International Youth Day 2026

"Different Contexts, Common Aspirations"

Indivisible Rights in a Fragmented Reality

Palestinian Youth with Disabilities under the Apartheid Regime

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When land is divided and the tools of deprivation are multiplied, the rights remain indivisible, and the dignity of the Palestinian youth with disabilities remains one that is neither geographically limited nor denied by disability.

Different contexts, Common Aspirations, and inalienable rights.

Introduction

A checkpoint may prevent a young person with a disability from exercising their right to access medical care, while the demolition of their home may turn their disability into complete isolation after they lose their accessible environment, assistive device, and support network. In Gaza, disruptions to electricity or medication may become a matter of life or death for anyone who relies on a medical device or continuous treatment, while an inaccessible evacuation order may leave a person behind as their family evacuates, unable to access transportation or a suitable shelter. In East Jerusalem, a young person may have a right that is recognised on paper but be unable to exercise it in practice because of language barriers, planning restrictions, residency and registration requirements, the absence of accessible services, or various other barriers.

These are neither isolated experiences nor inevitable consequences of disability. They are different manifestations of deprivation that arise when disability interacts with a system that restricts Palestinians' access to land, freedom of movement, resources and rights. In this context, the theme of International Youth Day 2026, "Different Contexts, Common Aspirations", has particular significance in the Palestinian case. The contexts differ, but their differences are not the product of geography alone; they have been shaped by a single system that deploys different instruments according to location. The aspirations, meanwhile, are not deferred wishes, but rights whose substance does not change according to where a young person lives.

Palestinian youth with disabilities in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have the same rights to life, safety, health, rehabilitation, education, work, freedom of movement, housing, independent living, participation and access to justice. These rights do not become privileges that the colonial occupying Power may grant or withhold on the basis of identity, geography or an imposed legal status. They are guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and international human rights law and are reinforced by the protections of international humanitarian law in situations of occupation and armed conflict.

Legal equality is not achieved merely by recognising a right or applying the same general rule to everyone. A road that is theoretically open is not accessible to a person who encounters barriers they cannot overcome. The existence of a hospital does not guarantee the right to health when a person is prevented from reaching it. A warning does not protect someone who does not receive it in a format they can understand. A shelter cannot provide safety if a person cannot enter it or use its facilities. Similarly, judicial proceedings cannot ensure access

to justice if a person is denied an appropriate means of communication, necessary support, or the procedural and other accommodations that would enable them to defend their rights. The denial of accessibility or reasonable accommodation is therefore not a mere technical matter; it may constitute discrimination and an effective denial of the right itself.

This deprivation does not affect all Palestinian youth in the same way. Disability is not simply added to a violation after it occurs; it may alter the nature, severity and consequences of that violation. A restriction that causes a delay for one person may result in a person with a disability losing access to treatment or education altogether. Harm is compounded when disability intersects with age, gender, poverty, forced displacement, detention, the loss of family members or the loss of a support person. The impact is particularly severe on young women with disabilities, who may simultaneously face gender-based violence and the denial of privacy, protection, sexual and reproductive health, and participation.

This paper therefore proceeds from the understanding that the situation of Palestinian youth with disabilities cannot be reduced to describing them as a "vulnerable group". Vulnerability is not an inherent characteristic of a person; it is the result of barriers, decisions and policies that can be identified, whose perpetrators can be held accountable, and which can be removed, with redress provided to those harmed. Youth with disabilities are not merely recipients of protection or assistance. They are rights holders with their own voices and expertise and must participate as partners in formulating policies, setting priorities, and designing the responses and reparation mechanisms that affect their lives.

The paper examines the different contexts experienced by Palestinian youth with disabilities across the Occupied Palestinian Territory: isolation, control over the conditions necessary for life, forced displacement, injury, and the disruption of treatment and rehabilitation in Gaza; checkpoints, settlements, demolitions, forced displacement, control over land and resources, and detention in the West Bank; and residency, family reunification, planning, property, and discrimination in the provision of services in East Jerusalem. It brings together facts, data, testimonies, and an analysis of laws, military orders, policies, and judicial decisions to reveal the connection between a legal or administrative measure and its actual impact on the life of a young person with a disability.

The paper therefore subjects the theme to a direct human rights test: if aspirations are shared, can all young people access the same rights? It demonstrates that the answer cannot be measured solely by whether a right is recognised in law, but by whether young women and men can exercise it in practice, with dignity and independence and on an equal basis with others. Contexts may differ, but life, dignity, liberty and equality are indivisible, and rights do not become any less binding because the rights holder is Palestinian, young or a person with a disability.

Gaza: the context of isolation and destruction within the apartheid regime and control

A. Blockade prior to October 2023

The separation of the Gaza Strip from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, constitutes one of the most prominent manifestations of the territorial fragmentation of Palestine. Although the Gaza Strip is an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, its inhabitants are subject to an independent system of closure and control of the movement of people and goods, based on control of crossings, air and sea areas, the permit system, and restrictions on moving to or from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

In September 2007, the Israeli mini- cabinet decided to designate the Gaza Strip as a "hostile territory", explicitly linking the decision to restricting the movement of goods, reducing fuel and electricity supplies, and imposing restrictions on the movement of people from and to the Gaza Strip. When the decision to cut fuel and electricity supplies was appealed in the Al-Bassiouni v. Prime Minister, HCJ 9132/07, and improved the description of the judgment, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected the petition in January 2008, after accepting the state's pledge to monitor basic humanitarian needs. Thus, control of resources and movement has moved from an administrative practice to a government policy that has undergone judicial review, with its general framework remaining in place.[1]

The effects of this system were not limited to freedom of movement, but extended, prior to October 2023, to education, work, medical referrals and family reunification, access to devices and services not available within the Gaza Strip. These restrictions had a stronger impact on young Palestinians with disabilities, some of whom rely on specialized treatment or ongoing rehabilitation or assistive devices and technologies not regularly available locally.

[1] Israeli Supreme Court, Jaber Al-Bassiouni Ahmed and others v Prime Minister and others, HCJ 9132/07, judgment of 27 January 2008, especially paragraphs 1–4 and 11–22.

The institutional nature of the separation is also reflected in the Status of Permits document published by the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, which does not treat the transition between Gaza and the West Bank as a movement within a single territory, but confines it to exceptional categories defined by the Israeli occupation authority, such as medical treatment and certain family and humanitarian cases. This document is a public administrative procedure and not a law enacted by the Knesset; however, it regulates practically who can leave the Gaza Strip for any purpose and gives the administrative authority the authority to determine acceptable cases. For a young person with a disability, this makes access to treatment, rehabilitation, or education unavailable in Gaza dependent on his inclusion in an exceptional category and then approval of his application and requesting accompaniment when necessary.[2]

When land is fragmented and the means of deprivation multiply, rights remain indivisible. The dignity of Palestinian youth with disabilities is a single right: it is neither bounded by geography nor diminished by disability.[3]

A study on the situation of young people in Gaza indicates that the prevalence of disability among them before the Israeli assault in October 2023 was estimated at approximately 3.6%, reaching 4.9% among males compared with 2.3% among females. Even before October 2023, young people with disabilities faced barriers to accessing education, employment, healthcare, and disability-related support services.[4]

These findings show that, even before the assault, the environment in which young people with disabilities lived was already neither accessible nor inclusive. Structural restrictions on movement and access to healthcare, education, and employment were already in place. Their deprivation therefore did not begin in October 2023; rather, it had accumulated over many years of isolation and restrictions on their ability to move freely and exercise their rights.

B. From forced displacement to injury and denial of treatment and rehabilitation

Since October 2023, the effect of the blockade and isolation from restricting movement between Gaza and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory has shifted to the widespread destruction of the living conditions

[2] Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, Status of Authorizations for Entry of Palestinians into Israel, for their Passage between the Judea and Samaria Area and the Gaza Strip and for their Travel Abroad, version of 8 February 2022, sections B and C.

[3] Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision), 5763—2003; and Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision), 2022.

[4] Study on the situation of youth in the Gaza Strip, data on the prevalence of disability among youth before the war.

within the same sector. Bombing, military attacks, repeated forced displacement, and the destruction of housing, health and educational facilities have interspersed with continued control over the entry of aid, medicines, equipment, assistive devices, and medical evacuation operations.

Repeated forced displacement took an organized form through successive evacuation orders and instructions issued by the Israeli occupation army for large areas, with changes in areas covered and declared transit routes. These instructions are not legislation from the Knesset; But they are operational orders that have a direct impact on where the population is and their access to hospitals, rehabilitation centers, water, and shelter.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has concluded that alarm and evacuation systems have repeatedly failed to protect persons with disabilities, including those who have not been given warnings in accessible formats or who cannot afford the cost of moving. The publications accompanying the orders also do not specify fixed arrangements for the transportation of equipment or medicines and ensure that the support person stays with the person during the transition.5

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 43,000 people in Gaza have sustained life-altering injuries, approximately one quarter of whom are children, and consequently require long-term rehabilitation. However, as of May 2026, no rehabilitation facility was operating at full capacity, amid continuing severe shortages of prosthetic limbs, equipment, assistive devices, qualified personnel, and specialised services.[6]

The latest mixed study on the experiences of young people and youth in Gaza, released in July 2026, provides more specific data. It included two research rounds during 2024 and 2025; the first included 1011 participants, the second 1380 participants, ranging in age from 10 to 24, with an intended expansion to represent and conduct quality interviews with youth with disabilities. And because the age group in the study starts at ten years, the findings in this paper are used as data on teens and young people, without generalizing to all Palestinian youth or considering them to be exclusively representative of the smaller youth group.[7]

The study showed that 61% of participants with disabilities reported being seriously injured or ill during aggression, compared to 25% of persons without disabilities. It also showed that youth with disabilities were

[5] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Report of the Committee on its thirty-third session*, 11–26 August 2025, UN Doc. CRPD/C/33/2, annex IV, paras. 25(b) and 35; see also United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Situation Update #321: Gaza Strip*, 10 September 2025.

[6] World Health Organization, *Data on Life-Altering Injuries and Rehabilitation Needs in the Gaza Strip*, 2026.

[7] Bassam Abu Hamad, Nicola Jones, and Joost Vintges, *Lives Disrupted: A Mixed-Methods Policy Brief on Young People's Experiences of the Gaza War (2024–2025)*, Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE), London, July 2026.

less able to get the health services they needed; the study reported that 82% of persons with disabilities versus 66% of persons without disabilities in the index of disability in access to health care.[8]

This gap shows that undermining the health system does not affect young people equally. A young person who suffers a stroke, spinal cord injury, or brain injury not only needs immediate medical intervention, but a continuous series of surgery, rehabilitation, physical therapy, psychological support, and support and follow-up. It means cutting off any loop in which the possibility of an injury turning into a permanent disability or worsening an existing disability and losing more independence to a serious threat to life.

"There wasn't much medicine, and I wasn't given any pain relievers at all except for bedtime."

