses and promoting self-employment through vocational training, loans, and grants.[18]

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[14] Un Expert Warns Torture Has Become 'State Doctrine' in Israel, Making Prisons Instruments of Genocide and Torture | Ohchr, www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/03/un-expert-warns-torture-has-become-state-doctrine-israel-making-prisons. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[15] Hamamra, Bilal, et al. "Hypervigilance and Resistance among Palestinian Former Prisoners - Discover Mental Health." SpringerLink, Springer International Publishing, 19 Mar. 2026, link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44192-026-00428-1.

[16] "UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine: 'The Question of the Palestinian Political Prisoners in Israeli Prisons and Detention Facilities: Legal and Political Implications' (Geneva, 3-4 April 2012) - Report - DPR Publication - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-202729. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[17] "UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine (Geneva, 3-4 April 2012) Plenary I - UNOG Press Release - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-198983/. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[18] Ibid.

This issue has become more significant due to the large number of Palestinian prisoners and detainees released through ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreements since 2023. Some have returned home after spending years in detention and may need help rebuilding their lives, finding work, continuing their education, and reconnecting with their families. This creates a need for both immediate assistance after release and long-term support that helps former prisoners successfully return to their communities.

B. History in the Arab World

Palestinian prisoners have been an important issue for Palestine and the Arab world for many years. Arab countries have often discussed the treatment and release of Palestinian prisoners through diplomatic efforts and international organizations. Much of their support comes through financial aid, diplomatic efforts, education, and calls for better treatment and the release of Palestinian prisoners. However, much of the attention has focused on prisoners while they are still detained rather than the challenges they may face after being released.

For Palestinian prisoners, release does not necessarily mean that the effects of imprisonment end. Research on former Palestinian prisoners has found that physical and psychological effects can continue after release and make returning to everyday life more difficult.[19] Former prisoners may also need assistance continuing their education, finding employment, receiving healthcare, and reconnecting with their families and communities.[20] Past Palestinian and international efforts have tried to help former prisoners by providing education, job training, employment opportunities, and other support after their release.[21] This creates an important area for Arab states to consider how regional support can address not only the treatment and release of Palestinian prisoners, but also their long-term reintegration afterward.

One major concern is the physical and psychological impact that imprisonment can have after release. A 2026 study of former Palestinian prisoners in the West Bank found problems including chronic insomnia, physical pain, hypervigilance, and difficulties reconnecting with family and community members.[22] Former prisoners can also face challenges rebuilding other parts of their lives. Access to healthcare, rehabilitation, and social support can therefore play an important role in helping former prisoners adjust to life after detention. The Palestinian Commission of

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[19] Hamamra, Bilal, et al. "Hypervigilance and Resistance among Palestinian Former Prisoners - Discover Mental Health." SpringerLink, Springer International Publishing, 19 Mar. 2026, link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44192-026-00428-1.

[20] "Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State - PA Programme ('Fayyad Plan')/Non-Un Document - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-209255/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2026.

[21] "Situation of Arab Workers in the OT - ILO Director-General Report - Question of Palestine." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-197680/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2026.

[22] Hamamra, Bilal, et al. "Hypervigilance and Resistance among Palestinian Former Prisoners - Discover Mental Health." SpringerLink, Springer International Publishing, 19 Mar. 2026, link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44192-026-00428-1.

Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs identifies education, employment, rehabilitation, and social and economic support as important areas for helping released prisoners reintegrate into Palestinian society.[23] These challenges show why Arab states should consider expanding their efforts to include greater support for the long-term recovery and reintegration of former Palestinian prisoners.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

Supporting former Palestinian prisoners requires both immediate assistance after their release and long-term support as they return to their communities. Some former prisoners may need medical care or mental health support, while others may need help returning to school, finding a job, or reconnecting with their families. Since every former prisoner may face different challenges, there should be different forms of assistance available based on their needs.

Education and employment are especially important for long-term reintegration. Arab states could help by providing scholarships, university opportunities, vocational training, and other forms of educational support. They could also support employment opportunities and small businesses that allow former prisoners to earn an income and become more financially independent.

