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Online Seminar: Israeli Crimes and International Law

On Thursday, May 20, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) held a [seminar](#) entitled “Israeli Crimes and International law” to discuss the recent [aggression](#) on the Palestinian people, especially in the Gaza Strip. The seminar also discussed means of ending the Israeli apartheid practices against the Palestinians and how to put an end to it.

A number of lawyers, experts, and human rights defenders participated in the seminar and discussed the [Israeli violations](#) on the occupied territories, the West Bank, and Gaza, and the impact of the [international silence](#) on the escalating violations and crimes by the occupation forces against Palestinian civilians.

Nasim Ahmed, Senior Researcher in Middle East Monitor, moderated the seminar and affirmed that Israel is practicing terrorism against Palestinians in the [Gaza Strip](#). He also condemned the silence of western governments towards the heinous crimes on Gaza and the occupied territories.

Dana Aboul-Jabine, Director of Campaign Against Arms Trade, highlighted the huge arms sales to Israel, condemning the role of the arms dealers who fuel any war or conflict in the world.

She pointed out that the Israeli army is one of the most powerful armies in the world, and unfortunately, it uses its forces against the people of Gaza and indiscriminately bombards homes, medical centres, and media institutions.

She stated that Israel is one of the largest importers of weapons in the world, and most of its imports come from the USA, which recently supported the Israeli army with a large arms deal, as well as the UK, Germany, and Italy.



Aboul-Jabine criticized the recent position of the [United Kingdom](#) on the Israeli aggression on Gaza, saying that it legitimized the Israeli bombing, warning of the negotiations on a [free arms trade](#) between the Israeli and the UK.

Aboul-Jabine concluded her speech by stressing that arms sales to Israel are not just numbers or trade, but are key tools for [killing the Palestinian](#) people.

William A. Schabas, Professor of international law at Middlesex University in London, spoke about the necessity of exposing the Israeli apartheid policies against the Palestinians, not only because it is a crime against humanity, but it also shows the world the similarity between the Israeli is practices against the Palestinians and the situation in South Africa 40 years ago, which is a matter of serious concern.

He explained that comparing the situation in South Africa 40 years ago with the current situation of Israel and its strong relations with the world's superpowers reveal its instability and unsustainability.

Schabas stressed the need to isolate Israel at the international level in order to reach a real solution, as South Africa did.

Dr. Ammar Dweik, Director General of the Independent Commission for Human Rights, stressed that the responsibility for stopping the Israeli [aggression](#) on Gaza is everyone's responsibility, adding that the situation in Gaza is the normal outcome of the failure to achieve justice through the application of international law, under which Israel has never been held accountable and therefore it continued and escalated its aggression on people in Palestine.

He stressed that without justice for the Palestinians, there will be no peace, stability, or justice in the region, and crimes will continue to take place against the innocent people, as Israel's policy is to leave great human losses, especially women and children, and destroy means of life.

Dweik stressed that the damage caused to the besieged Gaza Strip as a result of the recent Israeli aggression left more than 70 thousand people in Gaza displaced and searching for shelters in UNRWA schools, but unfortunately, UNRWA couldn't provide any services to them due to the overcrowding that might cause a third wave of Corona



within the Stripe that lacks sufficient electricity, water, food or blankets, funding, and medicine.

Dweik called on Arab countries to stop the shameful normalization and cut ties with Israel.

Shahd Qaddoura, Legal Researcher and Advocacy Officer at Al-Haq Organisation, detailed the crisis of the [Sheikh Jarrah](#) neighborhood, where she said that [Sheikh Jarrah](#) was the spark that exacerbated the recent conditions in Palestine, as these [violations](#) has been happening in Palestine for the past 73 years.

Qaddoura confirmed that the situation in Sheikh Jarrah is a small picture of the situation in all of Palestine, noting that '[settler colonialism](#)' does not exist only in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, but in other parts of Jerusalem and the West Bank, stressing that Israel is keen to geographically divide the Palestinian people.

Qaddoura pointed out that shortly before the events of Sheikh Jarrah, Palestinians were targeted in [Al-Aqsa Mosque](#), Bab al-Amud, and the Old City of Jerusalem by the Israeli occupation forces and settlers from the far right, explaining that the Nakba did not end in 1948, but rather began.

Qaddoura stressed that the time has come for the [international community](#) to take effective and concrete measures to hold those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity accountable, as Israel uses its arsenal of weapons and military equipment to suppress the Palestinians.

Haydee Dijkstal, British Attorney, spoke about the role of the [International Criminal Court](#) to hold Israeli perpetrators accountable, as under the Rome Statute the ICC must put an end to impunity for war crimes perpetrators.

She called on the court to act immediately, as the court's slow performance will not help end the current war crimes.

Dijkstal stressed that the court's performance is very slow in files related to Palestine, despite the fact that Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people have been presented to the International Criminal Court more than 12 years ago, however, the court did not start investigations until a few months ago.



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At the end of the seminar, all speakers called on the [international community](#) to take action to put an end to the increasing crimes of the Israeli occupation, and the need to enforce international law sanctions against Israel, and to end its impunity.

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