

## BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

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### SECRETARIAT

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*Security Council*

Olivia Demordaunt  
*General Assembly Plenary*

Nell Stevens  
*General Assembly Fourth  
Committee*

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 29th annual Brigham Young University Model United Nations Conference (BYUMUN). My name is Nell Stevens, and I will be serving as your Director for the General Assembly Fourth Committee.

I am currently a Junior in the BYU Advertising Program. Last year, I was able to participate in the National Model United Nations Conference (NMUN) in New York City, representing Paraguay on the General Assembly Fourth Committee for BYU. I grew and learned much more from my time at NMUN in New York than I had during any other experience during my time at BYU.

The topics before the BYU Model United Nations Conference 2018 General Assembly Fourth Committee are:

- I. Economic and Other Activities which Affect the Interests of the Peoples of the Non Self Governing Territories
- II. Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The General Assembly Fourth Committee addresses a variety of issues, including the peaceful use of outer space, the effects of atomic radiation, and questions of decolonization. At the Conference this year, our topics focus on aspects of decolonization and the role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). These topics, which represent the evolution of the United Nations since its foundation, will challenge delegates to create innovative solutions to support the maintenance of international peace and security.

I hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee. It is not meant to replace further research and we highly encourage you to explore your countries' policies in depth as well as use the Annotated Bibliography develop innovative solutions.

Good luck in your preparation! If you have further questions, please email me at the address below. I look forward to directing your committee in October.

Sincerely,

Nell Stevens

Director, General Assembly Fourth Committee  
nells2email@gmail.com

## Committee History

*“As we talk with candor, we open the doors to new possibilities and new areas of cooperation in advanc[ing] democracy, in combatting terrorism, in energy and environment, science and technology, and international peacekeeping.”*

*-Atal Bihari Vajpayee*

### Introduction

The General Assembly Fourth Committee, also known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee is one of the United Nations General Assembly's six main committees.<sup>1</sup> The General Assembly Fourth Committee deals with a wide range of issues including Palestinian refugees and human rights, Israeli practices, peacekeeping, public information, outer space, mine action, atomic radiation, University for Peace, and topics related to decolonization.<sup>2</sup>

Compared to most other United Nations committees, the General Assembly Fourth Committee is relatively young. The Special Political Committee was merged with the Fourth Committee in General Assembly resolution 47/233 of 17 August in 1993, forming the General Assembly Fourth Committee as we know it today.<sup>3</sup> This resolution revitalized the work and broadened the scope of the General Assembly Fourth Committee.

### Mandate

The original mandate of the General Assembly can be found in Chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations (1945).<sup>4</sup> Chapter IV, Article 10 of the Charter states that the body:

“May discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and, except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any such questions or matters.”<sup>5</sup>

The Charter of the United Nations explains that one of the most defining aspects of the General Assembly is its ability to discuss issues from any one of the committees of the United Nations. This is demonstrated by the wide range of topics addressed by the various committees of the General Assembly. The First Committee of the General Assembly focuses primarily topics pertaining to international security and peace; the Second Committee focuses primarily on economic and financial topics; the Third Committee focuses primarily on social, cultural, and humanitarian affairs; the Fourth Committee focuses primarily on special political questions and decolonization, the Fifth Committee focuses primarily on administrative and budgetary issues of the United Nations; and the Sixth Committee focuses primarily on legal questions in the General Assembly.<sup>6</sup> The mandate of the General Assembly Fourth Committee, specifically, varies depending on the allocation of agenda items for

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<sup>1</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly," United Nations, , accessed June 28, 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly," United Nations.