Mental health should also be an important part of reintegration. The effects of detention, including trauma and stress, can continue long after a prisoner is released. Access to counseling, healthcare, family support, and other services could help former prisoners adjust to everyday life and reconnect with their communities.

Greater cooperation between Arab countries could also strengthen these efforts. Arab states could also work with Palestinian institutions, universities, healthcare providers, and other organizations to provide more consistent support. This could also reduce the need to rely mainly on short-term assistance from individual organizations.

Overall, support for Palestinian prisoners should not end when they are released. Long-term efforts should focus on helping former prisoners rebuild their lives through education, employment, healthcare, mental health support, and stronger connections with their families and communities.

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[23] "Definition of Authority." *CDA*, cda.gov.ps/index.php/en/2018-03-12-10-54-51/definition-of-authority. Accessed 1 Sept. 2026.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What mental health services are currently available to former Palestinian prisoners?
- What barriers prevent former prisoners from accessing education, employment, healthcare, and other services?
- How do the needs of former prisoners differ depending on their age, length of detention, health, or educational background?
- How can Arab states work with Palestinian institutions to improve reintegration efforts?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How can Arab states strengthen rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for former Palestinian prisoners?
- How can Arab countries provide educational opportunities for former prisoners whose education was interrupted by detention?
- How can Arab states ensure that support for Palestinian prisoners continues after their release, rather than focusing only on their treatment while detained?
- What role should Arab states play in supporting Palestinian institutions that already assist former prisoners?
- How can rehabilitation efforts address the different needs of former prisoners instead of using the same approach for everyone?

IV. Additional Resources

Discover Mental Health - Hypervigilance and Resistance Among Palestinian Former Prisoners

Discover Mental Health is a peer-reviewed academic journal that publishes research on mental health and psychological well-being. This 2026 study interviewed 20 former Palestinian prisoners from the West Bank and examined the lasting psychological effects of their detention. It discusses issues they had, such as insomnia, nightmares, physical pain, and challenges returning to everyday life.

UN - Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, also known as the Nelson Mandela Rules, provide internationally recognized guidelines for the treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of prisoners. This resource discusses the importance of education, employment counseling, healthcare, and continued assistance after release. It also states that education in prison should connect with the outside educational system so individuals can continue their education after release.

DCIP - The Arrested Development of Palestinian Child Ex-Detainees

Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCIP) is an independent Palestinian human rights organization that works to protect the rights of Palestinian children. This article examines the difficulties Palestinian children can face when returning to school and everyday life after being released from detention. It discusses how detention can interrupt a child's education and how psychological effects, such as stress and difficulty concentrating, can make returning to school more challenging. This resource is especially helpful because it illustrates why education and mental health support are important parts of reintegrating younger prisoners into their communities. It also highlights the fact that detainees of different ages need different approaches to their reintegration.

Amnesty International - Israel must end mass incommunicado detention and torture of Palestinians from Gaza

Amnesty International is an international human rights organization that investigates and reports on human rights violations around the world. Its research on Palestinian detainees documents detention conditions, administrative detention, and allegations of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in Israeli custody. This resource is helpful because it shares the experiences that former Palestinian prisoners carry with them and explains why access to physical healthcare, mental health services, and other forms of support is necessary.

Topic III: Developing regional strategies to reclaim and restore Palestinian land under occupation.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

The loss and displacement of Palestinians from their land has been a major part of the Palestinian struggle since the Nakba in 1948. During the Nakba, more than 750,000 Palestinians were uprooted from their homes, more than 400 Palestinian villages and towns were completely destroyed, and thousands of people were killed.[24] Many Palestinians became refugees and were unable to return to their homes and property. After the Nakba, many Palestinians fled to what is now recognized as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, and other parts of the SWANA region. Their homes, farmland, and other property were left behind, creating long-term disputes over Palestinian land ownership and the right of refugees to return.

In December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 194, which stated that Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes and live peacefully with their neighbors should be permitted to do so and that compensation should be paid to those who do not wish to return and to those who had their property damaged.[25] However, the resolution did not resolve the issue. Israel and Arab states disagreed over how the Palestinian refugee crisis should be addressed, particularly over whether Palestinian refugees should be allowed to return to their former homes and land.[26] Arab states generally supported the right of Palestinian refugees to return, while Israel opposed the large-scale return of refugees and raised concerns about its security and the effect that their return would have on the newly established state.[27] As a result, large numbers of Palestinians remained refugees, and questions surrounding their land, property, compensation, and right of return remained unresolved.