A young man, 20 years old, lost his leg in an air strike.[9]

This testimony demonstrates that the impact of injury does not end when a limb is lost, but extends to ongoing pain, lack of medication, treatment disruption, rehabilitation, need for a prosthesis, an assistive device and support that allows movement and independence to be restored. Therefore, the shortage of painkillers is not an isolated health phenomenon, but a chain of interconnected deprivation that affects the rights to health, rehabilitation, personal security, accessibility and independent living.

This deprivation does not arise from the collapse of health services alone, but is exacerbated by the control of crossings, the movement of patients, the entry of medicines, equipment, prostheses, and assistive devices. Thus, geographical isolation, control of movement and resources are transformed into a factor that determines treatment opportunities and rehabilitation according to the place of residence of the Palestinian youth.

The control of aid during the offensive was also subject to Israeli judicial review. In the case of Gisha et al. v. Government of Israel, HCJ 2280/24, concerning the introduction and distribution of humanitarian aid, the Supreme Court rejected the petition on 27 March 2025, largely based on state data and follow-up mechanisms submitted to it. The issuance of this ruling does not mean that restrictions have become lawful under international law or that the actual needs of the population have been met; but it shows that the regulation of access to food, medicine, fuel and equipment was not the result of a disruptive pattern, but was part of a systematic government policy and administrative mechanisms that were presented to the judiciary, and the ruling kept its public structure intact.[10]

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[8] Ibid., data on injury and access to health care.

[9] Ibid., testimony of a 20-year-old man who lost his leg in an air strike.

[10] Order Regarding Prevention of Infiltration (Amendment No. 2) (Judea and Samaria) No. 1650 of 2009; Israeli Supreme Court, HCJ 495/12, judgment of September 2012, concerning the request of five female students from Gaza to travel to the West Bank for study.

In contrast, the International Court of Justice had ruled, on 28 March 2024, to ensure the widespread and unhindered introduction of basic services and humanitarian assistance, including food, water, electricity, fuel, shelter, clothing, hygiene, sanitation, and medical supplies.[11]

C. Water, food, and shelter: daily obstacles with a double effect

Deprivation was not limited to treatment and rehabilitation. The study found that severe water insecurity remained high among participants, affecting 88% in the first round and 82% in the second. The proportion of participants who did not have access to a toilet at their place of residence, or who had to rely on makeshift alternatives, also increased from 20% in the first round to 28% in the second.[12]

These findings are not separate from the previous structure of the aggression; Al-Bassiouni ruling itself addressed the direct link between reducing fuel, electricity, operating hospitals, water pumps, and sanitation, and then authorized the reductions based on the state's pledge not to touch basic human needs. Comparing this ruling to later reality reveals that access to water and sanitation remained linked to energy, fuel and traffic control decisions, factors that doubled the impact on people who need water for wound care, cataracts, assistive devices, or electricity to operate medical devices and assistive devices.[13]

These data represent the overall age of participants in the age group of 10 to 24 years and are not entirely categorized by disability. However, qualitative testimonials reveal that the impact of disability itself varies depending on disability and the need for support.

"Each of us had a small portion, just one glass".

A 16-year-old girl, with a disability, describes water sharing.[14]

For a young person with a disability, it may not only mean not having enough water to drink; it may also mean a lack of personal hygiene, wound care, cleaning a catheter or assistive device, and an increased risk of infection and disease. An unplanned or remote toilet may also become unusable, while the loss of a support provider or the separation of a family during forced displacement may make it impossible to obtain food or water even when they are present inside the forced displacement site.

[11] Israeli Supreme Court, Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement and others v Government of Israel and others, HCJ 2280/24, judgment of 27 March 2025; and International Court of Justice, Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v Israel), Order of 28 March 2024, paragraph 51(2)(a).

[12] Ibid., water and sanitation data.

[13] Ibid., testimony of a 16-year-old girl with a disability.

[14] Ibid., intellectual-health data.

The paper therefore examines the theme through a human rights lens: if aspirations are shared, can all youth access the same rights? It demonstrates that the answer cannot be measured solely by whether a right exists in law, but by whether young women and men can exercise it in practice, with dignity and independence and on an equal basis with others. Contexts may differ, but life, dignity, liberty, and equality are indivisible, and rights are no less binding because the rights holder is Palestinian, young or a person with a disability.

D. Mental health: impact of injury, forced displacement and loss of safety.

The second round of the study showed that 61% of youth with disabilities recorded moderate to severe levels of anxiety, versus 25% of persons without disabilities. Symptoms of moderate to severe depression reached 69% among youth with disabilities, compared to 39% among persons without disabilities. The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder also recorded the largest increase among youth with disabilities, rising by 17%age points between the two rounds of study.[15]

These indicators acquire particular significance when considered in connection with injury, pain, the loss of family members and homes, repeated forced displacement, fear of bombardment, disruption of education and treatment, and the inability to plan for the future. Some youth with disabilities also rely on a support person, medication, or an assistive device. This may compound the general fear with risks associated with the loss of support, an inability to evacuate or an inability to reach a safer location.

Indicators of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder are not presented as independent evidence of the apartheid regime, but as a cumulative effect of injury, forced displacement, loss of family, home, and treatment, within a broader context of isolation, continued control of living conditions, and access to protection.

West Bank: fragmentation, settlement, violence, and restrictions on rights

In the West Bank, a network of military barriers, gates, road closures, earth mounds, along with an annex wall, permitting system, settlements, settlement outposts, and associated roads are distributed. These discriminatory measures affect movement between cities, villages, and camps, and access to universities, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, workplaces, farmland, and community services.

Young people aged 18–29 accounted for approximately 22% of the West Bank's population in mid-2025. The most recent available data directly covering youth and disability in the West Bank come from the 2017 population census and use the 15–29 age group. The census recorded 18,300 young women and men with

[15] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Report of the Committee on its thirty-third session (11–26 August 2025), United Nations document No. CRPD/C/33/2, 23 October 2025, Annex IV, paragraph 46.

disabilities or difficulties, representing 2.5% of the West Bank's youth population; 32.1% of them were not enrolled in education.[1617]

However, there is insufficient modern data combining age, disability, place of residence, exposure to barriers, forced displacement or settler violence. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at its 810th session on 26 August 2025 confirmed the continuing shortage of data classified by age, gender, disability, and other factors. So, this section combines general context data, international outcomes for young people or persons with disabilities, certificates and documented individual cases, without the ratio of general figures to youth with disabilities.[18]

A. checkpoints and gates: disruption of movement and access to services

In a rapid survey conducted in early 2025, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented 849 barriers to Palestinian movement in the West Bank, including 288 road gates, pointing out that most of these gates are frequently closed. This figure does not include the annex wall, permit system, and other administrative restrictions on movement.[19]

This network is not based on separate physical barriers, but on orders to close, confiscate, and announce closed military zones issued by the military commander, along with the announcement of the "Seam Zone" and the permit system attached to the wall. In its 2004 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice concluded that the wall and its associated regime impeded freedom of movement and access to employment, health and education, and ordered that the sections constructed within the Occupied Palestinian Territory be dismantled and that reparation be provided for the resulting damage. By contrast, in Beit Sourik Village Council v. Government of Israel, HCJ 2056/04, and Mara'abe v. Prime Minister of Israel, HCJ 7957/04, the Israeli Supreme Court applied a proportionality test without invalidating the system as a whole.[20]

[16] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "On the Occasion of International Youth Day, 12/08/2025," mid-2025 data.

[17] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019–2020: Final Survey Findings Report, Table EQ.1.2, p. 274.

[18] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Report of the Committee on its thirty-third session (11–26 August 2025), United Nations document No. CRPD/C/33/2, 23 October 2025, Annex IV, paragraph 46.

[19] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Humanitarian Situation Update No. 274: West Bank," 20 March 2025.

[20] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, 9 July 2004; Israeli Supreme Court, Beit Sourik v. Government of Israel, 2056/04; and Mara'abe v. Prime Minister of Israel, 7957/04.

The Office reported that road closures and stricter restrictions on barriers disrupted access to schools, health centers, workplaces, and markets, and caused additional challenges to the work of humanitarian agencies. In Salfit Governorate alone, UN estimates in May 2025 reported that restrictions on movement disrupted access to health care, education, and livelihoods for about 90,000 people.[2122]

The ability of youth with disabilities to cope with these obstacles varies depending on the type of disability and the support available. An alternative or non-temple road may not be able to be used with a wheelchair or crutches, and the closure of a gate may result in the disruption of the equipped means of transport or the unavailability of a personal assistant. Instructions and inspection procedures may be lacking when barriers to sign language or sound and visual information are facilitated, placing people with hearing, visual, intellectual, or psychosocial disabilities before additional barriers.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities confirmed the presence of these impacts in the West Bank, noting that increasing restrictions on movement prevent persons with disabilities from accessing community services, and that administrative barriers and permit systems limit their access to basic services.[23]

The Committee also documented that military checkpoints prevented persons with disabilities from accessing hospitals in East Jerusalem and other cities in the West Bank, road closures and the absence of safe transportation prevented them from leaving refugee camps to access health, education, and social support services.[24]

In an Assessment of Humanitarian Needs for 2025, the UN Population Fund reported that military operations, expanding settlements, increasing barriers and road closures in the West Bank have affected Palestinian youth through restrictions on movement, access to education, employment opportunities, disruption of education, increased feelings of insecurity and psychological impacts. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular, documented the increasing isolation of children and youth with disabilities and their inability to participate in community life because of violence, insecurity, travel restrictions, movement restrictions, and disruption of services.[2526]

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[21] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Northern West Bank Humanitarian Response Update: 21 January–30 April 2025, 11 July 2025.

[22] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Situation Update No. 293: West Bank," 29 May 2025.

[23] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Report of the Committee on its thirty-third session, United Nations document CRPD/C/33/2, Annex IV, paragraph 26, items (a) and (b).

[24] Ibid., paragraph 28, item (c), and paragraph 35, item (d).

[25] United Nations Population Fund, 2025 Humanitarian Response Operational Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, p. 3.

[26] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, cited above, paragraph 25, item (b).

