Health Work Committee

مؤسسة لجان العمل الصحى

Newsletter

December 2009

The Opening

Mission

We, the Health Work Committees, are a Palestinian health and development non-governmental organization.

We are specialized in providing quality and comprehensive health care services and building development models for all sectors within the society, particularly the poor and the marginalized.

We work to empower and enhance the steadfastness of the Palestinian people through the enhancement of participatory management and professional qualified staff with the ability to influence the relevant public and sector policies towards a comprehensive health care system as a basic human right based on all international human rights conventions and agreements.

Determining on the National Rights Despite the Catastrophe and Setback (Al Nakba)



By: Shatha Odeh General Manager of HWC

Here comes the sixty first anniversary of Al Nakba (Catastrophe) due to which the Palestinians have been and still are hurting, suffering, and being displaced in different spots around the world. And just a few days later, the Palestinians commemorated the forty second anniversary of the occupation of the rest of Palestine, known as Al Naksa (Setback).

Al Nakba has afflicted the future of the Palestinian people, and commemorating this painful event is an expression of their adherence and commitment to the right to return and the refusal of giving up on it, being a group right that doesn't fade away with time. Al Nakba's activities aim at reviving the humanitarian side, exposing the continuous crime and confirming on the Palestinian people's devotion to all their legitimate rights, on top of which is the right to return, despite of the difficult challenges.

Al Nakba was a historical sin committed against the Palestinian people when the interests of the colonial powers and the Zionist's project had come across and more than one million Palestinians were forced out of their homes unjustly. Every national cause in the world has its own characteristics and qualities, but what most distinguish the Palestinian cause are the refugees and their right to return, being the foundation of the Palestinian issue and the center of their conflict with the Occupation. It's one of the most important international issues due to the volume of its victims, its interference with several global issues and parties, and its huge impact and reflections on the world.

The Palestinian refugees cause and the right to return have been assured by the international resolutions on top of which was resolution 194 which stated the refugees' right to return, which doesn't fade away by time and is both an individual and a group right that no one is entitled to give up on no matter how strong and intense it becomes; it remains a continuous right and the Occupation can never defeat it regardless of how hard it tried. In the context of the tragedies experienced by our people nowadays, it's very important to mention a number of some key facts so that we direct the compass back on the track on which martyrs had died, prisoners had sacrificed, the poor had been deprived from peaceful living, and the peasants' lands had been stolen.We are all suffering from the painful Catastrophe and Setback, for if we're not refugees, we are still immigrants or at least we're dreadfully affected by these two tragedies.

There are about 8 million Palestinian refugees nowadays who are suffering and experiencing the bitter daily humiliation and their relative's control over them. However, they've never given up on their right to return, as it's their only way to freedom and dignity.

Also, there are over half a million Jewish settlers living in the West Bank nowadays, whom the Occupation has been confiscating lands, constructing the apartheid walls and killing the innocent in cold blood for. And today, the rope has become closer around the necks of our brothers who have been hanging to their country in the 1984 Territories, as the Israeli right-wing government has revealed its brutal intentions in terminating the remaining Palestinians there by displacing and transferring them out.

This "Transfer" decision is no longer a decision of the right-wing; it has become an agreed one among the Zionists' community and has been approved in the "Knesset" and today, the rope has become closer around the necks of our brothers who have been hanging to their country in the 1984 Territories, as the Israeli rightwing government has revealed its brutal intentions in terminating the remaining Palestinians there by displacing and transferring them out.

This "Transfer" decision is no longer a decision of the right-wing; it has become an agreed one among the Zionists' community and has been approved in the "Knesset" and that criminalizes whoever denies the Jewish nature of the Occupation state. And so the discussions continue regarding criminalizing all those who commemorate Al Nakbah, and a law is being drafted with regards to "Loyalty for Citizenship"... all are policies that do not tell of any good intentions for the future; on the contrary, they indicate to a black future awaiting the Palestinian Cause. And so, Al Nakba is not over yet and the displacement is continuous, even though it's taking different shapes.

With regards to West Bank, Gaza and Occupied Jerusalem, the situation is not any better than what it is inside the 1948 occupied territories; settlements are growing day after day and the Serpentine wall is extending from the north to the south and from the east to the west.

Ten thousand Palestinians or even more are held in the Occupations prisons

under no humanitarian conditions; some are struggling with death while Jerusalem is being Judaize with an international blessing and an Arabic silence. Jerusalem, the city that should be the capital of the awaited old state, is suffering from settlers; the Arab houses are being destroyed as more than 1,300 Palestinian residents living in Jerusalem have received a warning that their houses will be destructed.

The state of internal division that we are witnessing has affected the national agenda and it's working towards the interest of the Occupation who's inflaming arousing it.

Since Gaza's clashes, the Palestinian national project had been affected towards a serious setback, represented by the impediment in the national achievements, were the Palestinians have been living a state of division same as they had been at the time of Al Nakbah... Yes, we are living a third catastrophe and our national project towards freedom, independence and full mastership is now threatened and is attached to the external will.

We, at the HWC, are part of the people and we believe in our rights and respect the struggle of our martyrs, prisoners and wounded ones.

We do our best throughout services and development and health programs to enhance the steadfastness of our people and alleviate their suffering, biased to the poor and the marginalized, and at the same time living the national concern, defending the case and rights of our people and exposing the occupation's practices in the national, Arabic and international events.

Regaining the Palestinian national unity is our choice and it will be the most powerful weapon in confronting the hostile Zionist policy which is supported by the USA. This requires putting an end to the state of division the Palestinians are living and reinforcing the comprehensive national dialogue that will lead into gathering Palestinians and activating the PLO organizations as a reference for rehabilitating the Cause and rights. It also requires depending in negotiations which only caused more Zionist murdering and killing against the Palestinians and an improved image before the international society.

The HWC Honors Its Staff on the First of May

The HWC has organized a ceremony to honor its employees; doctors, nurses, lab technicians, administrators, developers, founders and volunteers from all over the West Bank. The ceremony was launched with the Palestinian National Anthem and a one minute silence for the spirits of the Palestinian martyrs and as a devotion to the late Dr. Ahmad Al Maslamani, former HWC's General Director and the late Dr. Kamal Zeineh who had both passed away a little over a year ago.