<sup>3</sup> "A/RES/47/233. Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly." United Nations. September 14, 1993. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> "Charter of the United Nations." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> "Charter of the United Nations." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly," United Nations.

each session. However, the agenda items for each session invariably relate to “special, political, and decolonization” issues.<sup>7</sup>

## **Governance, Structure, and Membership**

As outlined in Article IX of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), the General Assembly Fourth Committee includes delegates from each of the 193 Member States.<sup>8</sup> The passing of all resolutions in the General Assembly Fourth committee requires the votes of two-thirds of all Member States.<sup>9</sup>

The General Assembly Fourth Committee begins annual sessions each September that continue for the duration of one year, meaning that the General Assembly Fourth Committee is effectively always in session.<sup>10</sup> The committee also has the option of holding Special Emergency sessions in the case of unexpected circumstances.<sup>11</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In recent years, the General Assembly Fourth committee has continued to work towards decolonization, mostly through the implementation of the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/RES/1514 (XV))*,<sup>12</sup> However, the expansion of topics addressed in the General Assembly Fourth Committee in recent years has allowed for an increased focus on Peacekeeping Operations, Palestinian Human Rights, peaceful uses for outer space, and more. Delegates are encouraged to draw inspiration from the committee’s rich history in order to address many of the world’s most complex and urgent issues.

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<sup>7</sup> "A/RES/47/233. Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly." United Nations. September 14, 1993. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> "Charter of the United Nations." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>9</sup>"United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly," United Nations, , accessed June 28, 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.

<sup>10</sup>Switzerland, The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly, 2011, p. 14; United Nations, UN Documentation: General Assembly – Introduction [Website].

<sup>11</sup>Switzerland, The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly, 2011, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> "A/67/432/Rev.1 - E," A/RES/61/295 - F, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://undocs.org/A/67/432/Rev.1>.

## *Annotated Bibliography*

**"A/RES/47/233. Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly." United Nations. September 14, 1993. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/47/a47r233.htm>.**

*This page is the published Resolution of the General Assembly which includes the changes in the role of the General Assembly Fourth Committee. All United Nations Committee Resolutions are available to the public.*

**"A/67/432/Rev.1 - E." A/RES/61/295 - F. Accessed September 14, 2018. <https://undocs.org/A/67/432/Rev.1>.**

*The published resolution of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This has been one of the General Assembly Fourth Committee's greatest focuses in recent years.*

**"Charter of the United Nations." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>.**

*The Charter of the United Nations was established at the time of the establishment of the United Nations. Each chapter specifies the role of each committee or organ of the United Nations. It can be found here.*

**"The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly". Switzerland, Permanent Mission to the United Nations. (2011). Accessed June 28, 2018. [https://www.eda.admin.ch/etc/medialib/downloads/edazen/topics/intorg/un/missny/news.Par.0013.File.tmp/UN\\_PG\\_A\\_Handbook.PDF](https://www.eda.admin.ch/etc/medialib/downloads/edazen/topics/intorg/un/missny/news.Par.0013.File.tmp/UN_PG_A_Handbook.PDF)**

*A guide created by the Swiss Permanent Mission aimed at providing comprehensive information about the United Nations and General Assembly. Contains many insights helpful for working as a delegate in the General Assembly.*

**"United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml>.**

*This is a website created by the United Nations explaining the roles of each committee. This page addresses the General Assembly Fourth Committee and also includes links to their previous sessions and work.*

**"United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.**

*This page of the United Nations Website provides a background for the General Assembly Fourth Committee. The General Assembly Fourth Committee's primary functions and powers as well as links to past sessions can be found here.*

## **I. Economic and Other Activities which Affect the Interests of the Peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories**

*“Always remember that the people are not fighting for ideas, nor for what is in men’s minds. The people fight and accept the sacrifices demanded by the struggle in order to gain material advantages, to live better and in peace, to benefit from progress, and for the better future of their children. National liberation, the struggle against colonialism, the construction of peace, progress and independence are hollow words devoid of any significance unless they can be translated into a real improvement of living conditions.”*

*-Amílcar Cabral*

### **Introduction**

Decolonization has been a central part of the General Assembly Fourth Committee since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945.<sup>13</sup> Although the focus of GA4 has expanded in recent years, decolonization and the protection of peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories remains at the center of the mandate of GA4<sup>14</sup>. These topics are as relevant now as they have ever been on a global scale. However, the term “Non-Self Governing” has evolved since the establishment of the United Nations and the creation of its charter.<sup>15</sup> Currently, the United Nations considers 17 territories that have not yet been granted self-determination to be Non-Self Governing, including the territories of the Western Sahara, Anguilla, United States Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, British Virgin Islands, Falkan Islands, Montserrat, Saint Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands, Gibraltar, American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Tokelau, and Bermuda.<sup>16</sup>

The exploitation of the individuals and resources of Non-Self Governing Territories has been an issue for many centuries. Because of these previous disputes, since the establishment of the United Nations, one of the main focuses of the General Assembly Fourth Committee has been regulating economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories.