B. Obstruction of access to higher education

The mixed-methods study published in July 2026 found that 61 per cent of participants with disabilities reported sustaining a severe injury or illness during the Israeli military offensive that began in October 2023, compared with 25 per cent of participants without disabilities. It also found that youth with disabilities faced greater barriers to obtaining needed health services: 82 per cent of participants with disabilities, compared with 66 per cent of participants without disabilities, reported being unable to access health care.[27]

The Education Group documented more than 90 education-related incidents in the West Bank between July and September 2025 and reported that these incidents disrupted the educational process for more than 12,000 students. The published figure does not identify the number of university students or students with disabilities among those affected, nor is there any comprehensive data on the number of students with disabilities who missed or delayed lectures and exams or dropped out of higher education due to barriers.[28]

A field report provides a direct example: according to the testimony of a university student with a visual disability, soldiers stopped her while she was leaving the camp for university and broke her glasses, phone and educational tablet. The source does not specify the age of the student; so, the case is presented as a certificate for a university student with a visual disability, not as evidence of youth.[29]

C. Military operations and forced displacement in the northern West Bank

Since January 2025, military operations in the camps of Jenin, Tulkarm, Noor Shams and the surrounding areas have led to widespread displacement and destruction of homes, facilities, roads, and infrastructure. As of July 2026, more than 33,000 Palestinians remain displaced from and around the three camps.[30]

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that these operations caused the West Bank's longest and most widespread displacement crisis since 1967. Camp entrances were also closed, roads were paved, water, electricity networks, housing, and service facilities were damaged, and large numbers of residents continued to be prevented from returning to their homes.

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[27] Ibid., paragraph 27, item (d).

[28] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Situation Update No. 333: West Bank," 23 October 2025.

[29] Stars of Hope Society for the Empowerment of Women with Disabilities, Women with Disabilities and Families of Persons with Disabilities in the West Bank: Displacement and Continuing Violations, 31 May 2025, testimony of a university student with a visual disability.

[30] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Report, 10 July 2026.

The closures and evacuation operations are conducted through field orders and decisions based on the powers of the military commander under the security legislation. The demolition of housing in Area C is also linked to the planning system that Military Order No. 418 of 1971 reconstituted; the planning powers were transferred to institutions controlled by the occupation authorities, and Palestinian participation in it was abolished. This forcible displacement makes it even more dangerous for Palestinian youth with disabilities who need extra time, personal support, tools and assistive devices during evacuation, and alternative, ready-made and usable housing.[31]

The published data on forced displacement do not include a classification showing the number of youth with disabilities among the forcibly displaced.

- A demolition order has been issued covering rehabilitation centers and community centers in the Jenin camp.
- Increased isolation of children and youth with disabilities and their inability to participate in community life.
- No shelter for persons with disabilities.
- persons with disabilities were forced to flee without mobility devices, aids, or medicines.
- Specialised health services, education, and social support are not accessible due to road closures, barriers, and the absence of safe transport.[32]

Forced displacement becomes more difficult when roads are paved or paved, or when a person loses his or her wheelchair or is dependent on an electrical device that cannot be turned on or moved. Moving to a temporary residence does not necessarily mean that there is an accessible entrance or toilet that can be used or near the health and rehabilitation services that a person was receiving before the forced displacement.

Human Rights Watch documented the testimony of Youssef F., a man from the Tulkarm camp who uses a wheelchair. He reported that Israeli forces ordered him and his family to leave their home after the shooting and inspecting family members.

"I am paralyzed, so my brother had to help me. Then he ordered us to leave. Youssef reported that the soldiers did not allow him to take his electric wheelchair, and only allowed him to take the manual wheelchair, although he did not feel comfortable using it. This is a direct testimony to a person with a disability, but it is not presented as a young man's testimony*; because* ***according to the source, he is forty***

[31] Order Concerning the Towns, Villages and Buildings Planning Law (Judea and Samaria) No. 418 of 1971, amending Jordanian Planning Law No. 79 of 1966; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Escalation in demolitions and confiscations amid increasing denial of the right to justice," 8 December 2020.

[32] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, cited above, paragraphs 25 and 35.

years old. It is used to show the special effect of displacement and the unusual ways in wheelchair users".[33]

Human Rights Watch also documented the testimony of Sarah D., who moved from a refugee camp with her family, including her elderly cousin who uses a wheelchair.

"We left with the clothes we were wearing, and we didn't take anything else, not even my medications. It was exceedingly difficult. When you have children and someone with a disability, you only think about them and their safety. She reported that she had to pass a checkpoint set up on the way out of the camp, before the family found a temporary shelter at the headquarters of an association that provides services to children and young people with visual disabilities".[34]

D. Settlements and organized and armed attacks on settlers.

Palestinian communities located near Israeli settlements and settlement outposts—particularly Bedouin and herding communities in Area C—are subjected to repeated attacks by Israeli settlers, who often operate in organised and armed groups. Documented incidents include coordinated attacks on Palestinian communities, physical assaults, shootings, the burning of homes and vehicles, the destruction of property and trees, the theft of livestock, and the obstruction of access to agricultural land, grazing areas, and water sources.

The repetition of these systematic attacks, their geographical scope, coordination, and similarity in methods shows that they cannot be understood solely as spontaneous or isolated acts committed by individuals. It is part of an organized and repetitive pattern that creates a forcible environment, gradually narrowing Palestinians' access to land and resources, accessible the expansion of settlements and settlement outposts and the forced displacement of Palestinian communities.

Often these attacks occur in the presence of, or under the protection of, Israeli occupation forces or without their active intervention. In documented cases, Israeli forces have participated in attacks, restricted the movement of Palestinians, obstructed medical assistance, or used excessive force against Palestinians seeking to protect themselves, their families and property. Therefore, this pattern must be examined not only from the perspective of the behaviour of individual settlers or organized and armed groups of settlers, but also in light of the protection that the state provides for, facilitates and participates in, and the continued failure to effectively prevent, investigate and hold those responsible accountable.

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[33] Human Rights Watch, All My Dreams Have Been Erased: Forced Displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank, 20 November 2025, testimony of Youssef F.

[34] Ibid., testimony of Sarah D.

During 2025, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented more than 1,800 attacks by settlers and resulted in injuries to Palestinians or property damage or both, and these attacks extended to some 280 Palestinian gatherings throughout the West Bank. They injured 1,190 Palestinians; Of these, 838 were wounded by Israeli settlers, and 339 by Israeli forces during the settler attacks, while it remains unclear whether Israeli settlers or Israeli forces caused the injury of 13 others. This is the highest daily average for these incidents recorded by the bureau since settler attacks began to be systematically documented in 2006. The number of these attacks, their frequency, their geographical distribution, and the repetition of the methods used provide additional evidence that they form a continuous pattern, not a set of unrelated facts.[35]

A range of military legislation has facilitated the expansion of settlements and the transfer of Palestinian territory to the control of the occupation authorities, including Military Order No. 58 of 1967 on abandoned funds, Military Order No. 59 of 1967 on government property, and Military Order No. 291 of 1968 on settlement of disputes over land and water. These orders form part of a broader legal and administrative system under which land is classified, registered, and declared as state land, or otherwise placed outside the real use and control of the Palestinians.[36]

In the case of Dweikat et al. v. State, known as Elon Moreh, HCJ No. 390/79, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that private Palestinian territory was not seized for military and security purposes when the real purpose was to establish a permanent civilian settlement. However, the ruling did not end the construction of settlements; Subsequent settlement expansion was largely based on state land declarations, planning measures, land allocation mechanisms, military orders, and restrictions on Palestinian access and development. This demonstrates an institutional approach to control and the continuation of the system of apartheid in the Palestinian territory.[37]

The International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 19 July 2024, concluded that Israel's settlement policy and associated practices violated international law. The Court found that the transfer of Israeli settlers, the confiscation or seizure of land, the exploitation of natural resources, the expansion of the application of Israeli law, and the displacement of Palestinians contribute to the annexation and division of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the continued illegal Israeli presence in it.

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[35] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Situation Update No. 352: West Bank," 7 January 2026.

[36] Military Order No. 58 Concerning Abandoned Property, 1967; Military Order No. 59 Concerning Government Property, 1967; and Military Order No. 291 Concerning the Settlement of Disputes over Land and Water, 1968.

[37] Israeli Supreme Court, Dweikat et al. v. Government of Israel (Elon Moreh), 390/79; International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024.

The attacks of organized and armed settler groups operate within this broader settlement structure; they contribute to the removal of Palestinians from strategically targeted areas, restrict access to agricultural land and grazing areas, and facilitate the seizure or laying direct land surrounding settlements and settlement outposts. Therefore, violence and the legal and administrative settlement system are not two separate phenomena; they work together to change the demographic and regional character of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and consolidate Israeli control over Palestinian territory and resources.

Persons with disabilities may face additional and anticipated risks during these attacks. A person with a motor disability may not be able to escape quickly or pass through an unpaved, damaged, or closed road. A deaf or hard of hearing, or a person with a intellectual or psychosocial disability, may not receive warnings or understand or understand them when information is inaccessible or support is unavailable. The loss of the personal assistant, the personal assistant or the means of transport equipped to evacuate may also make it impossible. Road closures during the attack may also delay ambulances and prevent family members, personal assistants, or emergency crews from reaching the person.

These risks arise not only from disability, but also from the interaction of organized attacks with ill-equipped infrastructure, restrictions on movement, the absence of accessible warnings and emergency arrangements, and the failure of the Israeli occupation authorities to provide protection. The impact on persons with disabilities should therefore be considered when assessing the severity of the attacks and their impact on the affected population and the environment of forced displacement.

In such circumstances, a person with a disability may have additional difficulty escaping the scene of an attack, understanding warnings, or accessing a safe place, especially in the absence of accessible transportation or personal support. Road closures during an attack may also delay the arrival of an ambulance, which is a documented condition for a young person with a disability.

On June 13, 2026, a 29-year-old Palestinian with **an intellectual disability** was shot dead by Israeli settlers near the entrance to the village of Douma south of Nablus. He was wounded in the stomach and leg, and Israeli forces reportedly held him for more than an hour. During that period, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society's ambulance staff were prevented from reaching him and treating him, before transporting him to the hospital.[38]

On 11 September 2025, four settlers attacked Saleh Haddad, a 27-year-old Palestinian with Down syndrome, from Ein Yabrud village northeast of Ramallah, while returning home. According to his family:

[38] "Israeli settlers shoot a Palestinian with a disability in the West Bank," The New Arab, 13 June 2026.

He was returning home after buying some items from a shop in the village, when two vehicles stopped beside him, and four settlers kicked him out, and they grabbed him with swivels and iron bars.[39]

E. Settlement and denial of access to water and basic services

The impact of settlements, settlement outposts, and settler attacks is not limited to physical assaults, but extends to water networks, roads, and infrastructure that the population relies on to access health, education, rehabilitation, and social services. In April 2026, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster reported that access to water and sanitation services in the West Bank remained restricted as a result of settler violence, movement restrictions, demolitions and infrastructure damage, particularly in Masafer Yatta and herding communities in Area C and The northern West Bank.[40]

Structural control of water is based on Military Order No. 92 of 1967 which transferred its management powers to a military official, and Order No. 158 which subjected the establishment and maintenance of water installations to a permit system. When combined with road closures or the destruction of networks, access to water becomes linked to the ability to move, carry water and use of inappropriate facilities, having an unequal impact on youth with disabilities and undermining the system of their rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and relevant international standards.[41]

The effects of water shortages or the distance from their source are not the same among all populations. UNICEF's guidelines on water and disability make clear that persons with disabilities face additional barriers when water points or toilets are far away, unequipped, or unsafe, and that the availability of a service is insufficient if it cannot be used independently, privately, and safely. The lack of well-equipped water and sanitation facilities can also disrupt education for students with disabilities, while young women with disabilities face additional risks in managing hygiene, personal hygiene, and safety.[42]

In July 2025, settlers destroyed a donor-funded water network and closed the only road connecting the beneficiary gathering to the village of Kisan in Bethlehem governorate, resulting in 17 families being deprived of water and basic services. However, the simultaneous destruction of the grid and the closure of the road have made access to water from an alternative source linked to the ability to move, transport water and use the road,

[39] Awad Rajoub, "West Bank: Israeli settlers assault a Palestinian with a disability in Ramallah," Anadolu Agency, 11 September 2025.