These unresolved issues became part of the larger Arab-Israeli conflict, although they were not the only source of tension. Disputes over borders, water resources, Palestinian armed attacks, Israeli military responses, and confrontations between Israel and Arab States also increased tensions throughout the following years. These tensions eventually contributed to the Six-Day War in June of 1967, when Israel fought Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. By the end of the six-day

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[24] "Palestinian Refugee Youth Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Nakba in Solidarity with Residents of Masafer Yatta - ACTIONAID USA News." ActionAid USA, 15 May 2023, www.actionaidusa.org/news/palestinian-refugee-youth-commemorate-the-75th-anniversary-of-nakba-in-solidarity-with-residents-of-masafer-yatta/.

[25] "Palestine-Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator." United Nations, United Nations, docs.un.org/en/A/RES/194(III). Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[26] "Right of Return of the Palestinian People - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-210170/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2026.

[27] Ibid.

conflict, Israel had taken control of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights.[28] For Palestinians, this created another period of displacement and brought the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza under Israeli occupation.

After the 1967 occupation, additional challenges were created involving Palestinian land and displacement. Since then, Israeli settlements, land confiscation, home demolitions, restrictions on Palestinian construction, and the growing number of Israeli-controlled areas have continued to restrict Palestinian access to and control over their land. Israeli settlement expansion has also affected access to farmland, water resources, and movement between Palestinian communities.

B. History in the Arab World

The question of Palestinian land has been an important issue for Arab countries since the Nakba in 1948. The displacement of Palestinians created a large refugee population across the Arab world, especially in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt. Since then, the Arab League has addressed Palestinian displacement, supported Palestinians' right of return, and supported their right to self-determination.[29]

The issue remains important today because Palestinian communities in the West Bank continue to face displacement. Israeli settlement outposts have been established near Palestinian villages and communities. Palestinians in these areas have reported settler attacks, intimidation and threats, property damage, and difficulties accessing farmland, water, and grazing areas. These conditions have contributed to the displacement of Palestinian families and, occasionally, entire communities. One recent example is Ras Ein al'Auja, a Palestinian community in the West Bank. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that repeated attacks and threats from settlers connected to four surrounding settlement outposts eventually contributed to the displacement of the entire community.[30] Around 600 Palestinians left the area. OCHA has also documented that, in other areas in the West Bank, around 120 Palestinian communities experienced full or partial displacement between January 2023 and July 2026, including 47 communities that were completely displaced.

Palestinian agriculture has also been affected. Olive trees and farmland are especially important because many Palestinian families depend on agriculture for both income and food. During the 2025 olive harvest season, OCHA documented the repeated and targeted destruction or damage

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[28] "The United Nations and the Question of Palestine - Dpi Publication - Question of Palestine." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-208097/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2026.
[29] Final Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices Of, www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20230724-wri-02-00-en.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.
[30] "Humanitarian Situation Update #356: West Bank." United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory, www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-356-west-bank. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

of thousands of Palestinian trees and saplings in 50 different villages.[31] Losing access to farmland or having crops destroyed can make it more difficult for Palestinian families to continue using and maintaining their land.

Despite the support Arab states have for Palestinian self-determination, they do not always agree on how the issue should be addressed. The differences have become more noticeable as many Arab countries have established or expanded diplomatic relationships with Israel, while others have not. Due to the different relationships with Israel and the different political and economic interests of different Member States, developing one strategy that every country supports remains extremely difficult. However, even with these disagreements, Arab states generally continue to support Palestinians and the right they have to their land, while also opposing the forced displacement of the Palestinian people. This gives the Arab League an opportunity to find ways to protect Palestinian land, help communities remain in their homes, restore damaged land, and prevent further displacement.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

Addressing the loss of Palestinian land will require both preventing further displacement and finding ways to restore land that has already been lost or damaged. To begin, one way Arab States could help is by protecting Palestinian land records and property documents. Documents showing who owned or lived on the land will be vital for legal cases, future negotiations, and efforts to return land to its owners.