### **Economic Activities**

Economic activities which affect the interests of peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories include a wide range of business and financial operations, both domestic and foreign. Foreign investments in the businesses and resources of these territories may be complex, but, when foreign investors include and empower local peoples in their endeavors, have the potential to not only provide Non-Self Governing Territories with financial stability, but further economic opportunity.

The General Assembly Fourth Committee has facilitated the empowerment of Non-Self Governing Territories through foreign business in a variety of ways, including through investments from the country of New Zealand for improved infrastructure opportunity and Renewable Energy Product developments in the territory of Tokelau.<sup>17</sup> This investment empowered the peoples of Tokelau through increased economic opportunities, providing a clear example of the potential effectiveness of the protection of the General Assembly Fourth Committee amongst Non-Self Governing Territories.

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<sup>13</sup> "The United Nations and Decolonization," United Nations, , accessed June 28, 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/fourthcomm.shtml>.

<sup>14</sup> "A/RES/47/233. Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly." United Nations. September 14, 1993. Accessed June 28, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Eagleton, Clyde. "Self-Determination in the United Nations." *American Journal of International Law* 47, no. 1 (1953): 88–93. doi:10.2307/2194153.

<sup>16</sup> "The United Nations and Decolonization." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonselfgovterritories.shtml>.

<sup>17</sup> "A/res/71/107 - E," A/RES/69/186 - E, , accessed September 14, 2018, <http://www.undocs.org/A/res/71/107>.

In order to eliminate the potential for the exploitation of Non-Self Governing Territories by foreign powers, securing the rights of their individuals to the natural resources and land of their territories is essential. Additionally, securing these rights in perpetuity will prevent the potential future exploitation of resources and individuals in Non-Self Governing Territories. Indigenous communities within these territories must also be protected from both foreign and domestic exploitation.

The General Assembly Fourth Committee has secured the rights of the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories to their natural resources previously, including in French Polynesia by reaffirming the rights of the peoples of French Polynesia to marine resources and undersea minerals.<sup>18</sup> This action by the General Assembly Fourth Committee ensured the people of French Polynesia the opportunity to limit fishing activity from outside nations and territories.<sup>19</sup>

### **Other Activities**

Other activities which may affect the interests of peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories may include (but are not limited to) foreign religious missionary efforts, the implementation of technological advances, humanitarian expeditions, disaster relief, educational development and recruitment, political efforts, and nuclear testing by foreign powers. Each of these activities have the potential to not only dilute the native cultural practices of Non-Self Governing Territories, but may result in increased dependence of these Non-Self Governing Territories or even their eventual colonization. In order to protect from such harm to the people of Non-Self Governing Territories, the General Assembly Fourth Committee has monitored these other activities carefully in the past.

An example of the General Assembly Fourth Committee's previous involvement in one such activity is its collaboration with the government of New Caledonia to create and develop educational programs for its citizens.<sup>20</sup> This educational program provides the people of New Caledonia with increased opportunities for Self-Determination. This also provides a framework for United Nations involvement for the potential development of similar educational programs in other Non-Self Governing Territories.

Additional possible non-economic activities which may affect the interests of peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories are those of political and government issues. The General Assembly Fourth Committee has been involved in these issues previously, including in relation to the territory of the Western Sahara. The General Assembly Fourth Committee as well as the United Nations Security Council endorsed and facilitated negotiations between the nation of Morocco and the territory of the Western Sahara for the potential annexation of the territory by the nation of Morocco.<sup>21</sup> This facilitation of peaceful negotiations is one way the General Assembly Fourth Committee has protected the people of Non-Self Governing Territories.