Inherspeech, Ms Shatha Odeh, HWC's General Director, confirmed on the importance of adhering to human rights of the working social class by saying: "104 years ago, the working class rebelled in order to seize its rights to gain dignity and dispose of all kinds of persecution practiced against it by the employers who took advantage of all allying brutal Capitalist rules and regulations, towards which came May 1st as a reminder of this class and its revolution against its executors and blood suckers.

She added that the abusive globalization policy and the unjust hostile destructive war launched by its parties in many places and in the Arab region like the situation in Iraq, which aim at forcing its control over the Third World's wealthy resources and persistence in stealing its fortunes, had created a globalized class of capitalists, estimated to form 1%, which controls the wealthy resources and fortunes of the entire world. She also referred to the Palestinian case by saying: In our Palestinian case, we are no better than any other country in the Arab region or the world, for all people and especially labors are suffering dual oppression and persecution by the Occupation; the first is because it is taking away our freedom and denying our legitimate national rights, and the second is due to the daily actions practiced against us; labors and peasants. Labors are facing repression, daily humiliation, attacks, arrests, murder and abuse in projects. She also referred to the Palestinian case by saying:"In our Palestinian case, we are no better than any other country in the Arab region or the world, for all people and especially laborers are suffering dual oppression and persecution by the Occupation; the first is because it is taking away our freedom and denying our legitimate national rights, and the second is due to the daily actions practiced against us; labors and peasants. Labors are facing repression, daily humiliation, attacks, arrests, murder and abuse due to the Israeli industrial, agricultural and service projects which the settlers had implemented on the Palestinian lands in the settlements, in addition to depriving them from working under security excuses and so they are prevented to work in Jerusalem and Gaza employees are not allowed to leave Gaza to work either, in addition that a big part of the Palestinian labor power is unemployed due to the occupation policies and practices, and are living on local and international aids, which raised unemployment among Palestinians to 80% in Gaza and 40% in the West Bank, and the average daily income per capita reached 2 USD per capita, which is the lowest rate in the world ever."

Regarding the world financial crisis, Odeh said: "The recent world financial crisis represented by the rise in prices ,the slow economical growth rates, and the impedance in the production of basic goods have added a new concern to the employees and their social class, since the globalization criminality and its classes gave the legitimacy to the controlling minority in our countries to support the requirements of globalization and its executors through facilitating privatization and restructuring economy for countries which are subjected to the conditions and terms of the international World Bank and Cash Fund, being the only policies that can promote their economy, despite the fact that they are undermining the national economy and causing more disasters to people in poor and developing countries. The controlling minority in these countries succeeded to remove all obstacles and restrictions before the control of the international capitalism and the global monopoly of our resources."

She added: "Our living conditions should not make us forget that the occupation is the main reason behind what we are suffering whether we were employees, peasants, men or women. The horrible crimes committed by the Zionist enemy nowadays against the Palestinians and its targeting to children and women in the streets of Gaza, which comes within the context of the continuing American-Zionist alliance after a series of crimes committed against the Palestinians and the political and economical pressures exercised against them and the unjust blockade to stop their resistance, break their will and give up their rights, cannot be separated from the very beginning of the conflict that we are commemorating its 61st year."

The HWC Director asked the partied Palestinians to unify in order to face the social class exploitation, which the employees and citizens are paying for and said: "The Palestinian national unity is our choice and will remain the most powerful weapon in confronting the Zionist hostile policy which is supported by the USA, and the choice of resistance that relies on a national political program that adheres to the national principles is the shortest way towards achieving freedom and dignity for the laborers and all people. This requires putting an end to the state of division the Palestinians are living through reinforcing the comprehensive national dialogue and activation the PLO organizations with the participation of all parties and the Palestinian national work institutes as a national reference that rehabilitates the cause and national rights."

She concluded he speech by making a commitment to moving forward in the supportive methodology to the poor and marginalized laborers, originally adopted by the late Dr. Ahmad Maslamani.

As for the speech of the HWC's Board of Directors, Dr. Isam Hijjaw, member of the Board, presented the institute's history and the stations it went through including all the challenges faced and are still faced by the institute, emphasizing on the importance of the unification of all laborers in facing any obstructions. Hijjawi also emphasized on the necessity of adhering to the direction that supports the poor and the marginalized, whom the late Dr. Ahmad Maslamani was devoted to. In their speech, which was made by Suhair A'lyyan, the workers at the HWC renewed their vows on devoting their efforts to serve the poor. A'lyyan asked the institute to pay more attention to the workers in terms of continuing education and developing their professional capacities by providing educational scholarships for them, each in their specialty, in order to improve their service skills.



By focusing on the health insurance situation

HWC Honors its Annual Media Prize Winners

The HWC has honored the journalists and media people who participated in its annual medial competition at the institute in Al Bireh City with the presence of the jury that included Mr. Khalil Shaheen the journalist, Mr. Issam Al Arouri and Ms Shatha Odeh, General Director of HWC.

At the beginning of the ceremony, where the results of the competition, which was designated to discuss the situation of the health insurance, were announced the institute's media coordinator, Mr. Kahled Al Faqeeh, spoke about the importance of the relationship between the media and the developmental and health work in Palestine. He said that since the beginning of Al Aqsa

Intifada, the institute has been organizing the media competition for journalists to write, where each year a subject that directly concerns Palestinians' lives is chosen, indicating that the institute had once designated allocated the competition to the prisoners inside the Occupation's jails to talk about their difficult health situation and what the health violations they go through. He added: "This prize represents one of the tools that the institute uses in attracting journalists and media to focus on humanitarian, social, economical and health issues and the affect of the Occupation and its practices against these sectors, which are clearly reflected on

a wide category of the society." He also indicated that the jury that supervised the follow up of the information had set clear guidelines and criteria to select the winning material. From her side, Ms Shatha Odeh, HWC's General Director, confirmed on the important role of the journalists and media in highlighting the reality of the deprived categories in the society in a way that affects decision makers and the drafting of policies and strategies that shall serve the these categories, clarifying that selecting the health insurance issue for this year's competition was for the sake of revealing the suffering of the poor and the marginalized in this area of interest.