[40] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Report, 23 April 2026.

[41] Military Order No. 92 Concerning Powers to Regulate Water, 1967; and Military Order No. 158 Concerning Amendment of the Water Supervision Law, 1967.

[42] UNICEF, Make Data Count: Guidance on Collecting, Monitoring and Reporting Disability-Inclusive WASH Programme Data, 2021.

requirements that place people with motor or visual disabilities and those who depend on personal assistance or equipped means of transport in front of additional barriers.[43]

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities confirmed this effect in the West Bank, recording that persons with disabilities have no access to clean water, as well as restricted access to community services. It also documented that checkpoints prevented persons with disabilities from reaching hospitals and that road closures obstructed their access to health care, education and social support services.[44]

The impact extends to rehabilitation services; road closures prevent protection and rehabilitation mobile teams, personal assistants, medicines, and assistive devices from reaching a person. For a young person with a disability, a water outage may coincide with a lack of access to university, work, health, and rehabilitation centers, particularly in gatherings that rely on water tanks and mobile services.

Forced displacement, homelessness, and decent livelihoods.

Since January 2023, 45 Palestinian groups have been completely displaced throughout the West Bank due to settler attacks and access restrictions. As of April 2026, the number of displaced due to settler attacks and access restrictions has reached about 5,700 Palestinians.[45][46]

This displacement interacts with Military Order No. 418 and the system for declaring land (state territory) or areas of fire. In Masafer Yatta No. 413/13, the Israeli Supreme Court in 2022 rejected petitions from residents against declaring the area a zone of fire, leaving them vulnerable to evacuation and demolition of residences. These orders do not consider whether a young person needs accommodation, an assisted living facility or a local support network, and the loss of a home becomes a loss of independence, access to education, work, and rehabilitation.[47]

This includes loss of housing, land, livestock and income sources, disruption of access to water, education, health care and social services, and for youth with disabilities, loss of family income may make it impossible to cover additional expenses related to accommodation, treatment, assistive devices or personal assistance.

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[43] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Situation Update No. 310: West Bank," 31 July 2025.

[44] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, cited above, paragraphs 26, and 28, and 31.

[45] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Report, 23 April 2026.

[46] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Report, 10 April 2026.

[47] Israeli Supreme Court, Masafer Yatta Association et al. v. Commander of the IDF Forces in the West Bank, 413/13, judgment of 4 May 2022.

Forced displacement may also result in the loss of the reasonable accommodations that used to allow a person to use the home or access services; the alternative home or place of forced displacement may lack an accessible entrance, a usable toilet or a nearby water source. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities documented forced evictions, the demolition of homes and the destruction of the livelihoods of persons with disabilities in the West Bank, as well as forcing some to flee without mobility tools, assistive devices, or basic medicines.[48]

G. Arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and the withholding of bodies.

Palestinian youth face the risk of administrative detention under Article 285 of Military Order No. 1651, which permits detention for renewable periods of up to six months, based on classified material and without charge or trial. The Israeli Supreme Court, in *Sajdiya v. Minister of Defence*, HCJ 253/88, upheld the transfer of detainees from the Occupied Palestinian Territory to prisons inside Israel, notwithstanding the prohibition contained in the Fourth Geneva Convention. **Deprivation of liberty may constitute enforced disappearance** when coupled with refusal to acknowledge the arrest or **conceal the person's fate or whereabouts**. The risks for youth with disabilities are doubled in the **absence of accessible communication**, **procedural accommodations and reasonable accommodation**, or the deprivation of medication and assistive devices; as demonstrated by the testimony of Mohammad Al-Taweel, a 29-year-old **from Hebron** with Down syndrome, who said:[49]

"A soldier grabbed me, tied my hands, and took me to the stables", he added.

"They beat me there and left me".[50]

The concealment of fate extends to the non-disclosure of the death of the detainee or the location of his body, and to **the withholding of bodies based on** Article 133, paragraph 3, of the **Defence (Emergency) Regulations, 1945**. **In Alian v. Commander of IDF Forces in the West Bank, HCJ 4466/16**, the Supreme Court ruled that this article does not provide a clear legal basis for **the withholding of bodies for use as bargaining instruments in negotiations**. However, **an expanded panel of the Court** reversed this ruling in Additional Review **No. 10190/17 and** decided by a majority that the text authorizes the military commander to temporarily detain and bury the bodies for security reasons, or to use them in negotiations aimed at recovering Israeli soldiers

[48] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, cited above, paragraphs 31(d) and 35(c).

[49] Military Order No. 1651 Concerning Security Provisions, 2009, Article 285; Israeli Supreme Court, Sajdiya et al. v. Minister of Defence, 253/88, judgment of 8 November 1988.

[50] Anadolu Agency, "Palestinian with special needs not spared by the Israeli army," 14 December 2017, testimony of Mohammad al-Tawil.

or civilians, with the requirement to respect the dignity of the deceased and his family and the principle of proportionality in each case.[51]

These practices prohibit the family from knowing the fate of their son, the manner of his death and his dignified burial, and undermine the rights of the young man to freedom, safety, health, and a fair trial, and the rights of the deceased and his family to dignity, knowledge and decent burial.[52]

East Jerusalem: Residence, isolation, demolition, and discrimination in access to rights and services

The restrictions faced by young Palestinians with disabilities in East Jerusalem differ from those in the rest of the West Bank but are not separated from them. Within East Jerusalem, Israel has applied its laws and administration directly since 1967, while the Palestinian coming to it from the West Bank is subject to a military regime of closures, barriers, and permits. As a result, the access of young Palestinians with disabilities to the same hospital or university may vary depending on the place of residence, type of ID card and residence status, although their needs for and merit for service are similar.

This systematic discrimination is not limited to administrative practices; it is based on a structure of laws, regulations, orders, and judicial decisions. The Basic Law: **Israel – The** National State of the Jewish People for 2018 constitutes an important constitutional framework for understanding these policies; The exercise of the state's national self-determination is limited to the Jewish people, Jerusalem is the "complete and unified" capital of Israel, and the development of Jewish settlements is a national value that the state encourages, strengthens and consolidates. This law does not create residence, demolition or permit systems by itself, but places them within a constitutional framework that clearly distinguishes the national status and the relationship to land and settlement.[53]

A. The deprivation of residence, reunification, and access to rights

The fragility of Palestinians' residence in East Jerusalem is not merely the result of administrative practice; it is based on their being subjected to the provisions of the 1952 Entry into Israel Act and its regulations and being treated as "permanent residents" rather than recognizing them as indigenous in occupied land. The Israeli

[51] Defence (Emergency) Regulations of 1945, Article 133(3); Israeli Supreme Court, Alian et al. v. Commander of the IDF Forces in the West Bank, 4466/16, judgment of 14 December 2017; Further Hearing No. 10190/17, judgment of 9 September 2019.

[52] Fourth Geneva Convention, Articles 27 and 76; Additional Protocol I, Articles 32–34; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 12–15, 17 and 25; International Committee of the Red Cross, "International Day of the Disappeared," 30 August 2024.

[53] Basic Law: Israel – The Nation State of the Jewish People, 5778–2018, Articles 1(c), 3 and 7.

Supreme Court laid down this construction in Awad v. Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, HCJ 282/88, when permanent residency was held to be liable to expire if its owner moved his center of life outside Israel.[54]

The Ministry of the Interior requires documents relating to housing, work, tax payments, water and electricity bills, and children's school attendance to prove the "Center of life". Thus, a Palestinian's continued residence in his/her hometown becomes linked to his/her ability to demonstrate continuous residence in accordance with administrative requirements, and residence outside the municipal boundaries, studying and working abroad, or insufficient documentation may endanger the residence and subsequent social rights and services.

All of this has a particular impact on youth with disabilities when they are forced to live outside Jerusalem in search of accessible, affordable housing, a disability-related service not available nearby, or to live with a family member who provides daily support. In this case, the need arising from the lack of reasonable accommodations and accessibility within the city, through the application of the "center of life" standard, may directly threaten the young person's residency status and access to health insurance, education, work, and social services.

The fragility of the residency situation is also intertwined with restrictions on the reunification of Palestinian families. The Citizenship and Entry into Israel Act (temporary ruling) of 2003, then the 2022 law, restricted residency, or citizenship to Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip who are married to Israeli citizens or permanent residents of East Jerusalem. When the former regime was presented to the Supreme Court in two cases of justice against the Minister of the Interior in 2006 and Gal-On against the Government's judicial adviser in 2012, the majority of the court refused to dismiss it, despite admitting judicial views that severely infringe on family life and equality.[55]

For a young person with a disability, these restrictions may mean that a father, mother, spouse, or support provider with a West Bank identity cannot stay with him permanently, but his presence depends on a limited, renewable, or refused permit. If a young person needs help with movement, communication, medication, access to university or work, not granting a permit or not renewing it not only separates the family and leads to family dispersion, but it may also cut off support for the exercise of other interconnected and undivided rights.

These restrictions may push families to live outside Jerusalem so that they can live together, putting a Jerusalemite's residency status at risk again because of the "life center" standard. Thus, residence law interferes with a law for reunification in a legal circle that may make the maintenance of family unity a reason for the threat of residence and make the maintenance of residence conditional on the separation of the family or the

[54] Awad v Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior HCJ 282/88, PD 42(2) 424 (1988).

[55] Adalah – Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel v Minister of the Interior HCJ 7052/03, PD 61(2) 202 (2006); and Gal-On v Attorney General HCJ 466/07, judgment of 11 January 2012.

submission of the support provider to the permit system. Which results in the continuation of the policy of forced displacement through these tools based on systematic discrimination against youth with disabilities.