### **The Role of the United Nations**

The United Nations has worked to address the needs of the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories in a variety of ways. In previous sessions, the General Assembly Fourth Committee has heard from petitioners and representatives of Non-Self Governing Territories in order to better understand the needs of their communities.<sup>22</sup> In its 2017 Session, the General Assembly Fourth Committee discussed the granting of Independence to colonized territories and reviewed the reports of Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard

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<sup>18</sup> Manuel Terai, *PDF*, New York, New York: United Nations, May 16-18, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Manuel Terai, *PDF*, New York, New York: United Nations, May 16-18, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> "A/RES/71/119 - E," A/RES/69/186 - E, , accessed September 14, 2018, <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/119>.

<sup>21</sup> "A/res/71/106 - E," A/RES/69/186 - E, , accessed September 14, 2018, <http://www.undocs.org/A/res/71/106>.

<sup>22</sup> "Fourth Committee," United Nations, , accessed June 28, 2018, <https://www.un.org/ga/53/session/fourth/ac45311e.htm>.

to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2016.<sup>2324</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories are particularly vulnerable to the cultural, economic, and political exploitation of foreign powers. Previous disputes over these territories have slowed the stability and independence of Non-Self Governing Territories as well as caused international disputes and tension. Protecting the peoples of these territories from exploitation and other potentially harmful activities by foreign powers is essential to securing their future stability, independence, and self-determination. Delegates are encouraged to implement previously effective solutions on a wider scale as well as to continue to seek new and innovative ways to protect and empower the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories through economic and other activities.

## **Questions to Consider**

1. How can the General Assembly Fourth Committee secure the legal rights of the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories?
2. What standards and criteria must be implemented in order to regulate Foreign Powers conducting business, investments, etc. in Non-Self Governing Territories?
3. What standards and criteria must be implemented in order to regulate foreign groups conducting missionary, humanitarian, educational, or other activities in Non-Self Governing Territories?
4. How can the General Assembly Fourth Committee facilitate the technological development of Non-Self Governing Territories while maintaining their native cultural practices?

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<sup>23</sup> "A/C.4/71/INF/1 - E," S/RES/1888(2009) - E, , accessed June 28, 2018, <http://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/71/INF/1>.

<sup>24</sup> "A/71/23 - E," S/RES/1888(2009) - E, , accessed June 28, 2018, <http://undocs.org/A/71/23>.

## *Annotated Bibliography*

**"A/71/23 - E." S/RES/1888(2009) - E. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://undocs.org/A/71/23>.**

*A report published by the United Nations conducted by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2016. This is one of the main ways the United Nations has interacted with the Peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories in recent years.*

**"A/res/71/106 - E." A/RES/69/186 - E. Accessed September 14, 2018. <http://www.undocs.org/A/res/71/106>.**

*The General Assembly Fourth Committee passed this Resolution in regards to the territory of the Western Sahara and their negotiations with the nation of Morocco. Their encouragement of peaceful negotiations is one way the General Assembly Fourth Committee has worked to protect the people of Non-Self Governing Territories.*

**"A/res/71/107 - E." A/RES/69/186 - E. Accessed September 14, 2018. <http://www.undocs.org/A/res/71/107>.**

*A United Nations published resolution written by the General Assembly Fourth Committee facilitating economic investments for the territory of Tokelau from the country of New Zealand. This is an example of previous involvement of the General Assembly Fourth Committee in protecting the peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories.*

**"A/RES/71/119 - E." A/RES/69/186 - E. Accessed September 14, 2018.**

**<http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/119>.**

*This document is a General Assembly Fourth Committee Resolution published by the United Nations. The General Assembly Fourth Committee's efforts to develop an educational system in the territory of New Caledonia can be found here.*

**"A/C.4/71/INF/1 - E." S/RES/1888(2009) - E. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/71/INF/1>.**

*This page is the published documentation from the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly Fourth Committee. The agenda, allocation of work, and working papers from this session can be found here.*

**"A/RES/47/233. Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly." United Nations. September 14, 1993. Accessed June 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/47/a47r233.htm>.**

*This page is the published Resolution of the General Assembly which includes the changes in the role of the General Assembly Fourth Committee. All United Nations Committee Resolutions are available to the public.*

**Eagleton, Clyde. "Self-Determination in the United Nations." *American Journal of International Law* 47, no. 1 (1953): 88–93. doi:10.2307/2194153.**