Along with preserving these records, protecting Palestinian communities that remain on their land is also important. This could include supporting housing, agriculture, water access, and infrastructure in communities that are at risk of displacement. Arab States could also help Palestinian farmers restore damaged farmland, replace destroyed trees and crops, and improve access to water. These efforts could help families continue to farm in their homeland and earn an income to support themselves.

While these efforts could help Palestinians remain on their land, legal action could provide another way to protect Palestinian land rights. In 2024, the International Court of Justice stated that Israel must stop new settlement activity and provide reparations for damage caused by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Arab States could support Palestinian land claims and international legal efforts to protect Palestinian land rights.

Beyond preventing further land loss, Arab States must also consider what should happen to land Palestinians have already lost. Some land could potentially be returned to its original owners,

[31] "Humanitarian Situation Update #333: West Bank." *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory*, www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-333-west-bank. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

while other cases may require compensation or other forms of reparation. This becomes even more complicated when discussing Palestinians who were displaced in 1948 compared to those displaced after 1967 because the legal frameworks and historical circumstances are different.

Due to the fact that these issues extend beyond what any single country can address, regional cooperation could strengthen these efforts. Rather than Arab States acting independently, the Arab League could help coordinate legal assistance, financial support, and projects to restore Palestinian land and agriculture. Different Arab countries could contribute resources and expertise based on their experience in areas such as agriculture, infrastructure, and reconstruction.

Together, these efforts show that reclaiming and restoring Palestinian land is not only about returning individual pieces of property. It also involves helping Palestinians remain on their land, rebuild their communities, access farmland and resources, and protect their right to self-determination. Since there is no single solution to this issue, Arab States need to come together to create a regional strategy that combines land protection, legal action, economic support, restoration, and diplomacy.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- How have Israeli settlements affected Palestinian access to land in the West Bank and East Jerusalem?
- How has the loss of agricultural land affected Palestinian farmers and local economies?
- How are Palestinian land ownership and property records documented?
- What role could international courts play in resolving Palestinian land claims?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How can Arab states help prevent further loss of Palestinian land?
- When returning property is not possible, should compensation or other forms of reparation be considered?
- What long-term measures could help restore Palestinian control over land while supporting Palestinian self-determination?
- What role should Arab countries with diplomatic relations with Israel play in addressing Palestinian land loss and displacement?
- How can damaged farmland, olive trees, homes, and other property be restored?

IV. Additional Resources

ICJ - Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the main judicial body of the United Nations and rules on questions involving international law. Its 2024 advisory opinion examines Israel's occupation, settlements, annexation, land policies, and the Palestinian right to self-determination. The Court concluded that Israel must cease new settlement activity and pay reparations for damage caused in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Amnesty International - Erasing Anything Palestinian

Amnesty International is a global human rights organization that investigates human rights violations around the world. This 2026 report examines the displacement of Palestinian Bedouin and herding communities in the West Bank, with case studies involving communities affected by settlement and outpost expansion, settler violence, and restrictions on access to farmland and water. It also examines how attacks on livestock, crops, homes, and other property can make it difficult for Palestinians to remain on their land.

Peace Now - Settlement Watch

Peace Now is an Israeli organization that monitors Israeli settlements and government settlement policies in the West Bank. Its Settlement Watch project tracks settlements and outposts using field surveys, aerial photography, Israeli government records, and other sources. Its database provides information about settlement locations, population, expansion, and land use.

Human Rights Watch - Israel and Palestine

Human Rights Watch is an international organization that investigates human rights conditions around the world. Its reporting on the West Bank covers settlement expansion, home demolitions, displacement, movement restrictions, and access to Palestinian agricultural land. Its World Report also discusses increased settlement construction and settler violence during 2025. This resource is helpful because it explains how settlement expansion and restrictions on land are connected to the larger issue of Palestinian control over territory.