After the Hazardous Impacts Due to the Latest Israeli Aggression on Gaza

Specialists Confirm that the Health Sector Suffers a Lot and is in Need for a Serious Shift to Upgrade its Performance

By: Sa'ed Abu Farha

The health sector in Gaza is facing exceptionally cruel conditions for many reasons, including the continued Israeli attacks and blockade that have been imposed on Gaza for a relatively long time and the resulting obstruction of the arrival of many types of drugs, medical equipment, etc. Nothing could be more evident of the siege's impact than the death of 300 patient from Gaza because of their inability to leave Gaza for treatment, however, the last Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip, which resulted in the death of around 1500 people, had enforced more complications and difficulties in the face of the health sector. according to many workers and specialists in this field. Among the greatest impacts of the aggression, the results of the surveys conducted by the UNFPA and the Norwegian "Fafo" Center for Applied International

Studies regarding the living, economical, social and health conditions in Gaza. The recently declared results showed that the Israeli aggression on Gaza had forbidden 4 out of 10 pregnant women to get pre-natal or post- partum care.

The survey indicated that 34% of young people, aged between 18 and 24 years old, find difficulties in focusing, while 35% of them get feelings of despair frequently, and 35% get so angry that they sometimes lose control. As for aids, the survey showed that 48% of the families had received aids during the war and that 78% of them received aids several weeks after it ended, where 17% of the families said they didn't get any aids since the beginning of last year; these aids were divided as follows: 27% were free health aids, 24% food, 20% free health insurance and 2% money. It also showed that one of ten (11% of Gaza's residents) is suffering from chronic diseases, which is 20

times more for individuals aged 60 years or above, compared to 10 years old children or younger, meaning 61% against 3%.

No access to services

The survey also recorded that 2 out of 3 had been suffering from chronic diseases, where 66% needed healthcare during the aggression, 52% received the right care, 27% received inappropriate care and 20% didn't receive any care at all.

As for the reasons for not receiving the right medical or any other care, the results showed that 46 % said this was due to the financial inability for getting advice or treatment where 30% said that going to a clinic or a hospital is very dangerous, 4% said the health facilities were closed, destroyed or full with war casualties, 3% said there were no enough capacity, 5% said there were no health centers available near, 1% were self-treated and 17% mentioned

other reasons. According to another study, 1% of Gaza's citizens suffered from severe psychological problems and stress due to the aggression, and thus 13% of them had sleeping problems during the week prior to the survey, where children aged between 2-9 years old were the most affected, especially girls. Young people aged between 15-24 years old, especially males, were less affected. And so, representatives of many health institutions indicate that there are ongoing impacts on Gaza due to Israeli aggression. In this context, Dr. Wael Qa'dan, Head of Health Services at the Red Crescent Society confirms that the health situation in Gaza should be dealt with from three different angles; the first is related to providing health services, adding that: "the service provision is going well and has no problems, however, there is shortage in some of the drugs and the equipment needed for surgery and operations. The second relates to the primary healthcare services, where Qa'dan assures that these services have been marginalized during the aggression due to the focus on the casualties of that period.

He adds: "Many of the clinics have been destroyed due to the Israeli attacks and the reconstruction hasn't even started yet." The third angle relates to the transfer of patients who need advanced treatment to outside of Gaza, according to Qa'dan, which is a really complicated issue, especially after the latest developments, where the Ministry of Health of the discharged government became in control of the Transfers Department.

The Palestinian government have been accused by the discharged government of obstructing the transfer of patients outside Gaza, the thing that Dr. Fathi Abu Mughli, Minister of Health, disclaimed this, and demanded that things in the department should get back to what they have been before; allowing the original staff of the department to do their work as usual instead of their newly assigned replacements. Qa'dan indicates that many drugs, are not available spare parts and electricity generators are not available. He also indicates that impacts of the Israeli aggression on the health sector can be considered as direct and indirect.

He says that the direct impacts are represented in the big numbers of casualties and martyrs, the unusual number of procedures and operations and the deprivation of many usual patients from visiting hospitals and benefiting from their services. As for the indirect impacts, they are represented in the huge number of disabilities, psychological stress, in addition to the postponement of many operations, which were able to be resumed after the aggression had ended, in order to perform them right. He also clarifies that there was no concern about the primary healthcare issue where no drugs or vaccines for chronic diseases are available, pointing that the health situation in Gaza has been highly affected during the aggression period and afterwards, which was negatively reflected on lots of children, pregnant women and old aged people.

Future hazards

He adds that many of the negative health impacts will appear in the future and will thus affect the lives and health of citizens. Regarding his evaluation of the health staff performance during the aggression, he thinks it's satisfying in terms of working 24/7 according to the available capabilities compared to the magnitude of the disaster, indicating that the martyrdom of 13 persons from the medical teams is the best evidence on how the occupation forces target them. However, he thinks that it's inconvenient not to have teams who are specialized in certain fields, where the Head of the Health Services Department at the Red Crescent Society has some fears regarding the repetition of the Israeli aggression and so he thinks that it's not over yet. He says: "Apparently, the aggression will be repeated and so we, as health service providers, must adjust and prepare ourselves to what's coming, so that previous mistakes are not duplicated." He concludes his speech: "We must be well prepared to deal with the post-aggression conditions, construct new health facilities, increase the capacity of existing ones, and develop and train the existing staff on working during war, and prepare them for dealing with what's known as the "medicine specialized with war wounds."

Considerable recession

On the other hand, Dr. Omar Al Nasser, Public Relations and Media Director in the Ministry of Health, confirms the considerable recession in the health situation in Gaza. He says: "The Israeli blockade has negatively affected the health sector in Gaza, causing difficulty in entering some medical aids and sending patients abroad for treatment." He also clarifies that the discharged government caused a huge recession in the health sector by eliminating competent medical and health staff and replacing them with others who belong to Hamas and lack the professional and Directorial expertise, in addition to taking over the "Treatment Abroad Department" on the 22nd of last March and firing its staff and manger. He

adds:"Those who did this had forgotten that this department has legal agreements with many hospitals inside and outside Palestine, especially in Jordan, Egypt and inside the Green Line area. However, the Ministry is holding as much as responsibility as it could for what's going on in Gaza and is providing hospitals and their storages with the different drugs, paying the staff's salaries, and fuels and consumables invoices, and signing agreements with many donors to the benefit of the health's sector in Gaza." As for the impacts of the latest Israeli aggression on Gaza, he thinks that it's represented by the tight closure of Gaza, the murder of about 1,500 people and the injury of around 5,000 others, where lots are already suffering from permanent disabilities, in addition to the destruction of many health facilities and ambulances, which had let to the martyrdom of 13 employees of the health sector and the demolishing of 26 health centers and 14 ambulances.