*A journal article written about the evolution of the term "Self-Determination" in the United Nations. Also includes insights as to the relationship between the United Nations and Non-Self Governing territories.*

**"Fourth Committee." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.**

**<https://www.un.org/ga/53/session/fourth/ac45311e.htm>.**

*This page is the published documentation from the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly Fourth Committee. The agenda, allocation of work, and working papers from this session can be found here.*

***Terai, Manuel. PDF. New York, New York: United Nations, May 16-18, 2017.***

*PDF report of speech given in General Assembly Fourth Committee by representative of French Polynesia. Accessed from United Nations Non-Self Governing Territories page.*

***"The United Nations and Decolonization." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.  
<http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/fourthcomm.shtml>.***

*This page provides information about past sessions relating to Decolonization in the General Assembly Fourth Committee specifically. Links to press releases from these past sessions can also be found here.*

***"The United Nations and Decolonization." United Nations. Accessed June 28, 2018.  
<http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonselvgovterritories.shtml>.***

*The United Nations published a list of what is considered to be a "Non-Self Governing Territory". The list as well as other information about Non-Self Governing Territories can be found here.*

## II. Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

*“Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them. Our strength is our unity of purpose. To that high concept there can be no end save victory.”*

*- Franklin D. Roosevelt*

### Introduction

The approximate 5 million refugees from Palestine currently comprise one of the largest and longest standing groups of individuals displaced from one area of the World<sup>25</sup>. This massive amount of displaced individuals has further heightened the world’s already unstable economic, religious, and political tensions. The displacement of the Palestinian people dates back to the Arab Israeli War of 1948 as well as the Six-Days War of 1967, in which Israel occupied the previously neutral city of Jerusalem, all of the UN Sanctioned borders of Palestine, as well as parts of Jordan, Egypt, and Syria (although Egypt later regained its territory following the Camp David Accords).<sup>26</sup>

The Palestinian and Israeli conflict over this land has continued since, despite efforts by the United Nations and other foreign powers to negotiate peace agreements, including the Oslo Accords and Second Camp David Accords<sup>27</sup>. Today, the only land the Palestinian people are allowed by the Israeli government is the Gaza strip. However, the Israeli government has placed tight restrictions on their economy, resulting in an approximate 40 percent unemployment rate and poor living conditions for the Palestinian people.<sup>28</sup>

Currently, Israeli Occupied Territories include Golan Heights (Syria), the Gaza Strip, as well as the West Bank.<sup>29</sup> Accusations of Violations of Human Rights by the Israeli Government against the citizens of each of these territories have been made on multiple occasions.

According to the Human Rights Watch, “At least five categories of major violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law characterize the occupation [of the Israeli Government]: unlawful killings; forced displacement; abusive detention; the closure of the Gaza Strip and other unjustified restrictions on movement; and the development of settlements, along with the accompanying discriminatory policies that disadvantage Palestinians.”<sup>30</sup>

### Special Committees

The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories was established in 1968 by the General Assembly in Resolution 2443.<sup>31</sup> The Committee investigates the human rights of those Palestinians under Israeli Occupation in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza strip. According to the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, in order to investigate, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the

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<sup>25</sup> "Palestine Refugees." UNRWA. Accessed June 28, 2018. <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

<sup>26</sup> "Palestine Refugees." UNRWA. Accessed June 28, 2018. <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

<sup>27</sup> Jimmy Carter, "Camp David Accords," Encyclopædia Britannica, July 21, 2016, , accessed June 29, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Camp-David-Accords>.

<sup>28</sup> "Palestine's Economic Outlook - October 2017." World Bank. October 11, 2017. Accessed June 29, 2018. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/westbankandgaza/publication/palestine-s-economic-outlook--october-2017>.

<sup>29</sup> "Occupied Palestinian Territory," OHCHR | Freedom of Religion: UN Expert Hails Albania, but Notes New Challenges and Unresolved Issues from the past, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/menaregion/pages/psindex.aspx>.

<sup>30</sup> "Israel: 50 Years of Occupation Abuses," Human Rights Watch, June 04, 2017, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/04/israel-50-years-occupation-abuses>.