B. Wall, barriers, permits, access to health and rehabilitation

The annexation and segregation wall surrounding Jerusalem is not limited to being a material barrier; parts of it were erected based on of military orders to seize land, coupled with a system of closures, permits, gates, and barriers. The Israeli Supreme Court has turned parts of its course in the two cases of Beit Surik village council against the Government of Israel in 2004 and Mara'abe against the Prime Minister of Israel in 2005. Although it abolished or modified some sections based on the principle of proportionality, the court accepted in principle the military commander's authority to erect the wall for security reasons in accordance with the controls it had established, and the general order of barricades and permits remained in place.[56]

Access by Palestinian West Bank ID holders to specialized Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem is subject to the permit regime. During 2025, 87,427 applications were submitted for permits for patients to access East Jerusalem hospitals and health facilities within Israel; 36% were rejected or remained pending, compared to about 18% in 2022.[57]

These numbers do not show the number of young people or persons with disabilities among applicants; therefore, they cannot be directly attributed to them. However, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recorded, in its 2025 report, that barriers prevent persons with disabilities from accessing hospitals in East Jerusalem and other cities in the West Bank.[58]

For a young person who needs repeated physical therapy, the fitting of a prosthesis, maintenance of an assistive device, psychological or neurological follow-up, the effect of refusal of authorization is not limited to single appointment delays; it may interrupt a series of treatment programs and lead to pain or decreased functional capacity and independence. If the young person requires a companion, his access becomes restricted to two separate administrative decisions: a patient permit and a companion permit. Between October 2023 and

[56] Beit Sourik Village Council v Government of Israel HCJ 2056/04, PD 58(5) 807 (2004); and Mara'abe v Prime Minister of Israel HCJ 7957/04, PD 60(2) 477 (2005).

[57] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Movement and Access in the West Bank | April 2026, 23 April 2026.

[58] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Report of the Committee on its thirty-third session, 11–26 August 2025, United Nations document CRPD/C/33/2, Annex IV, paragraph 28(c).

December 2024, 47% of applications for escort permits submitted for access to treatment in East Jerusalem and health facilities in Israel were rejected or remained pending.[59]

The published data do not show whether the disability-related need is taken into account when deciding on the application for a companion permit, or whether an alternative is provided when the patient is allowed to pass without his or her assistant. Barriers may require standing for extended periods, crossing narrow gates, changing vehicles, and walking unprepared tracks, without easy-to-understand information or trained assistance.

This reveals the limits of the formal protection provided by the Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 1998 and the accessibility schemes issued by it. The hospital may be equipped from within, but legal and physical access to it remains bound by identity, authorisation, and barrier. Here, denial does not result in disability or isolation barriers, but in the interaction of disability-related barriers with the identity- and place-based movement system.

C. Deprivation of education and higher education

Palestinian youths' access to Jerusalem's educational institutions is linked to the type of ID card, residence, and road available. A young person living behind the wall or holding a West Bank ID may need to pass through a barrier daily or obtain a permit to access a school, university, or training institution within the city. For youth with disabilities, there is a growing need for accessible transportation, accessible buildings, educational materials, and affordable accommodation.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted that rising risks from West Bank barriers impede access to higher education, including students with disabilities. This finding shows that providing reasonable accommodation within the university is not enough if the road to it remains subject to barriers, permits, and inaccessible transportation routes.[60]

In 2024, the Knesset passed two laws restricting UNRWA's work, one prohibiting Israeli authorities from contacting it, and came into effect in 2025. In July 2026, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that six UNRWA schools in East Jerusalem remained closed.[61]

[59] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Update #258: West Bank, 23 January 2025.

[60] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations document CRPD/C/33/2, Annex IV, paragraph 27(d).

[61] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Update #279: West Bank, 10 April 2025; and Humanitarian Situation Report, 10 July 2026, 11 July 2026.

No published data are available on the number of students with disabilities affected by the closure, the reasonable accommodations they had been receiving, or the availability of accessibility measures and reasonable accommodations in alternative schools. Therefore, simply providing a place at another school cannot be considered genuine continuity of education. The alternative school may be farther away, inaccessible, or unable to provide the means of communication, individual support, or assistive technology on which the student relies.

A young Jerusalemite with a disability may be forced to study outside the city due to a lack of specialization or reasonable accommodation, while an extended stay outside Jerusalem may raise questions about the person's "center of life". Thus, the exercise of the right to education, given the lack of available options, may become a factor affecting the stability of their residency status and access to related rights.

D. Demolition, evacuation, settlement, and loss of supporting environment

The event of demolition does not begin when the notice is issued; it begins within the planning system governed by the Israeli Planning and Construction Act of 1965, the Structural Plans, Proof of Ownership and Licensing procedures. Amendment No. 116 of 2017, known as the Kaminets Amendment, tightened enforcement tools and sanctions related to unauthorized construction, expanded the use of certain administrative orders and fines, and restricted the possibility of delaying implementation.

The International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 19 July 2024, concluded that the Israeli planning system in East Jerusalem and Area C is discriminatory, and that it makes it extremely difficult for Palestinians to obtain building permits, in a context where settlement expansion continues.[62]

From the beginning of 2026 through early August, approximately 170 Palestinian structures were demolished in East Jerusalem on the grounds that they lacked Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the owners of a significant proportion of the residential structures demolished in East Jerusalem carried out the demolitions themselves to avoid additional fines and fees. This occurred amid a notable increase in the rate of demolitions: since 2024, the average monthly number of structures demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C has been at least twice the monthly average recorded during the preceding 15 years[63].

[62] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024.

[63] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Situation Report*, 7 August 2026.

These data do not disaggregate displaced persons by age and disability. However, the impact of demolition on a young person with a disability extends beyond the loss of housing. Their home may have been adapted for wheelchair use, located near a rehabilitation center or university, or used to store medication, assistive devices, and communication equipment. Moving to temporary, overcrowded, or inaccessible accommodation may result in the loss of these arrangements while also disrupting access to treatment, education, employment, and family support.

The loss takes on an additional dimension if demolition orders, notices and court proceedings are not available in formats that the person with a disability can understand and use, or if he or she is not provided with accessible arrangements to participate in the objection and prosecution. The evacuation process also requires time and assistance to transport the person, his or her medicines and equipment, and an accessible alternative accommodation; They are elements that do not clarify the demolition databases whether the authorities evaluate or provide them before they are implemented.

Forced displacement in East Jerusalem is not limited to planning and construction law. The 1970 Law on Legal and Administrative Affairs allowed Jews to claim property in East Jerusalem said to have been in possession before 1948, while the legal system does not allow Palestinians to recover their property in West Jerusalem or elsewhere on the same basis, as those properties are subject to the **Absentees' Property Law** of 1950.

In Hossein v. Cohen in 2015, the Israeli Supreme Court in principle affirmed that the Law of Missing Property can be applied to property in East Jerusalem owned by Palestinians residing in the West Bank, even if it calls for its exceptional and restricted use. These rules show that evictions and foreclosures do not always result from a direct military decision, they can occur through civil lawsuits, land registration procedures, the decisions of absentee guardians, and laws that allow for varying paths to recover or lose property depending on the identity of the claimant.[64]

This is related to Article 7 of Basic Law: Israel – The Nation-State of the Jewish People, which considers settlement expansion a national value that the state encourages. This does not mean that the law has created or ratified every eviction claim; but it places settlement expansion within an official constitutional framework, helping to interpret the relationship between property legislation, eviction claims and broader land and population policy.

For a young person with a disability, the evacuation by judicial order may result in traces resembling the wreckage of a house; he may lose his residence, his familiar neighborhood, his support network, and his

[64] Hussein v Cohen, CA 5931/06, CA 2250/06, CA 6580/07 and CA 2038/09, Israeli Supreme Court, 15 April 2015.

proximity to basic services. This evacuation should not be seen as a mere dispute over ownership between individuals; because laws, procedures, and official bodies play a fundamental role in enabling one party to request and enforce an evacuation.

E. Undermining Basic Services in Neighbourhoods Isolated by the Wall

A Palestinian annexation wall separates neighborhoods within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries from the center of the city, including Kafr Aqab, Shu'fat Refugee camp and surrounding areas. Residents live within the boundaries that the authorities need to prove to be "the center of their lives", but their access to institutions and services within the city remains dependent on traffic through the barriers. This is an important institutional contradiction: Municipal boundaries are used to regulate residences, while walls and barriers re-form actual access within those boundaries.

Infrastructure, congestion, roads, waste, water and sanitation problems and the difficulty of accessing emergency vehicles are particularly reflected in persons with disabilities. Young people with mobility disabilities depend on usable roads and pavements, appropriate transportation, reasonable accommodation, and accessibility; A young person with a visual, intellectual or psychosocial disability needs safe pathways, clear signals, accessible information, and nearby services that can be accessed independently and with dignity.

When water or electricity is disrupted, the impact is not limited to the general standard of living. Personal hygiene, the prevention of wounds and infections, the charging of electric chairs and communication devices, the storage of certain medicines, and the operation of the devices on which a person depends may be affected. Also, buying water, using tanks, or carrying packages from far away may be unavailable to a young person with a disability without personal support, increasing his dependence on family.

These conditions cannot be separated from the system of planning, construction, and distribution of municipal services, or from the wall and barriers that impede the access of workers, maintenance vehicles, and emergency services. Thus, deprivation of water, sanitation or ambulance does not appear as a separate service disruption, but as a result of planning interaction, spatial isolation, and accessibility for Palestinian youth with disabilities.

Cross-legal analysis.

A. fragmentationing and restricting the right of movement in the legal description of apartheid.

Restriction of the movement of Palestinians in the occupied land is subject to three simultaneous legal frameworks: prohibition of discrimination and segregation, guarantees of human rights, and rules of the Law of Occupation. Whereas Article 12, paragraph 1, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees that every person lawfully within the territory of a free movement and choice of place of residence

is free. Article 12, paragraph 3, shall not permit the restriction of this right unless the restriction is provided for in law and is necessary and proportionate and inconsistent with international standards, is intended to achieve a legitimate purpose, respects other rights and does not constitute any form of discrimination, including discrimination based on of disability.

For persons with disabilities, this protection is integrated with Article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on Equality and Discrimination, Article 9 on accessibility, and Articles 18 and 20 on freedom of movement and personal mobility. Denial of reasonable accommodation is a self-contained distinction under Article 2 of the Convention and cannot be justified simply because a person is subject to general restrictions on the movement of Palestinians.[65]

The wall system, barriers, permits, and closures do not meet these conditions solely based on public safety considerations. In its 2004 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice concluded that the construction of the Wall and its associated system within the Occupied Palestinian Territory impeded the exercise of freedom of movement, rights to work, health, education and standard of living, and that military necessities or national security requirements did not justify the measures under consideration.[66]

It was limited to examining the suitability of specific sections of the track, and the legality of the overall structure of the wall, the request area and the permitting system was not determined under international law. Therefore, the measures should be assessed as an integrated and permanent system, not a temporary and separate set of restrictions.[67]

This system gains further significance in legal analysis with the issuance of the famous ruling of the International Court of Justice on 22 July 2024 on the illegality of the occupation of the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory and the consequent consequences thereof, as well as the decision of the General Assembly of the same year, since those exceptions based on 'reflective necessity' and 'security considerations' cannot be challenged or justified in light of the court's decisive orientation to the illegality of the occupation of the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, here the fundamental legal significance of the ruling is emphasized.