Situation during the aggression

He also points to the central role that the Ministry had played during the aggression, indicating that on the very first day (27/12/08), the Ministry sent a big batch of drugs and consumables; i.e. 96 drugs types and 104 lab materials and medical consumables, which enabled the hospitals to overcome the first phase of the Israeli attacks. He recalls that the Ministry had followed up the evacuation of casualties outside Gaza, where more than 1,000 injuries were basically transferred to Egyptian hospitals in addition to other hospitals in Arab and friend countries, and had established an operation room in the Ministry in Ramallah that worked 24/7 on determining the real needs of Gaza in order to meet these needs. He adds: "90% of the aids that were entered into Gaza during the regression had arrived upon coordination with the operations room." He thinks that to get the health sector back to what it has been like before, the Israeli blockade must be removed immediately so that drugs, consumables, requirements, medical equipment, and naval fuels are entered and the medical staff is protected according to the international conventions and agreements. He also emphasizes that: "Hamas must not trade the lives and souls of the Palestinians and must stop political harassments, especially with regards to patients' lives and not obstruct the work of the Ministry of Health." He concludes: "We, as a Ministry, are ready to fully hold our health responsibilities towards our people in Gaza if the obstacles put by Hamas are removed."



The HWC Projects' Coordinator, Ms Juani Rishmawi, returned back after concluding a successful business trip to Spain and Belgium, during which she met with a number of officials and communal people in charge. Ms Rishmawi said that her trip to Spain included visits to Barcelona, Madrid, Valladolid (Balad Al Waleed), Galicia, Malaga, Alicante and Majorca, where she conducted a number of meetings with

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The HWC Concludes Two Successful Visits to Spain and Belgium

Spanish institutions and local governments, some of which the HWC had had previous relationships with, as they discussed the approaches of developing these relations. Ms Rishmawi also conducted some seminars about the Palestinian cause, some of which were allocated to students aged between 13-18 years old. The seminars outlined some aspects of the lives of the Palestinian people and their suffering due to the blockade, apartheid wall, settlements, checkpoints and arrests. The participants were also introduced to the work of the HWC and the services it's providing to the Palestinian citizens quantitatively and qualitatively. The seminars also addressed the political situation in Palestine and the Israeli role in the occupied Palestinian Territories including Jerusalem. The visit to Spain resulted in securing some funds to a number of the HWC'S projects. In Belgium, Ms Rishmawi met with ECHO and Europe-Aid t representatives to discuss some potential cooperation with the HWC for the sake of developing the services it's providing to the Palestinian people.

The HWC Commemorates Qalqilia Martyrs

The Community Development Program in cooperation with the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC) in Qalqilia and Salfeet Cities commemorated Qalqilia martyrs during the "Festival of Loyalty to Martyrs" in Qalqilia, with the participation of hundreds of the martyrs and prisoners' families and representatives of the Palestinian parties, civil and governmental agencies and communal development centers.

Dr. Issam Hijjawi, a member of the HWC's Board of Directors, assured the national, social roles and services of the HWC, indicating that it was originally founded to serve the poor and the marginalized categories of the Palestinian society. He also addressed the apartheid wall and settlements in Qalgilia and their impact on the lives of the Palestinians and their future. Mr. Hijjawi also spoke about the Palestinian political reality and the national dialogue emphasizing on the necessity of putting the interest of our people on top of every other consideration and confronting the brutal attack that's destroying our Palestinian cause and future. From his side, Mr. Naser Aby Aziz, member of the PFLP Central Committee, said that the success of the Palestinian dialogue requires it to be a comprehensive national one and not bilateral, and that it takes place inside

Palestine...

He added that the dialogue must be Palestinian, not to undermine the importance of the other Arab countries, but because the Palestinians have the right to sense the results and agreements of this dialogue, which must be a pure national comprehensive Palestinian rather than a bilateral one.

Abu Aziz also emphasized on the necessity of having a unified Palestinian will, being the one and only way towards ending the division and confronting the Zionists' Occupation, criticizing the internal conflict over authority between Hamas and Fateh and refusing any bloodshed that may occur for the sake of this authority.

From his side, Mr Sa'ed Swidan saluted the martyrs through his speech to their families and the families of prisoners as well, expressing his sadness for the lack of attention for these families, by saying: "None of us, who is honest to his people, cannot stand before prisoners' and martyrs' families and tell them that their right to get their revenge for the murder of their sons is hindered because we are in the middle of a conflict, a state of weakness, confusion, in love with diplomacy, in a legendary love of titles and councils. Rationality and credibility of words have limits, and we are clearly witnessed how leaders blew away any chances and possibilities in protecting those who sacrificed their lives in defending their land.

He added: The number of Palestinian prisoners inside the Israeli jails has reached over 10 thousand ones, among which there are women, children and men where some spent all his life and died in there, some entered Guinness World Record as the oldest political prisoners on earth like Nael Al Barghouthi, who has been there for 32 years now and others who were assassinated like Ibrahim Al Ra'ie and Mustafa Al Akkawi but still their files and death do not mean anything for some people and no one was questioned in regards. There are almost 400 children, 60 women and 760 men who are sentenced to life.

In his speech on behalf of the national forces, Mr Adel Al Noubani confirmed that the only way out of the current crisis is to adhere to the national Palestinian unity in confronting the challenges that arise with the continuous Zionist's attack on our Palestinians. Deputy Mayor of Qalqilia Municipality, Dr. Sameeh Al Nasser, promised the martyrs to follow their steps and maintain their sacrifices, emphasizing on the importance of having a national unity and a settled internal Palestinian situation.

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A Workshop on Boycotting Israeli Products in Qalqilia

The Palestinian National Committee for boycotting, withdrawing investments from and enforcing sanctions on Israeli, has organized a workshop for boycotting Israeli products at Al Quds Open University in Qalqilia educational region, in cooperation with Al-Ra'ed Cultural and Community Development Center and the Public Campaign for Resisting the Apartheid Wall, with the participation of a big number of academics and interested people.

Dr. Ra'ed Nimer, the academic supervisor of field training, opened the workshop by welcoming the participants and said: The European countries boycotted the Israeli products and are promoting this idea, and so we are even more obliged to boycott those who oppress us, kill us and confiscate our lands. From his side, Mr. Ahmad Jaber, President of Al Quds Open University addressed the importance of boycotting Israeli products, the apartheid wall that splits the country into parts, the role of the civil and national institutions that expose the threats of wall and the criminal Zionist policy and the importance of having these institutions in the Palestinian society in order to reach the way of freedom and dignity that every Palestinian wished to have.

