



Date : 14/06/2023

Webinar: The ICC Must Step Up: Justice for Palestinians Awaits

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) successfully organised a pivotal [webinar titled "The ICC Must Step Up: Justice for Palestinians Awaits."](#) Esteemed speakers and activists from diverse backgrounds came together to discuss potential strategies to persuade the International Criminal Court (ICC) to take concrete measures in ensuring justice for the Palestinian people. The webinar shed light on the escalating violence, human rights violations, and the urgent need for accountability.

Moderated by Roba Salibi, a Postdoctoral Fellow at Oxford University, the webinar commenced with a warm welcome to all participants and emphasized the importance of the topic at hand. The event focused on the message composed by the Arab Organisation for Human Rights, requesting ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan to continue the Palestinian case from the point left by his predecessor, Fatou Bensouda. The message highlighted the escalating brutality of Israeli offences against Palestinians and their unwavering struggle for justice and equity.

Mohamed Jamil, Chairman of AOHR UK, delivered a passionate speech highlighting the ongoing criminal activities committed by occupying forces and their flagrant disregard for international humanitarian law. He emphasized the alarming death toll, particularly among innocent civilians and children, as well as the destruction of homes and displacement of communities.

Jamil expressed deep concern over the continued settlement activities and construction of residences, such as the recent project announced to build a settlement in the E1 area. He underscored the detrimental impact this would have on communication between the divided West Bank and Jerusalem.

Kirsten Bayes, Local Outreach Coordinator of Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), drew attention to the exacerbation of the conflict through arms exports. She



emphasized the need to end the complicity in the production and trade of Israeli weapons and drones, highlighting the growing movement calling for a complete shutdown. Bayes criticized the selective attention of the media, particularly during major incursions, and shed light on the deliberate policy of the Israeli government to suppress journalism.

Bayes called for an end to the use of these weapons in committing war crimes and emphasized the necessity of better regulation in arms exports, particularly in light of the lack of transparency in the UK's Open Licensing scheme.

Dr. Nadia Najab, Senior Lecturer in Palestine Studies at the University of Exeter, provided a comprehensive analysis of the international inaction concerning Palestinian justice. She highlighted the exclusion of the Palestinian narrative and the active combat against their narrative, which contributes to the denial of Israeli wrongdoings.

Dr. Najab expressed concern over the international community's silence regarding the impact of Israeli arbitrary laws on Palestinians, emphasizing the need for an inclusive approach that acknowledges the experiences and struggles of the Palestinian people.

Dr. Najab highlighted the need for unity among Palestinians and other solidarity groups, underscoring the significance of small steps contributing to the larger picture of resistance and change.

Dr. Ramzy Baroud, Palestinian-American Journalist and Editor of The Palestine Chronicle, offered incisive insights into the ICC's jurisdiction over Palestine and Israel. He clarified the pressure points and potential actions within the ICC, emphasizing the need for political pressure and collaboration with those lobbying for Palestine.

Dr. Baroud highlighted the inconsistent actions of the ICC, contrasting the swift response to cases like Russia-Ukraine with the prolonged delays in addressing the Palestinian situation. He called for a broader understanding and action to ensure that Palestine, admitted as a state in the ICC and ratifying the Rome Statute, is not treated differently.

Sarah Wilkinson, a passionate pro-Palestinian activist from the UK, shared her experiences and emphasized the importance of enforcing international law. Wilkinson discussed the suppression of pro-Palestinian voices but expressed hope in the growing people's power to bring about change.



Drawing attention to the movement to end complicity in the production of Israeli weapons and drones, Wilkinson stressed the importance of Palestine's actions gaining international support. She emphasized that without the enforcement of international law, its existence becomes questionable. Wilkinson expressed her frustration with the lack of progress in addressing the Palestinian issue within institutions like the ICC and the UN, highlighting the need for concrete actions rather than symbolic resolutions.

Dr. Ralph Wilde, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Laws, UCL, highlighted the recent UNGA vote requesting an advisory opinion from the ICJ on the Israeli occupation. Dr. Wilde emphasized that the occupation is illegal both in its existence and conduct, calling for its immediate end.

He highlighted the significant development on December 30, 2022, when the UNGA requested an advisory opinion from the ICJ regarding the Israeli occupation. Dr. Wilde emphasized that this legal opinion, separate from the International Criminal Court, will encompass all areas of international law related to the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Dr. Wilde clarified that while the ICJ cannot determine individual criminal responsibility, it has the responsibility to address violations of international law and assess actions that do not necessarily lead to individual criminal responsibility. He highlighted the fundamental issues of legality and illegality surrounding the occupation, underscoring how it hinders Palestinian self-governance and violates their right to self-determination.

The webinar concluded with a collective call to the ICC to fulfill its mandate and deliver justice for the Palestinian people. The speakers reiterated the importance of global solidarity, political pressure, and raising awareness to bring about meaningful change.

to Joseph Tomb.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)