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[65] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 12; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 2, 5, 9, 18 and 20; Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 6 (2018), paragraphs 17–19 and 23–25.

[66] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, 9 July 2004, paragraphs 133–137 and 142–163.

[67] Israeli Supreme Court, Beit Sourik v. Government of Israel, No. 2056/04, judgment of 30 June 2004; Mara'abe v. Prime Minister of Israel, No. 7957/04, judgment of 15 September 2005.

This system also falls within the scope of Article II(c) of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid of 1973, which identifies as acts of apartheid legislative and other measures aimed at preventing an ethnic group from participating in political, social, economic and cultural life, in particular by depriving it of freedom of movement, residence, education and work. **Article II(d) also applies when measures are used to divide the population along racial lines by creating separate reserves or ghettos or by expropriating land and property.** Thus, the areas of legal classification are not a barrier or permit in themselves, but the function of these tools within an institutional system that divides the Palestinians, restricts their movement between Gaza, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, while maintaining the freedom of movement of Jewish settlers and their access to land, roads and services within the occupied territory.[68]

Under the Rome Statute, the violation of freedom of movement alone is not sufficient to prove the crime of apartheid. **Article 7(1)(e)** and **Article 7(2)(h)** require the commission of an inhuman act similar in nature to the acts contained in Article 7, paragraph 1, in the context of an institutional system of repression and systematic control exercised by an ethnic group over another, with the aim of maintaining that system. Restrictions on movement may be associated with this corner when persecution has reached a limit in accordance with **Article 7(1)(h)**, i.e. the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights because of national or ethnic identity, or when they are used to cause forced transport in accordance with **Article 7(1)(d)** or produce severe suffering or serious harm falling within the scope of the other inhumane acts in **Article 7(1)(k)**. In any case, it requires proof that the action took place within the framework of a large-scale or systematic attack directed against civilian populations, the existence of a state or organization's policy, and the knowledge of the actor in the context.[69]

The discretionary and enduring nature of the movement system indicates its connection to the corners of control and purpose. Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the same territory are not subject to the same legal system and do not have the same access to roads, land, and services. The International Court of Justice concluded in 2024 that Israeli legislation and measures kept a near-complete separation between settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and constituted a violation of Article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It reads with the continuation of the wall, permits, settlement, annexation, and residence restrictions as proof that separation is not an accidental result of

[68] International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, Article II, paragraphs (c) and (d).

[69] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(d), Article 7(1)(h), Article 7(1)(j), Article 7(1)(k), Article 7(2)(a), and Article 7(2)(h).

temporary measures, but part of a structure designed to maintain control and distribute rights and resources based on identity.[70]

The application of Articles 2 and 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reveals that the damage caused by this system is cross-cutting; A young person with a disability is first subject to restrictions imposed on him as a Palestinian, and then is subject to additional exclusion when he cannot cross the barrier or the alternative road, or when his travel is based on a permit for facilities or equipped vehicles, or when information and transit procedures are not available in accessible formats. This does not constitute a marginal social impact of restrictions, but a connected deprivation of the rights to education, health, habilitation and rehabilitation, employment and independent living, protected under Articles 19, 24, 25, 26 and 27 of the Convention. This means that the legitimacy of the movement system must not be limited to its impact on the Palestinian who can overcome the obstacle but must include its actual and expected impact on people with various disabilities.

The system of movement and permits thus demonstrates the legal connection between apartheid and intersectional discrimination: it is, At the level of the State's responsibility, part of measures that deprive a national group of movement, residence, participation and spatial distribution in accordance with **Article II(c) and (d)**, of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid; At the level of individual rights, it violates the principle of equality and non-discrimination, the rights to personal mobility, accessibility and related rights guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; At the level of individual criminal responsibility, it must be demonstrated that the restrictions were embodied in an inhuman act of the nature of the acts contained in Article 7, paragraph 1 of the Rome Statute, and that they were committed in the context of the institutional system and its continuity and maintenance structure.

B. Land, planning, settlement, and resources: engineering control and depriving youth with disabilities of housing and independent living

Discloses the facts relating to land confiscation, settlement, restrictive planning, demolition, forced displacement, and water control of the systematic redistribution of land, resources, and housing conditions between Palestinians and Israeli settlers. It is not related to a set of independent administrative decisions; It is a system that allows the expansion of space for a community, in return for narrowing the possibility of construction, housing, development and access to resources for the other group. In its 2024 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice concluded that settlement, annexation, land confiscation, demolition, resource

[70] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024, paragraphs 223–229, particularly paragraph 229.

exploitation and forced displacement violate international law, transcend the boundaries of the provisional administration of the occupied territory, and contribute to the consolidation of permanent Israeli control over it. The 2024 International Court of Justice resolution also stresses that the settlement project in the Occupied Palestinian Territory must be dismantled and its population compensated, and no new settlements created, as it constitutes a gross violation of the rules of international law.[71]

It also violates Articles 43, 46 and 55 of the **Hague Regulations**, which restrict the power of occupation and protect property, as well as Articles 49 and 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibit the movement of occupying forces to the occupied territory, the forcible transfer of protected populations, and the destruction of their property. Demolition, confiscation or forced displacement cannot be justified on the basis of orders or internal laws; because the legitimacy of the action is measured by international law, and because the occupying power does not have sovereignty over the territory that allows it to be reorganized permanently for the benefit of its population.[72]

These practices fall under Article II (c), of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid insofar as they deny Palestinians, as a national and ethnic group, the right to housing, work, health, water, services, and economic and social participation on an equal basis. Article II (d) also applies when land confiscation, demolition and settlement are used to create separate areas and redistribute population and property based on of identity. The cornerstone is to maintain control of the cumulative and permanent nature of these systematic discrimination-based practices, and of combining the narrowing of the Palestinian presence with settlement expansion and the annexation of occupied land in the Israeli system, not of a single demolition or seizure.[73]

At the level of individual criminal responsibility, systematic and widespread acts resulting from the policy of demolition, violence or deprivation of residence constitute forced displacement under **Article 7(1)** "D" of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, because the definition of "forced" is not limited to the use of physical force, but also includes the threat, coercion, fear of violence and exploitation of the forcible environment. Intentional and severe deprivation of land, housing and water because of national identity constitutes persecution under Article (7)(1)(h**)** and may be included in the crime of apartheid under article 7, paragraph 1, item "Y" and article 7, paragraph 2, item "H" if committed in the context of an institutional system

[71] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024, paragraphs 155–179 and 239–263 and the operative clause.

[72] Hague Regulations of 1907, Articles 43 and 46 and 55; Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, Articles 49 and 53.

[73] International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, Article II, paragraphs (c) and (d). Details concerning Military Orders 418, 58, 59, 291, 92 and 158, and the Elon Moreh and Masafer Yatta cases, are discussed in the West Bank section.

of control and systematic repression with the intent to maintain it, as in the Palestinian case. The transfer of the population of the occupying State to the occupied territory remains a war crime under Article 8, paragraph 2, clause "B", subparagraph 8.[74]

For a young person with a disability, the demolition of a home or forced displacement may mean the loss of engineering modifications to the ground, reasonable accommodation such as assistive devices, proximity to a support provider or rehabilitation center and a source of income; Moving to unprepared housing to restrict movement, privacy and independence, even if an alternative shelter is provided in a narrow physical sense. Restricting the right to access water affects more severely those who need it for wound care, the use of castration or personal hygiene, or those who cannot access a remote source or carry water.

In doing so, that system is in continuing violation of the provisions of Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on Accessibility, Article 19 on Independent Living and Choice of Place of Residence, **Article 28 on adequate housing, water and social protection**, as well as the rights to health, habilitation and rehabilitation, and work set out in Articles 25 to 27. The systematic discrimination based on Palestinian identity here is combined with additional discrimination when demolition or evacuation procedures are conducted without assessing the needs of the youth with disabilities, or providing accessible information, usable transportation, accessible alternative housing, continuing assistance, and personal support.[75]

This effect does not make persons with disabilities an independent group in defining apartheid; rather, it reveals the severity of the effects on young Palestinians with disabilities within the oppressed Palestinian community. The act of depriving Palestinians of land or housing in general may, at the same time, deprive a young person with a disability of the material conditions necessary to exercise his rights to health, education, work, private life, and independent living. The same practice then combines the act of apartheid, intersectional discrimination, and violation of the substantive rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

C. Discrimination in access to services: referring social rights to tools for segregation.

Apartheid is not limited to spatial separation or land seizure; Article 2 (c) of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid includes legislation and other measures that prevent an ethnic group from fully participating in social, economic and cultural life and deprive its members, in particular, of the rights to work, education, health and public services. Therefore, continuing discrimination in the

[74] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(d), Article 7(1)(h), Article 7(1)(j), Article 7(2)(h), and Article 8(2)(b)(viii).

[75] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 5 and 9 and 19 and 25–28.

availability and quality of services and accessibility is not treated as a neutral development deficit when it is linked to national identity and operates within a broader institutional system of separation and control.[76]

Such discrimination is prohibited under Article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Article 2, paragraph 2, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The prohibition of discrimination is not subject to progressive action or the availability of resources; It provides for an immediate commitment to the occupation force of the Occupied Palestinian Territory to ensure the non-discriminatory exercise of rights, and to remove obstacles to their effective use. The provision of reasonable accommodation is also an individual and immediate commitment, and its denial constitutes discrimination under Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is therefore not enough for a service to be formally available if its location, building, language, registration procedures or means of transport actually prevent a young person with a disability from benefiting from it.[77]

In East Jerusalem, continuing discrimination in finance, infrastructure, special education, rehabilitation, and services available in Arabic reveals a separation between legal recognition of the right and actual ability to practice it. The discrimination does not result solely from the formal application of the same civil law to Palestinians and Israelis; because legal equality is not achieved if budgets, services and conditions of access are managed in a way that continually produces wide disparities based on national identity. The documented comparison of Palestinian and Jewish students' access to special education frameworks is evidence of the institutional nature of this discrimination, with its use to prove the pattern of service distribution rather than describing disaggregated data for youth.[78]

This de facto exclusion is contrary to Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees the right to inclusive education, including access to tertiary education, and prohibits the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the education system, and which must provide reasonable accommodations and individual support. The effect of this exclusion extends to Article 25 of the Convention on the Right to Health, **Article 26 on Habilitation and Rehabilitation**, and Article 27 on Employment; because the denial of diagnosis, education, support and assistive devices in earlier stages later limits the opportunities for transition to higher education, training, work and independent living. The effects of discrimination and

[76] International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, Article II, paragraph (c).

[77] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 2, 4(2) and 5; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 2(2); Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 6 (2018) on equality and non-discrimination, paragraphs 12 and 23–25.