He also indicated that colonialism comes in

many forms; cultural, political, settlements, and economical, , which is the most threatening, through the leading companies that look after marketing and promoting the Israeli products in order to demolish the local and national economy.

On behalf of the National Committee for boycotting Israeli, Mr. Jamal Barham spoke about the political, ethical and economical feasibility that motivates us to boycotting and the historical development of this subject, which had started back in 1929, when representatives from Palestine, Syria and Lebanon swore to work on boycotting the Israeli products, until the year 1936, where the national movement forbid entering any Israeli products to the markets. He said that boycotting project had been initiated by the public, after which the Arab University Council adopted the boycott, thus transferring this decision from the public to the national level in 1987 with the beginning of the first Intifada and was reactivated in the second Intifada.

Mr Barham also praised the experience of other oppressed people such as the "Salt Revolution" in India lead by Gandhi, who was able to attain India's independence by expelling the English Occupation. He also addressed the apartheid system that was practiced against the black people in South Africa, where they started with boycotting potato farms, then the boycott targeted sports, politics and economy, until their demands were finally complied.

Suhail Salman, representative of the Public Campaign for Resisting the Apartheid Wall, addressed the relationship between the organizing National Committee and the Campaign for Resisting the Apartheid Wall and the boycott of Israeli products. He also spoke about the International Court of Justice which issued an advisory opinion regarding the impacts of the Wall in Eastern Jerusalem and the other Palestinian cities, which recommends compensating the Palestinians and forbidding the construction of the Wall, at the same time that Israel tried to create some kind of disbelief in this opinion and accused the Court of being illegal, unauthorized and irrelevant.

Mohammad Ra'ie, representative of Ra'ed Cultural and Development Center, said that this campaign, which is organized by the National Committee for Boycotting Israel, aims at activating the public awareness in Qalqilia City, and that the conduction of this workshop at the University is intended to establish an honor document with the University's administration in order to forbid entering any Israeli products.

Development and Awareness Activities

The Community Development Program of the HWC in Bethlehem Area and in cooperation with the Old City Center for Counseling conducted a workshop about the "Risks and Impacts of Drugs" at Al Khader Municipality Hall. This workshop was conducted upon the request of the Program' supporting committees in Al Khader area, in order to avoid this serious social scourge, which threatens and drains the people of the society especially the young ones. The workshop included a theoretical demonstration of the drugs' concept and types, in addition to the causes of drug abuse and its dangerous impacts at the health, social and psychological levels...etc. The workshop also hosted one of the ex-addicts



whospoke about his bitter experience in drugabuse and its terrible consequences.

An Empowerment Course for Women



On the other hand, and in cooperation with the UPWC, the Program started implementing a series of awareness meetings that aim at empowering women in the rights' aspect related to clarifying the place and situation of the Palestinian women within the context of the Palestinian Women Rights Document and the attached rights. The campaign targeted the villages of the western rural areas of Bethlehem District in addition to the city itself, and the beneficiaries reached up to 300 women who work in the different fields especially the active women institutions and frameworks. A closing

session followed the campaign with the participation of all women, who came out with general recommendations that help in diagnosing the women situation and the efforts put in regards.

Within this context, Ra'ed Aweidat, the **Development Program Coordinator in** the Western Villages of Bethlehem, said that the Program is paying great attention to women issues, on top of which are the enhancement of their status and supporting them to take leading positions, adding that many relevant activities have been implemented, believing in the capabilities and competencies of the women role in all the national, social and struggling places. He also said that the HWC believes in the importance of connecting the roles of men and women and is working on achieving equal opportunities and integrate both roles for the sake of getting our rights as a Palestinian society everywhere.

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Project Management for Small Projects Training Course

The Western Rural Development Program in Bethlehem in cooperation with Peter Public Library has completed a course in Project Management for Small Projects, with the participation of 25 women from Paiter Village. The closing ceremony included many activities and speeches. In his speech, Fahed Abu Saif, form the Development Program, indicated to the importance of these courses in empowering and providing the participants with the required skills for managing projects, and thanked Bateer Library for hosting the course confirming on the importance of the base institutions in the area and their role in supporting the HWC throughout its programs and developmental and health centers. After that, the trainer A'tidal Mo'amar spoke about the Community Development Program's efforts through its different activities and their positive reflections on building the society and its different institutions, and she recommended that more efforts should be put by the participants.

The ceremony also included a speech from the participants and another from the President of the Village Council, which praised and appreciated the efforts of the HWC in the western rural areas of Bethlehem and hoped that the Institute continues its work according to the growing health and developmental needs of the society. At the end of the ceremony, the participants received their certificates.



The HWC has completed a training course in "Modern Management and Extreme Supervisory Skills" for its staff who work as Directors of health and developmental centers in Ramallah City for 3 consecutive days of a duration of 30 training hours. This course comes within the framework of the institutions' objectives, which allocate obligatory training courses for their staff every year that target the human resources within, for the sake of reaching excellence and innovation in service provision for the Palestinian society, believing in the importance of such trainings that are conducted from while to while, which come within the context of the institute's strategic

planning, and the impact trainings have at the level of work and development of the staff's skills, keening to set indicators for each course in order to measure the benefits taken and the development after the training. The course addressed the concepts of modern management through demonstrating the different schools of management, in addition to the characteristics and methods of management and other relevant topics like the functions of management, communication, and the advantages of having a team spirit and its impacts on work inside the institute in a smooth and distinguished way.

Medical Activities The Labor Day is celebrated by organizing a free medical day in the Jordan Valley Area

The HWC in Toubas celebrated the Labor Day by organizing a free medical day in Al Nassariyah Village in the Jordan Valley area.

Dr. Bassam Sha'ban, HWC Director in Tubas Area, said that this day, which 170 people had benefited from, included many medical specializations like general medicine, the ear, nose and throat, bones, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, and optics. He added: "The medical team who participated in this day checked the visitors and prescribed the needed medications for free." He indicated that Birzeit Pharmaceutical Company provided these drugs. Also, awareness and educational flyers and brochures published by the HWC were distributed to participants, who

thanked the institute for its continuous efforts in serving the citizens, especially those in the poor and marginalized areas. The HWC also declared a number of field activities on the Labor Day to alleviate the burden off the workers' shoulders, who are facing difficult situations due to unemployment and the racial occupational practices.

