

UN Panel: Sanctions Needed Against Israel to Stop Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

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The U.N. recently launched a scathing critique of Israel's occupation when the U.N. rapporteur for human rights in the occupied territories [delivered a report](#) condemning Israel's conduct to date.

According to the report, published October 23, the “duration of this occupation is without precedent or parallel in today's world.” In fact, Israel has “driven Gaza back to the dark ages” due to its particularly stringent denial of water and electricity and its restrictions on movement since 2007.

[According](#) to *Mondoweiss*, the U.N. rapporteur didn't hold back at a press conference. He demanded the international community be held accountable for Israel's actions:

“At a press conference about his report, S. Michael Lynk, a Canadian professor of law and human rights expert, said it is time the international community reach into its ‘toolbox’ of enforcement mechanisms, so as to ‘raise the stakes’ against the occupation and change international ‘opinion’ of Israel. The country had been worried by the Goldstone Report in 2009 and is today worried by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS), Lynk said; so if the international community took ‘unified actions on an escalating basis’ to declare the occupation illegal and demand Israel's withdrawal, Israel would respond.”

Mondoweiss suggested Mr. Lynk was indirectly advocating for the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement that has started to take off in recent years.

The report notes that the Special Rapporteur has indicated his desire to conduct a mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territory but that Israeli authorities have not granted permission. Even at the time of the report's publication last week, he was yet to receive a reply from a request as far back as March this year. Conversely, the report even went so far as to thank the Palestinian government for its cooperation.

Regarding the human rights situation inflicted by the Israeli authorities, the report stated:

“In the 50th year of the occupation, the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is in a state of severe deterioration. The human rights and humanitarian law violations associated with the occupation impact every aspect of life for Palestinians living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem,

and Gaza.”

The report didn't hold back in its criticism of the illegality of Israel's actions with respect to the occupied territories:

“In June 2017, Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory – the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza – marked its 50th anniversary. This is the longest-running military occupation in the modern world. Notwithstanding insistent calls by the international community, most recently in 2016, that the Israeli occupation must come to a complete end, that many of its features are in profound breach of international law, and that its perpetuation both violates the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and undermines the possibility of a two-state solution, it has become more entrenched and harsher than ever. Indeed, the Israeli occupation has become a legal and humanitarian oxymoron: an occupation without end.”

Though most major media outlets have failed to pay much attention to the report, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley [said Friday that](#) the U.S. was “deeply disturbed” by the report's findings and by Mr. Lynk's support for the “economic and academic boycott” of Israel.

Considering the report's content, Haley's rejection of its findings is not remotely surprising. For example, while Mr. Lynk didn't directly use the term apartheid, *Mondoweiss* notes that this is essentially what his report has accurately described. It stated:

“According to recent reports by the World Bank and the United Nations, the expanding Israeli settlement enterprise and the supporting apparatus of occupation has deepened the already separate and distinctly inferior civil and economic conditions imposed upon Palestinians in the West Bank. There, the Palestinians are subject to a harsh and arbitrary legal system quite unequal to that enjoyed by the Israeli settlers.”

The report also seemed to acknowledge something akin to ethnic cleansing, stating:

“Israel employs practices that in some cases may amount to the forcible transfer of Palestinians, primarily those living in rural areas, as a means of confiscating land for settlements...As for East Jerusalem, the occupation has increasingly detached it from its traditional national, economic, cultural and family connections with the West Bank because of the Wall, the growing ring of settlements and related checkpoints, and the discriminatory permit regime...”

While it is certainly progress to have the Special Rapporteur explicitly state the truth regarding Israel's brutal occupation, America's longstanding support of Israel will most likely entail that the country will have free rein to continue its discriminatory policies with impunity.

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