[78] The data and comparison concerning enrolment in special-education settings and the lack of accessibility, assistive technologies and Arabic-speaking staff are discussed in the East Jerusalem section. These data are used to establish a pattern of unequal service distribution, not as youth-specific disaggregated statistics.

widespread bias do not end with an individual reaching the age of 18, but continue to shape the opportunities, degree of independence and ability to participate in society of young Palestinians with disabilities.[79]

In Gaza, these legal obligations are combined with duties under international humanitarian law. Articles 55 and 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention on the Supply of Food, Medicines and the Preservation of Health and Public Health Services required the occupying power to ensure the supply of food and medicine, while Article 59 mandated that aid operations be permitted and facilitated by war when the population is insufficiently provided with them. These obligations are read in conjunction with Article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in which all necessary measures were to be taken to protect and ensure the safety of persons with disabilities in armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies, and Articles 10, 25, 26 and 28 relating to life, health, rehabilitation and an adequate standard of living.[80]

Compliance with these obligations is not achieved by simply introducing a limited amount of aid or maintaining a limited service; rather, relief and services must actually reach persons with disabilities and be accessible and usable. Medication entering the territory without a means of getting it to a person, shelter that can't be accessed or used with an escort, warning that isn't given in an accessible form, evacuation that doesn't include facilities or assistive devices, none of these provide equal protection. Ignoring these needs, despite their obvious and predictable nature, is an intersectional discrimination that places persons with disabilities at heightened risk of death, injury, and loss of independence.

In the light of the documented facts in Gaza, the deliberate deprivation of food, water, medicine, health care, and other residents of survival goes beyond the description of discrimination in services or persecution alone. This widespread deprivation, combined with the killing of members of the Palestinian community and the infliction of serious physical and psychological harm to them and the imposition of destructive living conditions on them, is included in the material acts constituting the crime of genocide, as provided for in Article 2, paragraphs A, B, and C of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and Article 6, paragraphs A, B, and C of the Rome Statute. The special intention to destroy the Palestinian community in Gaza, wholly or partially, is based on the total, scope, repetition, agility, and systematic nature of

[79] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 19 and 24–27.

[80] Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, Articles 55 and 56 and 59; Additional Protocol I of 1977, Article 70.

its actions, and on the targeting of survivors and the continuing imposition of destructive conditions with its consequences.[81]

This definition differs from extermination as a crime against humanity provided for in **Article 7(1)** "B" of the Rome Statute. Genocide is here intended as a crime under international criminal law, which requires the commission of an act defined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Rome Statute with the intention of totally or partially destroying a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.[82]

The cross-lens shows that the actions of genocide do not affect all members of the community in the same way. youth with disabilities are more likely to die, be injured, be physically and psychologically injured when the health system is destroyed, electricity is cut off for medical devices, medicines and auxiliaries are lost, evacuation orders, transportation, shelters, and assistance become uncomfortable. These effects do not represent any side effects separate from the legal description but rather interfere with the appreciation of the nature and physical nature of physical acts, particularly killing members of the group, causing them serious physical or psychological harm, and intentionally subjecting them to living conditions in which the group is intended to be totally or partially destroyed.

Thus, systematic discrimination in services reveals the legal connection between apartheid, genocide, and intersectional discrimination. The apartheid regime identifies the controlled group, distributes land, resources, movement, services, and protection based on of national identity; and in Gaza control over food, water, medicine, health, and relief has been used to impose devastating living conditions on the Palestinian community. The disability perspective reveals that these situations do not result in a similar deprivation, but that youth with disabilities within the Palestinian community are at greater and doubled risk, and the same practices combine the actions of apartheid, material acts of genocide, intersectional discrimination and violations of the rights guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This exclusion takes young women with disabilities a step further, as discrimination based on national identity and disability intersects with discrimination based on gender, affecting access to education and health, including sexual and reproductive health services, rehabilitation, employment and social protection. This is contrary to Articles 2 and 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on the Prohibition of Discrimination and the Equality of Women's Rights and Articles 10, 11, 12 and 14 relating to education, work, health, and women in rural areas. The Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of

[81] Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, Article II, paragraphs (a), (b) and (c); Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 6(a), (b) and (c).

[82] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(b) and Article 7(2)(b).

Discrimination against Women also stressed that women with disabilities face complex discrimination that requires measures to ensure their effective equality, access to services and participation in public life. Therefore, it is not sufficient to measure discrimination between Palestinians and Israelis or between persons with disabilities and others; Instead, we need to examine how the system of separation and control of deprivation is distributed within the Palestinian community itself, putting young women with disabilities at a higher risk of exclusion, violence, poverty and loss of independence.[83]

D. Detention, ill-treatment, and enforced disappearance: deprivation of liberty as a tool of racial segregation.

arbitrary detention and violence during arrest and interrogation cannot be read apart from the legal structure of apartheid; Article 2 (a) of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid lists as part of the Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of Apartheid the gross physical or psychological harm to members of the persecuted group, assault on their freedom and dignity, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, arbitrary detention and unlawful imprisonment. And when these actions are systematically exercised against the Palestinians within an institutional system that aims to regulate their existence, suppress their resistance, and maintain the control of one national group over another, they do not represent individual transgressions, but perform a constructive function within the apartheid regime.[84]

This is complemented by the provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Article 1 defines torture as the act of inflicting severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, for purposes including obtaining information, confession, punishment, intimidation or coercion, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when the act is committed by, or is incited, consented to, or silenced by an official. Article 2 decides on an absolute prohibition that cannot be justified by aggression, emergency or orders from a higher authority, while Article 11-14 required review of the arrangements for interrogation and detention, prompt and honest investigation, enabling the victim to complain, coerce and compensate, Article 15 prohibits the use of torture words, and Article 16 extends the scope of protection to other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention also required that protected persons be respected and protected from violence, Articles 31 and 32 prohibit physical coercion, torture and other arbitrary measures of human dignity, and Article 76 regulates the

[83] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Articles 2, 3, 10, 11, 12 and 14; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 18 on women with disabilities, 1991; General Recommendation No. 28 on the core obligations of States parties under Article 2 of the Convention, CEDAW/C/GC/28, paragraph 18.

[84] International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, Article II, paragraph (a), particularly subparagraphs (ii) and (iii).

treatment of detainees from the occupation territories. These guarantees may not be invalidated based on of a general security description or internal rules; because the prohibition of torture is absolute, and because the lawfulness of detention, treatment and interrogation is governed by applicable international law.[85]

For a young person with a disability, the legitimacy of the procedure is not achieved once there is a formal basis for detention; rather, procedural accommodations must be provided at every stage and ensure that he understands, communicates, and defends himself effectively. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guarantees equality before the law and legal capacity in Article 12, effective access to justice and appropriate procedural accommodations in Article 13, freedom and security in Article 14, protection from torture and ill-treatment in Article 15, protection from violence and exploitation in Article 16, and respect for physical and mental integrity in Article 17. So, depriving a detainee of a sign-language interpreter, information in an easy-to-read format, an alternative means of communication, a support person, medication, or assistive devices is an independent violation that could render the guarantees of interrogation, prosecution, and trial ineffective.[86]

Disability is not a justification for deprivation of liberty, the use of force or restraint, nor can a person be assumed to be disingenuous or unable to make decisions because of his or her intellectual, psychological, social, or sensory disability. When interrogation or restraining methods are used without taking into account a person's ability to understand instructions, communicate and respond, the act presented as a routine procedure may be a source of serious physical or psychological harm, or cruel or degrading treatment, to the person with a disability. This affects the legal description of the act and the assessment of its necessity, appropriateness, and the foreseeable harm.

The gender-based dimension is particularly evident in the experiences of young women with disabilities; arrests and violence based on national identity are intertwined with the risks of sexual violence, degrading inspections, threats, privacy violations, and deprivation of sexual and reproductive health needs. This is contrary to Articles 2, 3 and 15 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, read with General Recommendation No. 18 on Women with Disabilities and General Recommendation No. 35 on Gender-Based Violence against Women. In this context, uniform safeguards are not sufficient; Protection and

[85] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 7 and 9 and 10 and 14 and 16; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Articles 1 and 2 and 11–16; Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, Articles 27 and 31 and 32 and 76.

[86] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Articles 5 and 12–17 and 21 and 25.

procedural accommodations should be made taking into account the interplay of disability, gender, age, and national identity.[87]

Detention becomes an enforced disappearance when a person is deprived of liberty by State officials or by persons acting with the State's authorization, support or acquiescence, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or concealment of the person's fate or whereabouts, thereby placing the person outside the protection of the law. This is the definition contained in Article 2 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Enforced disappearance, when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, constitutes a crime against humanity under Articles 7(1)(i) and 7(2)(i) of the Rome Statute. The violation is therefore not limited to the initial deprivation of liberty but continues throughout the period during which the detention is denied or the person's fate or whereabouts are concealed.[88]

The effect of enforced disappearance is more severe for a young person with a disability when hiding leads to medication, care, assisted living or personal support being cut off, or when a family and lawyer are unable to inform the detainee of his or her needs or check his or her safety. These findings are included in the assessment of the severity of the act and its physical and psychological effects and are not treated as personal circumstances outside of the offence; because the need for support is known and the consequences can be expected to be ignored.

The withholding of bodies and the concealment of their whereabouts shall be legally distinguished from enforced disappearance without separation from the right to know the truth. If the death of a person and his identity are known, the non-delivery of the body does not, in itself, constitute enforced disappearance; But it violates the duty to honor the dead, disclose their fate and whereabouts, and enable their families to recover them and bury them with dignity, in accordance with Articles 32-34 of the First Additional Protocol and the rules of customary international humanitarian law. If the death precedes an unrecognized detention, or the fate or place of existence continues to be hidden, the declaration of death or its subsequent discovery does not erase the crime of enforced disappearance from the period in which the person was placed outside the protection of the law.[89]

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[87] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Articles 2 and 3 and 15; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 18 on women with disabilities, 1991; General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, CEDAW/C/GC/35, 2017.

[88] International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Articles 2 and 5; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(i) and Article 7(2)(i).

[89] Additional Protocol I of 1977, Articles 32–34; International Committee of the Red Cross, Customary International Humanitarian Law Rules, Rules 114 and 116.

In these cases, the damage extends to the family as the rightful owner to know the truth and to mourn, bury and recover the body. The impact may be doubled on family members with intellectual, psychosocial, or sensory disabilities who need accessible information, support in communication, and participation in search and recovery procedures. Prolonged detention of the body may also cause particular psychological harm to mothers, wives and young women with disabilities, with due regard to their rights in the light of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the provisions of Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities concerning women with disabilities, not as mere relatives of a detained or deceased person.