Activities in Jerusalem and Bethlehem

The HWC, in cooperation with the Education Directorate in Jerusalem suburbs, the Thalassaemia Patients' Friends Society and the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, organized a health day in Abu Dees Girls School, which included medical exams of 300 students, educational seminars and health competitions for the school girls. Also, a recreational day was organized for Thalassaemia patients in Murad Resort in Bethlehem, in coordination with Bethlehem Governorate and the Thalassaemia Patients' Friends Society, which included many artistic parts. At Beit Sahour Health Center of the HWC, a health lecture was held for forty employees in the institute, including doctors and lab technicians specialized in blood tests under the supervision of Professor Khaled Younis, lecturer in Blood Science.



Health Trade Unions...Facts and Hopes

Believing in the importance of free democratic and professional trade union work and its core contribution in building a progressive and civil society, the HWC conducted a workshop about the situation of the Palestinian health trade unions, with the participation of a big number of active Palestinian professional trade unions' and institutes' employees, in addition to trade unionists who had pilot experience in this field. The HWC General Director, Shatha Odeh, welcomed the participants at the beginning of the workshop, confirming on the importance of the trade union work in maintaining the capabilities and rights of laborers in the different trade unions in order to promote their status in a way that serves employees and customers as well.

The first session discussed the situation of the Doctors' Trade Union, where Dr. Issam Hijjawi, Vice-Chairman of HWC's Board of Directors, assured that the Doctors' Trade Union's situation after Oslo Agreement was much different than it had been before within the national responsibilities which used to be taken into consideration in field work. He also said: "Trade Unions are adopting the narrow Partisan and Block approach, which had negatively affected their effectiveness and presence." He indicated that the trade unions' procedures used to focus on the comprehensive agreed upon national issues, away from partisan demands. He also clarified that changing the current situation of these unions is represented by a unified national program that adopts the principle of participatory democracy and crystallizes a professional trade union status, away from the political divisions followed nowadays. From his side, Dr. Nabeel Abd Al Razeq, member of the HWC's Board of Directors, presented the reasons behind the failure of trade unions' frameworks to transfer into an active and organized union movements and recommended the construction of a union assemblage that is capable of defending the principles of unions, taking into consideration multiplicity, proportional representation and democratic elections that establish administrative and financial independency, away from politicization and external interventions.

The second session presented the Nursing Trade Union, where Yacoub A'shour confirmed that the number of the Union's members in Palestine exceeded 7000, and said that the nurses' situation in Palestine lacks legislations and laws that organize their work, in addition to the lack of offices for the Union's branches in the different cities, the nurses' negligence of the Trade Union's work, and the lack of their commitment, which negatively affected its ability to be strong and active in defending their rights and achieving gains for their own interest.

Within this context, Sabri Al Safadi assured that the Nurses' Trade Union suffers from weakness in attracting its members due to the political divisions among the Palestinians, which made the political belonging overcome the trade union work. Also, the pharmacist Sana' Abu Za'rour spoke about the status of the Pharmacists' Trade Union, indicating to the absence of planning with regards to the market needs, which is well represented by the big number of pharmacy college graduates whom the market doesn't have enough space for to fit in job opportunities.

Concerning the Dentists' Trade Union, Dr. Mahmoud Al Barbarawi called for finding a base for the professional and democratic trade unions' work, for conducting elections and promoting health trade unions.

From their side, Sameeha Al Khawaja and Osama Barham spoke about the Laboratories' Trade Union and presented its foundation and professional work mechanisms, such as enacting the social solidarity law. They both called for enacting a transparent professional law on professional basis that radicalizes what has been established so far and accumulate what's coming next. They also asked for new faces to join the trade union work by entering new blood and young people in health trade unions.

During the workshop, Mr. Ribhi Qatamesh, member of the Bar Association, represented the experience of the democratic assemblage of the Palestinian lawyers in the Association and said that their experience in the assemblage came out as a result of five years of hard work which was faced by obstacles including political divisions.

He also said: "We overcame that by building a strong professional movement after conducting a number of meetings in the different cities before holding a conference during which an administrative assembly that represented the movement In the Trade Union's general elections was formed." He added that this successful experience was then moved from West Bank to Gaza.

During the semi-final session, the unionist Farid Murra spoke about the trade union work in Palestine, clarifying the state of mixing between politicians and unionists, which makes the trade union work lack professionalism and causes absence of sought democracy. Murra also spoke about the experience of "Ramallah Lal Jamee" (Ramallah for All) list, which was able to reach the municipal council in the city and promote the situation in Ramallah in a professional and practical way that gained the respect and encouragement of all citizens. At the end, the door was opened for discussion and recommendations for the required mechanisms in order to have democratic and professional trade unions.

Renovating the Western Rural Society for Reconstruction

The HWC started renovating and rehabilitating the residence of the Western Rural Society for Reconstruction in Bethlehem through its Community Development Program, where the renovation shall include all aspects related to the place to be ready for workers to do their activities and duties towards people of the local community in full. Ra'ed Aweidat, the Program Coordinator, hoped that the renovation reaches all basic institutions in Bethlehem, so that they become able to complete their mission and serve the Palestinian society, in addition to their important role in establishing the concept of voluntary work in serving the Palestinian cause, especially at a time where the volunteer work had lost its value from the inside and the outside.

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Kufor Ni'meh Health Center

By: Faten Salah Eddin

The fragrance of roses and jasmine spreads all the way long to Kufor Ni'meh Village to the west of Ramallah, which reminds you of a beautiful past that still holds its beautiful colors, a past that carries the meaning of the beautiful green land where the trees and flowers stand proudly and maintain its fertility, with a continuous challenge to give more and more day after day.

Village Geography

Kofur Ni'meh Village is 13 km away from Ramallah; it spreads in the form of a stripe that extends for about 3 km on both sides of the road that connects Ramallah and its western rural area. The Village is about 470km above sea level and is surrounded by many villages: Bil'een, Ras Karkar, Lower Beit Our, Safa, Ein Areek, Deir Ibzee', Ein Qinia, and Kharbatha Bani Hareth, which adds more value to it due to its strategic location.