Topic IV: Addressing economic strangulation and restrictions on Palestinian labor, trade, and movement.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

The Palestinian economy has faced restrictions on trade, labor, and movement for decades. Palestinians depend on the ability to move between cities, reach workplaces and farmland, import and export goods, and trade with other countries. Israeli control over borders, checkpoints, permits, and the movement of goods has limited many of these activities, making it difficult for the Palestinian economy to operate independently.[32]

These restrictions have a major impact on everyday life in the West Bank. Checkpoints, road closures, permit requirements, and other barriers can make it difficult for Palestinians to travel between communities or reach jobs, schools, hospitals, and farmland. As of February 2025, OCHA documented 849 movement obstacles throughout the West Bank, including road gates and earth mounds. These barriers can increase travel times and make it more difficult for Palestinians to work and run businesses.[33]

Employment has also been heavily affected. Before October 2023, more than 177,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza worked in Israel and Israeli settlements, where wages were generally higher than the wages that were available in the Palestinian markets.[34] After October 2023, most of these workers lost access to their jobs when Israel suspended or revoked work permits. This left many Palestinian families without a source of income and contributed to the rising unemployment rate and poverty.

The economic situation in Gaza is even more severe. Since 2007, Israel's blockade has restricted the movement of people and goods entering and leaving Gaza. Egypt also controls access through its side of the Rafah crossing. Restrictions on imports, exports, fuel, construction materials, and movement have affected businesses and employment for years. The situation became much worse after October 2023 because of widespread destruction, displacement, and

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[32] "The Palestinian Economy Will Continue to Operate below Potential without Concrete Policy Actions." World Bank Group - International Development, Poverty, & Sustainability, 9 May 2022, www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/05/09/the-palestinian-economy-will-continue-to-operate-below-potential-without-concrete-policy-actions.

[33] "Humanitarian Situation Update #274: West Bank." United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory, www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-274-west-bank. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[34] The Two-Year War in Gaza: Impacts on Employment And, www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/Bulletin%20no.6-%20impact%20on%20the%20West%20Bank_0.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

further restrictions on the movement of goods. According to the World Bank, Gaza's economy shrank by 83% in 2024.[35]

Trade is another major challenge. Palestinian businesses depend heavily on Israel for imports, exports, transportation routes, and access to international markets. Many of the economic rules come from the Paris Protocol, signed in 1994 as part of the Oslo peace process. The agreement created rules for trade and taxes between Israel and Palestine, but it has also contributed to continued Palestinian economic dependence on Israel.[36]

B. History in the Arab World

Arab countries have provided financial and economic support to Palestinians for many years. This assistance has included direct funding to Palestinian institutions, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction funding, investment, and support through Arab and international development organizations. Countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Algeria, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and more have all provided different forms of financial assistance.

Arab states have also attempted to strengthen Palestinian trade with the Arab world. One important step came through the Arab League's decision to exempt Palestinian products from customs and taxes in Arab markets.[37] This can give Palestinian businesses more places to sell their products and help reduce their dependence on the Israeli market.

Jordan and Egypt play particularly important roles because they share borders with Palestinian territories. Jordan provides an important route for Palestinian goods and people traveling from the West Bank, while Egypt's Rafah crossing connects Gaza with Egypt. This means policies involving border crossings, customs procedures, transportation, and regional trade can directly affect Palestinian economic activity.

Arab countries have also used the Arab League and international organizations to raise concerns about Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement, trade, and economic activity.[38] More recently, Arab governments have called for increased humanitarian access, reconstruction, and economic assistance to Palestinians following the destruction caused by the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

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[35] Gaza Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e539cbf23b348c3d4fc69b8a7e9c9d7d-0280062026/original/Gaza-RDNA-2026-Final-April-19.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[36] GE.23-17435(E) Trade and Development Board Seventy-Fourth Executive Session, unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdbex74d2_en.pdf. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[37] "United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/data-collection/. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

[38] "Human Rights in the Opt - Arab League Report - Question of Palestine." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-185678/. Accessed 27 Aug. 2026.

