

The Elders and The Carter Center  
Joint convening with “1948 Palestinian” civil society and thought leaders  
September 30, 2020, via Teams  
Summary Report

On September 30, 2020, The Carter Center and The Elders jointly hosted an online consultation with “1948 Palestinian” civil society and thought leaders. This was the fourth in a series of similar consultations with Palestinian civil society leaders from the West Bank and Gaza and their counterparts from Israel.

Former Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi and Human Rights activist Hina Jilani participated on behalf of the Elders and introduced the sessions with brief framing comments:

Palestinian rights and justice is a longstanding issue of concern for The Elders and The Carter Center. Since Nelson Mandela founded The Elders in 2007 he set resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict as a priority for the Group. This series of consultations run by the two organizations serves to better understand Palestinian priorities and concerns in the evolving political context in Israel/Palestine and the wider region. Mr. Brahimi described the situation as one that is fast becoming akin to apartheid. Ms. Jilani reminded the group that The Elders had condemned the US plan in the strongest terms and written to European leaders warning against the threat of Israeli annexation of parts of the West Bank. She welcomed the input of the Palestinians to help inform the advocacy work of The Elders.

Participants described an increasingly oppressive, albeit complex atmosphere for Palestinians in Israel. Significant mention of the 2018 Jewish Nation State Law was made, but participants stressed that it did not change their reality on the ground. Rather, it simply confirmed Jewish supremacy policies that have been in place since 1949.

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and using the Covid19 crisis as a pretext One participant mentioned that the cyber units in the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Strategic Affairs have been intensifying smear campaigns online, portraying Palestinians as “terrorists.” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has also been successful at cultivating a “new right” that frames anyone who opposes his policies as an enemy.

Human rights advocates are being targeted and censored on social media, especially Facebook, including being detained and charged with crimes. Administrative detention has also increased

Participants mentioned that the crackdown on foreign funding and human rights advocates, combined with the political climate, was having a chilling effect on European support for Palestinians in Israel. “Donors are afraid to work in this field and to the extent that they are engaged are contributing more to soft social projects like “women’s empowerment” and other social issues. The exception cited was the British Council.

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