<sup>31</sup> "General Assembly Resolutions 23rd Session." United Nations. Accessed June 29, 2018. <https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/23/ares23.htm>.

Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the occupied Territories “meet[s] with victims, community representatives, witnesses, Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental organizations, officials from Egypt, Jordan and Palestine, and UN representatives to receive testimonies and to hear briefings on a range of human rights issues of concern in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan.”<sup>32</sup>

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established in 1948 following the Arab-Israeli conflict in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 302.<sup>33</sup> The two main purposes of the agency as expressed in the resolution are first, “To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programmes as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission;” and second, “To consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available.”<sup>34</sup>

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees was created in 1950 during aftermath of World War 2.<sup>35</sup> The purpose of the UNHCR is to provide basic resources, healthcare, and safety to those individuals who are displaced or fleeing their countries.

The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories as well as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), all report to the General Assembly Fourth Committee.<sup>36</sup> Each of these committees plays a vital role in the General Assembly Fourth Committee’s ability to assist the people of Palestine and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

## Recent Sessions

The General Assembly Fourth Committee has worked to address the issue of Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories in a variety of ways for many decades. In more recent years, the committee has passed resolutions requiring continued research and investigation be done by The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Resolution A/70/87, passed in 2015, condemns the actions and policies of the Israeli government that violate the Geneva Convention of 1949.<sup>38</sup>

## Conclusion

Both the Palestinian and Israeli forces have been accused of committing human rights offenses throughout the history of their conflict, which has not only increased the severity of the conflict but postponed the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. However, the settlement of Israeli’s along the West Bank and other portions of the land designated to Palestine by the United

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<sup>32</sup> "OHCHR | UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices to Visit Amman and Cairo on Annual Mission," OHCHR | Freedom of Religion: UN Expert Hails Albania, but Notes New Challenges and Unresolved Issues from the past, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19885&LangID=E>.

<sup>33</sup> "Who We Are UNRWA," UNRWA, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>.

<sup>34</sup> "General Assembly Resolution 302," UNRWA, , accessed September 14, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/content/general-assembly-resolution-302>.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations. "History of UNHCR." UNHCR. Accessed September 14, 2018. <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/history-of-unhcr.html>.

<sup>36</sup> "Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories: Report of the Secretary-General – Question of Palestine." United Nations. Accessed June 29, 2018. <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/work-of-the-special-committee-to-investigate-israeli-practices-affecting-the-human-rights-of-the-palestinian-people-and-other-arabs-of-the-occupied-territories-report-of-the-secretary-general/>.

<sup>37</sup> "A/res/70/87 - E," S/RES/1888(2009) - E, , accessed June 29, 2018, <http://undocs.org/A/res/70/87>.

<sup>38</sup> "A/res/70/87 - E," S/RES/1888(2009) - E, , accessed June 29, 2018, <http://undocs.org/A/res/70/87>.

Nations is a serious and ongoing offense to the Human Rights of the people of Palestine and other Arabs of Occupied Territories.

Furthermore, accusations of additional Human Rights Abuses by Israel towards the Palestinian people have arisen throughout their conflicts, including high amounts of Palestinian civilian deaths caused by Israeli forces as well as limited access to basic supplies such as food and water due to restricted economic opportunities resulting in high unemployment in Palestinian territories.

Delegates are encouraged to seek solutions for this issue by providing ways to prevent the continuation of current Human Rights Violations, potential incentives for those governments which cooperate with the will of the United Nations to end these Human Rights Violations, potential pressures for those governments which don't cooperate with the will of the United Nations to end these Human Rights Violations, as well as opportunities for the General Assembly Fourth Committee to further assist the people of Palestine and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

### **Questions to Consider**

1. What incentives or repercussions can the United Nations implement in order to ensure that Member States respect the allotment of territories and other policies made at the United Nations?
2. What incentives or repercussions can the United Nations implement for allies of Israel or Palestine in order to regulate the practices of Israel or Palestine affecting human rights? Would this be effective? Why or why not?
3. How can the United Nations more effectively investigate Humans Rights Offense accusations against both the Palestinian and Israeli forces?
4. How can the United Nations provide aid and opportunity for economic growth for the Palestinian people and Arabs of other occupied territories?

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