At the level of international criminal law, such practices may be described as imprisonment or severe deprivation of liberty in violation of the fundamental rules of international law under article 7, paragraph 1, item "e", or torture under article 7, paragraph 1, item "w", or persecution under article 7, paragraph 1, item "h", or enforced disappearance under article 7, paragraph 1, item "i" of the Rome Statute. And when these acts are committed within an institutional system of systematic repression and control of the Palestinians and with the intention of preserving it, they also constitute acts that constitute the crime of apartheid under **Article 7(1)** "Y" and article 7, clause 2, clause "H".[90]

Therefore, an intersectional approach does not merely add disability- and gender-related dimensions to an otherwise complete analysis; it reveals the full nature of the act and its legal consequences. Detention itself may deprive a young person with a disability, at the same time, of liberty, legal capacity and communication, health, physical and mental integrity, and an effective defence; a young person with a disability may be subjected to additional forms of violence and humiliation. Thus, apartheid control, arbitrary detention, torture or enforced disappearance, and intersectional discrimination prohibited by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are combined in one practice.

Key findings

This paper shows that the slogan of the 2026 International Youth Day, "Different contexts, common aspirations", gains in the Palestinian context meaning beyond recognition of the diversity of youth experiences. The contexts in which young Palestinians with disabilities live in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem were not created by natural or neutral geographical differences, but were created through a single system of governance and control using different tools depending on location: isolation and control of living quarters and

[90] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(e), Article 7(1)(f), Article 7(1)(h), Article 7(1)(i), Article 7(1)(j), and Article 7(2)(h).

relief in Gaza; and systematic fragmentation, settlement, demolition, barriers and detention in the West Bank; Residency and reunification, restrictive planning, and discrimination in access to services in East Jerusalem.

East Jerusalem clearly shows the importance of comparison in exposing this pattern; Palestinians and Israelis seemingly subject to the same administration and civil law do not mean they enjoy the same opportunities and rights. A comparison in planning, infrastructure, special education, rehabilitation, and services available in Arabic, and in pathways to regain ownership and access to treatment reveals a continuing gap between formal recognition of right and actual ability to practice it. Data on children and students is not used as statistics for young people, but as evidence of institutional disparity that begins at an early stage, then moves with a person into the youthful stage and affects their opportunities for higher education, work, independence, and participation. Thus, the comparison helps to show that the differences in contexts within Jerusalem, between it and the rest of the Palestinian territory are not just differences in place of residence, but differences created by unequal conditions for access to the same rights.

The paper thus reveals the logical relationship between the two parts of the slogan: contexts are different because the tools of deprivation differ, while aspirations are common because the rights are the same. The right to life, safety, health, education, work, mobility, housing, independent living and participation does not change with the change in the place of residence of the young person, nor does it become a privilege subject to identity, geography or the legal status imposed. Thus, the "common aspirations" are not only the expression of similar hopes, but of equal legal merit for all young Palestinians with disabilities to enjoy their full and equal rights.

The paper also explains that the impact on youth with disabilities is not just the sum of a violation based on Palestinian identity and another violation based on disability. The barrier can turn into a complete barrier to treatment or education, demolition of the home can lead to the loss of the built environment, assistive device and support network, detention without procedural accommodations can deprive a person of effective communication and defense, while a power outage, water outage or medication can directly lead to the death of a person who is dependent on a medical device or ongoing treatment. The impact on young women with disabilities is stronger when combined with gender-based violence, denial of privacy, protection, sexual health, reproductive health, and participation.

Therefore, the cessation of an infringement does not occur once a public procedure is cancelled or a service is formally made available but rather requires the removal of a structural barrier and the treatment of its own impact on the person with a disability. This includes the provision of reasonable accommodations, the availability of information, the environment, transport, services and judicial proceedings, and ensuring the continuity of assistive devices, personal support, health care, and rehabilitation. It also requires close consultation with youth with disabilities and their involvement, and their representative organizations, in the decisions, policies and mechanisms affecting them, and the collection of disaggregated and securely managed

data by age, gender, type of disability, place and legal status, in accordance with Articles 4 (3) and 31 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[91]

This also requires a clear integration of the rights of young women with disabilities, ensuring their access to education, health, work, protection, justice and equal participation, and taking all necessary measures without delay to prevent, investigate, and hold accountable perpetrators of all forms of gender-based violence. Access, privacy, and support in cases of forced displacement, housing, detention, health care and judicial proceedings, and the involvement of women and girls with disabilities and their organizations in the design and monitoring of responses should also be ensured, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the inclusion of disability.[92]

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the paper, Israel should stop all illegal acts, end the system of separation and control, remove illegal restrictions on movement, land and resources, cease settlement activities, annexation, demolition, forced displacement, arbitrary detention, torture and enforced disappearance, and ensure that the population has effective access to food, water, health care, education and humanitarian assistance. Property, land, and bodies should also be returned, the fate and whereabouts of missing persons clarified, and full and effective reparations to victims should be provided, without relying on domestic law or military orders to justify the violation of international obligations.

The immediate and full implementation of the obligations set out by the International Court of Justice in its 2024 Advisory Opinion and confirmed by United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-10/24 of 18 September 2024, including the termination of the illegal Israeli presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the cessation of settlement activities, the evacuation of settlers, the dismantling of parts of the wall within the occupied territory, the abolition of measures that create or maintain the illegal status, the return of confiscated lands and property, the return of displaced persons, and the award of damages should also be undertaken. The resolution has set a deadline of no more than twelve months to end this existence; a deadline that expired in September

[91] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 4, paragraph 3 and 5 and 9 and 11 and 13 and 19 and 20 and 31 and Article 33, paragraph 3.

[92] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Articles 2, 3, 10–12 and 15; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 6; Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendations Nos. 18 and 35.

2025 without implementation, making an international move to implement the commitment urgently a non-deferred political issue.[93]

In Gaza, immediate cessation of acts of genocide, ensuring the unimpeded introduction of food, water, medicine, fuel, medical equipment and assistive devices, restoration of health and rehabilitation services, and provision of medical evacuation, transportation, shelters, warnings, and assistance in accessible form should be ensured. The response and reconstruction plans should also include an assessment of the special impact and duplication of the destruction on persons with disabilities, the restoration of assistive devices, environmental modifications and support networks, and ensuring that the reconstruction process does not re-create the obstacles that existed before the aggression.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, ending the denial of rights requires removing barriers, gates, restrictions, the permit regime that disrupts access for youth with disabilities to health, rehabilitation, education, work, water and basic services, and stopping the demolition of homes, forced displacement, settler violence, and the confiscation of land and resources. This includes protecting Jerusalemites' rights to residency, reunification and housing, addressing discriminatory inequalities in budgets, infrastructure, education, health, rehabilitation and social services, and ensuring their linguistic, material and informational availability to young Palestinians with disabilities, while ensuring accessible transportation, specialized personnel and assistive devices. Addressing the effects of injury, displacement, violence, and loss also requires the provision of sustained and accessible mental health and psychosocial support services tailored to age, gender and type of disability, and integration into health care, rehabilitation, education, and protection.

Arbitrary detention, torture, ill-treatment, and enforced disappearance should end, the fate and whereabouts of all missing persons should be revealed, withheld bodies should be returned to their families, and families should be able to bury their deceased relatives with dignity. Procedural and reasonable accommodations for detainees with disabilities, uninterrupted access to medication, care and assistive devices, contact with family and lawyers, independent investigation of violations and accountability of those responsible and the provision of reparation to victims and their families should be ensured, in accordance with the Convention against Torture and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Palestinian Authority must, within the scope of its mandate and actual capacity, respect, protect and implement the rights of youth with disabilities, prevent discrimination, violence, torture, and ill-treatment, and provide access to education, health, employment, social protection, justice, and participation. These obligations

[93] International Court of Justice, Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024, paragraphs 267–279 and the operative clause; United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-10/24, adopted on 18 September 2024, official text.

do not transfer to them the responsibility of removing the restrictions imposed by the occupying power, but they prevent the limited use of powers to justify not taking possible legislative, political, financial and administrative measures, or the continuation of barriers and discrimination within Palestinian institutions and services.

In this context, there is a clear national legislative gap; according to an estimate by Ward in a 2024 art exhibition, the Palestinian legislative system comprises more than 12,500 pieces of legislation, without a Palestinian youth rights law that defines their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and establishes enforceable obligations and mechanisms for participation, accountability and redress. The Temporary Youth Care Foundation Act No. 70 of 1966, in force in the West Bank, focuses on youth care, sports, cultural and social activities, and does not constitute a comprehensive legal framework based on empowering, leading, and participating in youth decision-making.[94]

The Palestinian authorities should therefore begin to develop a comprehensive Palestinian law on youth rights through a participatory process led by young people themselves, including young people and youth with disabilities and their representative organizations. The law should move from a pastoral approach to a human rights approach, defining rights, obligations, enforcement mechanisms, **accountability,** and redress. The 1966 Act and other relevant legislation and policies should also be revised, and an updated national youth strategy including measurable targets, budgets and indicators, and effective representation of youth with disabilities in decision-making bodies should be adopted, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Security Council Resolution 2250 of 2015 on Youth, Peace and Security.[95]

It also recommends aligning Palestinian legislation, budgets, and public services with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ensuring access to education, health, habilitation and rehabilitation, employment, social protection, justice, and political participation. A national system should also be set up to collect age, gender, disability, and place-specific data, while protecting privacy, and use this data to identify gaps, allocate resources, and monitor the implementation of commitments.

Third States should fulfill their duties of not recognizing the illegal status or providing aid and assistance in its continuation, of discriminating in their dealings between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and of refraining from the economic, trade and investment relations that entrench the occupation and settlement. The transfer of weapons, equipment and technology should also be stopped when there are risks for their use in international crimes, appropriate measures should be taken towards persons and entities responsible for the continuation of occupation, settlement and settler violence, support international and national investigations

[94] Issam Abdeen, Towards Building a Palestinian Youth Law: Empowering Youth through Advocacy and Legislation for a Better Future, November 2024.

[95] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 4(3), Articles 6 and 29; Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, 9 December 2015.

and prosecutions, cooperation in the implementation of judicial decisions and orders and prevention of impunity.[96]

The United Nations, international mechanisms, committees of inquiry, courts and humanitarian agencies should include disability, age and gender in the documentation, analysis, accountability, harm assessment, the design of reparation measures, and should not merely subsume persons with disabilities under a general category of vulnerable groups. This requires the collection of disaggregated and securely managed data, the provision of information and complaint procedures, the involvement of youth with disabilities and their organizations in investigations, consultations, relief programmes, reconstruction, and reparation. It also requires the preservation of evidence relating to crimes, abuses, and their specific effects on persons with disabilities, supporting the investigations of the International Criminal Court, national and international judicial mechanisms, and ensuring that reparative measures include compensation, rehabilitation, and guarantees of non-recurrence.

Civil society organizations, youth organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities should also build a common national alliance that employs the results of this paper in advocacy, documentation, litigation, and follow-up with international mechanisms, and places youth with disabilities in the leadership and direct participation position. Dismantling the tools that have created contextual inequality and ensuring that young Palestinians with disabilities enjoy the same common rights, wherever they are in the same country.

[96] International Court of Justice, 2024 Advisory Opinion, paragraphs 273–279; United Nations General Assembly, Resolution No. ES-10/24; Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Article I.