Village Demography

The number of people living in the village has reached about 4,500 residents according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, and it has an area of about 1400 dunums. 910 dunums of which are residential. At the educational and health levels, there are two preparatory schools, one for males and another for females, where around 350 students get their education, in addition to a mixed secondary school. The health center of the HWC is considered one of the most important centers in the village, being the only place that patients and the Intifada injuries from the village and the surrounding villages can go to. The center is well developed and provides many different services for people. Like the other villages, Kofur Ni'meh made great sacrifices during the first and second Intifadas, where 7 young men where martyred, in addition to many prisoners and injured ones and the continuous suffering due to the violations, closures and checkpoints that have disconnected the Palestinian villages and cities

Kofur Ni'meh Health Center

Kofur Ni'meh Health Center was established in 1987, after 5 years of the foundation of HWC. The establishment of this center came at a time that almost all villages were in need for health services, which were blocked and obstructed by the Occupation during the first intifada. The foundation of this center had a great contribution in regards, being the one and only of its kind in the area and was much nearer to go to instead of travelling to Ramallah, especially under the continuous practices of the Occupation like curfews and prohibition of transportation, in addition to the closures and other racial actions that aimed at ending the intifada. The HWC's clinic in the village was able to fulfill some of the people's demands in Kofur Ni'meh and its surrounding.

Nowadays, the clinic is very much different than it was when it was first founded according to Dr. Sa'ed Al Balbisi: "The Center started with a small team in one of the village's small houses, and the clinic was only comprised of two rooms; one was a waiting room and the other was for general medication and vaccinations, and there was only one physician there, Dr. Mazen Da'na, in addition to the nurse, Muna Jubran, who is still working at the center till this day; it was a simple beginning." Dr. Balbisi adds: "Since its beginnings and till 1992, the center's function was in general medicine, vaccinations and provision of drugs to patients, but at the same year, it was merged with the Ministry of Health and it moved to a bigger place, where a dentist clinic and a lab were added, and the quality and types of drugs provided to patients were improved." He continued: "The situation stayed this way until 2006, where the Institute took upon itself to develop the center in a quick and accurate way that corresponds to the needs of citizens in the area, especially that the second intifada and the following closures and siege of villages and cities increased motivated the development of health services, in addition to Kofur Ni'meh's geographical location on a strip that includes several villages. So, the center started to develop one time after the other, where the number and variance of clinics increased, and it became to have night shifts, and each clinic had a specialized physician. Also, the number of nurses reached to 5 in addition to 2 receptionists. The clinics that currently provide treatment and check up at the center are: Obstetrics and Gynecology clinic, Diabetes clinic, Healthy Children and Vaccination clinic, Dental clinic, laboratory, Dermatology and Reproductive clinic, Bones and Arthritis clinic, the Ear, Nose and

Throat Clinic, Urology clinic, Physiotherapy clinic, Ophthalmology clinic, and Cardio and Internal Medicine clinic, in addition to a pharmacy inside the center that provides all types of drugs, which saves much time and effort for patients to travel to Ramallah for receiving healthcare and treatment services." Dr. Al Balbisi confirms that the number of patients who approach the center during the day and night ranges from 3000 to 3500 one per month in all clinics. Also, the center functions outside the building, where a team follows up on some cases in their houses, especially the difficult ones such as the disabled, brain stroke patients, and the wounded, and the center usually provides these services against small fees. The center also provides free services for the families of martyrs and the wounded who suffer from difficult economical situations as they are categorized under the "social situations". As for the nurse Muna Jubran, she says: "At first, we used to work 3 days a week and we provided general medicine, nursing and children vaccination, then the work time was extended to all days of the week due to the big number of visitors. Our nice way of dealing with patients and the availability of drugs were two reasons for gaining people's friendliness."

The Center's role during the Second Intifada

The actual center's role ascended at the beginning of the Second Intifada in a great and remarkable way. Since the year 2002, i.e. the beginning of the Israeli invasion to all cities of the West Bank, a number of the intifada's wounded and martyrs were received and treated within the center's capacities before transferring some cases who needed further advanced care to Ramallah hospitals.

The center has good relationships with the local community in the village and its surrounding; Kufor Ni'meh Village Council contributed to the implementation of many projects that helped building and developing the village at different aspects, like the project of improving the health situation in the village, where the Council cooperated with the HWC and the Ministry of Health in developing the health clinic in the village and provided a piece of land for constructing a bigger and more advanced center, which is being executed and accomplished nowadays.

The HWC broadcasts a TV episode from the Heart of Jerusalem on the 42nd Anniversary of Occupying the City and as a Celebration of the World Health Day

The HWC broadcasted a TV episode in Jerusalem about the situation of the Palestinians who live in the occupied city on the 42nd anniversary of the Israeli occupation for West Bank and Jerusalem, which coincided with the celebration of the World Health Day. The episode hosted Dr. Nabeel Abdul Razeq, member of the HUWC Board of Directors, Dr. Rustum Al Nammari, Director of Al Maqased Charity Hospital, and Ziyad Hammoury, Director of Al Quds Center for Economical and Social Rights. The episode was broadcasted on many local TV channels in addition to the Palestinian Satellite Channel (PSC).

At the beginning, Dr. Abd Al Razeg presented the situation and foundation of the institute by a group of volunteers back in 1985 which started in Jerusalem and then expanded to reach all West Bank and Gaza areas as a response to the needs of the marginalized people who live under the occupation. Speaking about the health situation in Jerusalem, he clarified that the concept that the institute adopts regarding Jerusalem is different than that which Israel is marketing, indicating that Jerusalem, from a Palestinian point of view, includes 52 residential compounds where 400,000 Palestinians live, where Israel markets the fact that there are 20 compounds where 220,000 Palestinians live, 70,000 of which carry the Israeli ID and are now located behind the apartheid wall, which means that it's very difficult or even impossible for them to get the health services which they are enforced to pay for to the Israeli government, and where the Israeli ambulances are claimed to be unable to reach, which is against all international norms and conventions.

He said that the HWC provides many health and developmental services for the Palestinians in Jerusalem; health-wise, the School Health Program provides services for school students and kindergartens where a comprehensive checkup for all students is conducted. He indicated that in 2008, 2000 first-graders were checked and some cases were transferred for follow up and treatment. He added that the institute doesn't only conduct the comprehensive checkups; it also provides precautionary medicine for students such as implementing the unified national vaccination program, which is executed by the HWC in coordination with the Palestinian Ministry of Health, where these vaccinations were given to students in 60 schools last year in addition to the health education and enhancement at schools through the daily classes, not mentioning the health work days, health festivals, seminars and lectures which include students, schools' administrations and parents.