However, much of Arab financial support has been focused on aid and emergency assistance. While this aid is important, it does not always help the Palestinian economy become stronger and more independent in the long term. Arab countries could also consider ways to create more jobs, increase Palestinian trade with the Arab market, support Palestinian businesses, and provide more economic opportunities.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

One possible solution is to increase trade between Palestine and Arab countries. Arab states could make it easier for Palestinian products to enter their markets by reducing trade barriers, simplifying requirements for Palestinian exports, and creating stronger connections between Palestinian and Arab businesses. This could especially help Palestinian farmers and small businesses sell products such as olive oil, dates, agricultural goods, textiles, and other locally produced products to a larger number of consumers. Arab countries could also work with neighboring states such as Jordan and Egypt to improve transportation routes for Palestinian goods. Together, these efforts could provide Palestinian businesses with more customers and reduce their dependence on the Israeli market.

Employment is another major issue. Palestinians who lose access to jobs in Israel may have few alternatives because of high unemployment within the Palestinian territories. Arab countries could help create more employment opportunities by investing in Palestinian businesses and industries and supporting job training in fields where employment opportunities are growing. Arab states could also consider providing temporary work opportunities for Palestinians who have lost access to jobs in Israel.

Improving freedom of movement is more complicated because many checkpoints, permits, and border restrictions are controlled by Israel. These restrictions can affect workers trying to reach their jobs, farmers trying to access their land, and businesses attempting to transport goods. Arab countries that have diplomatic relations with Israel could use those relationships to push for fewer restrictions on Palestinian workers, farmers, and goods. Other Arab countries could work through the Arab League, international organizations, and diplomatic pressure to address these restrictions.

Another solution could be reducing the economic dependence Palestine has on Israel. Arab countries could invest in Palestinian agriculture, technology, manufacturing, energy, and small businesses. Supporting Palestinian manufacturing could also allow more products to be produced locally rather than relying as heavily on imported goods. These investments could create more jobs and give Palestinians greater economic opportunities within their own communities.

In conclusion, addressing economic strangulation requires more than providing financial aid when the Palestinian economy is in crisis. Emergency assistance can help Palestinians meet immediate needs, but it does not address the restrictions and economic dependence that contribute to these problems. A long-term strategy will require helping Palestinians build an economy that can create jobs, trade with regional markets, and operate more independently.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- How do checkpoints and movement restrictions affect Palestinian workers and businesses?
- What barriers prevent Palestinian products from reaching Arab markets?
- How could Arab countries with diplomatic relations with Israel use those relationships to address restrictions on Palestinian trade, labor, and movement?
- How have restrictions since October 2023 changed unemployment and poverty in the West Bank and Gaza?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How can Arab countries improve transportation and trade routes connecting Palestine with the Arab world?
- How can Arab states support Palestinians who have lost access to employment in Israel?
- How can Arab states move from providing mainly short-term financial aid toward supporting long-term Palestinian economic independence?
- What protections should exist for Palestinians offered employment opportunities in other Arab countries?
- What measures could reduce Palestinian economic dependence on Israel?

IV. Additional Resources

MAS - Palestine Economic Update

The Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) is an independent Palestinian research institute that studies economic and social issues affecting Palestine. Its January 2026 economic update looks at unemployment, economic growth, Palestinian Authority finances, lost employment in Israel, and barriers to economic recovery. It reports that unemployment has reached 78% in Gaza and explains that recovery depends partly on creating alternatives to jobs Palestinians have lost in Israel.

IMF - West Bank and Gaza

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial organization that monitors economies, government finances, and financial systems around the world. Its reports on the West Bank and Gaza examine economic growth, unemployment, trade, banking, and economic relations with Israel. The IMF also examines the Palestinian Authority's financial situation, including its dependence on the Palestinian economy. This resource explains why the Palestinian economy faces difficulties operating independently and what financial reforms, international assistance, private investment, and regional economic cooperation could do to support long-term economic stability.

Oxfam - Palestinian Livelihoods and Movement Restrictions

Oxfam is an international humanitarian and development organization that works with Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza. Its research examines how restrictions on movement, trade, land access, and employment affect the daily lives and livelihoods of Palestinians. Oxfam has also documented how checkpoints and road closures can make it harder for humanitarian organizations to reach communities. Oxfam also looks at how restrictions on trade and land access affect Palestinian farmers, businesses, workers, and families.