Also, 300 health wall journals and 400 health radio school messages were accomplished in the year 2008 during the obvious and deliberate absence of the Israeli Ministry of Health, which must provide services to the Palestinians living under the occupation's authority. He also clarified that the HWC is working hard to provide an ultimate child healthcare through the program including dental and vision checkup without the coordination with the Israeli Ministry of Health or any other occupation agency.

He also said: Our work in Jerusalem is not only limited to the health aspect; it also includes the developmental aspect that has 40 employees. After the institute had renovated an old house and transferred it into an active beehive that serves people in Jerusalem and enhances their steadfastness in the city through serving the youth and women and all social classes through the institute's national health and development mission. He also presented the obstacles imposed by the Occupation's authorities on the work of the institutes in Jerusalem like the HWC, such as preventing them from making any health and national activities or celebrating international events, in addition to obstructing the movement of health teams and the entrance of vaccines and health equipment, which forced some of the donors to stop their fund to these institutions, and so he demanded the Palestinian Authority to pay more attention to the people and institutions in Jerusalem and free them from the

restrictions imposed by the political agreements especially those related to Jerusalem and which Israel haven't been committed to.

From his side, Ziyad Hammouri emphasized on the necessity of freeing the Palestinian Authority from Oslo Agreement's restrictions and its proceedings, and said that the Palestinian negotiator could have taken international guarantees with regards to Jerusalem especially that it was postponed to the final phase in order to protect it from what it's experiencing nowadays; Judaization, transformation of its demographic reality and changing its features. He added that Oslo allowed the Israelis to change the reality in Jerusalem with an American and international support. After praising the performance of the HWC and its work in Jerusalem, Al Hammouri called all institutes working there to increase their efforts and programs in the city since many endeavors are needed to hold it against what it's facing, indicating the spreading of some dangerous phenomena like drugs, poverty among Palestinians with a percentage of 60%, and the exceptionally high rates of unemployment.

He also said: "The Palestinians in Jerusalem were able to endure so far, however, what they are exposed to is way stronger than they could bear, which requires an extraordinary effort from all parties to enhance their steadfastness in confronting the policies of settlements, homes destruction, withdrawal of identities and health targeting that aim eventually at throwing more than 220,000 Palestinian resident out of their city boarders.

As for Dr. Rustum Al Nammari, he spoke about the health situation of the Palestinian people inside Jerusalem assuring that Al Maqaed hospital serves about 30% of Jerusalem residents and the rest of the patients are from the West Bank, because Jerusalem residents carry Israeli IDs and thus are treated in health centers that belong to the Israeli health insurance as their fees are prepaid. He also said: we encourage Palestinian pharmaceutical industries and prefer to use their products in our centers."



It's Time to Announce Palestine an Arab State from the River to the Sea

By: Khaled Al Faqeeh

The Zionist Knesset has recently announced a resolution that forces the Palestinians of the 1948 lands to acknowledge the Judaism of the state that's governing them after discussing other regulations that serve the same purpose, such as criminalizing all those who commemorate Al Nakba and imposing loyalty for citizenship.

Before getting into the details and motives behind these Israeli resolutions, it must be assured that they are not recent; they have been proposed to the Israeli Parliament before. They are also no longer a vision of the extreme right-wing of the Israeli government; they have now become a general vision of the Zionist community, who ratified this project, with the possibility of ratifying more similar ones.

With reference to the laws of international countries, it is found that no state ever forces its citizens to provide loyalty for citizenship. The relationship among the democratic systems in the country and the citizens is based on providing services to people against their commitment to the rules the country sets to organize the ongoing daily life of the public. The history never mentioned a system that imposed the idea of loyalty on citizens except for the fascist system in Italy back during Mussolini's days.

When searching for the reasons behind these recent directions of the Israeli government, one can find they are not separate from the current general context of the right-wing of the Israeli government, which attached any solutions or negotiations with the Palestinians with their acknowledgement of the Jewish State of a national nature, which was refused by the Palestinians on the public and official levels, due to what this acknowledgement may result with like a group displacement of the Palestinians inside the 1984 lands and opening the immigration doors for the Jews from all over the world to enter this national state that was acknowledged by the Palestinians, the Arabs and the world.

Confronting this new resolution, the Arab leaders in the 1948 lands confirmed their refusal to this resolution even if the result was imprisoning or chasing them, due to their awareness of the danger resulting from approving such a resolution, which will simply represent signing their own displacement document. Even if the Palestinians and the Arabs acknowledged the Judaism of Israel, who would guarantee that the Occupation state would give away the Palestinian territories that were occupied in 1967, especially that Netanyahu's government refuses to give away Jerusalem and is expanding settlements under the argument of the increase of the natural demands of the Israeli population in the West Bank.

Israel is afraid of the truth and the resolution of establishing the state's Judaism and chasing and criminalizing those who commemorate Al Nakbah is only the fear from the Palestinians' adherence to the right to return and the transfer of the houses' keys from one generation to another after they've lost the bet on the death of old people and the disregarding of young ones, although more than 6 decades have passed after the rape of the Palestinians.

After this presentation, an important question is asked: What are the Palestinians and Arabs requested to do in order to confront the new racial policies after being rationed by the 2 highest Israeli authorities; the government and the Parliament.

The solution may not sound new; it just needs to be brought out of the files, cabinets and principles of the national Palestinian work, which was originally established on the basis of adhering to liberating Palestine as a whole from the sea to the river, which was at least admitted by all Arabs on the political level.

The "Ten Points" program was the first step into abandoning the proposal of a Palestinian Arab State of full mastership on the Palestinian land that was mandated back in 1974, after which the compromise projects followed one after the other until Madrid then Oslo, where it was agreed that there were two states on this land, with the adherence to the right to return of displaced people to their homes from which they were dismissed. Then there's the manipulation in words in addition to new synonyms like "a just resolution for the refugees cause."

Arabs and Palestinians must now run away from what they had been committed to and go back to the full Palestinians' right in their occupied lands as a whole without any reduction, as a logical, understandable and acceptable response that opposes the new Israeli racial project, which will no doubtfully be followed by even more racial laws and resolutions.

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with the support of ICCO-Netherland