

**Arria-Formula meeting on Gaza**  
**20 July 2015**  
**Israel-Palestine NGO Working Group at the UN**

On Monday, July 20, 2015, the United Nations Security Council met in an Arria-Formula format for a meeting entitled, "Reflections One Year Later and Charting a New Course for Gaza." The Permanent Missions of Malaysia and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the UN, co-chaired the meeting, the first ever Arria-Formula Security Council Meeting to focus on Gaza, and the first on the occupied Palestinian Territory since 1997.

One year on from Operation Protective Edge, the 2014 Israeli military offensive against the Gaza Strip, little to no reconstruction has taken place. This latest military offensive has exacerbated an already dire humanitarian crisis due to the ongoing eight-year blockade imposed since 2007 by Israel, the occupying Power, by which it has sealed off Gaza by land, sea and air and separated and isolated it territorially, economically, socially and politically from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The situation faced by Palestinian people in Gaza is intertwined with that of all the Palestinian people who live daily under occupation. The situation in Gaza impacts the possibility for creating a just and secure peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

The Israel-Palestinian NGO Working Group at the United Nations welcomes this historic event. The significance of this Arria-Formula meeting should not be underestimated. For eighteen years, no member state of the Security Council has been able to discuss Palestine through this mechanism.

We are grateful to the Permanent Missions of Malaysia and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the UN for organizing the meeting. We are grateful for the briefings and testimonies given to the Security Council from colleagues who share our concerns for Palestinians and Israelis. We are encouraged to see many constructive and compassionate interventions from members of the Security Council, and urge each member state to work to end the status quo.

It is time for the members of the Security Council to overcome the current inertia, and work toward new approaches and solutions that pursue a peace founded on justice for Palestinians and Israelis. Concerted and sustained engagement by a wide array of dedicated actors, state and non-state alike, has the potential to transform the unacceptable situation that currently exists.

The Israel-Palestine NGO Working Group at the UN hopes this meeting can help turn a new page in the long history of the long history of addressing the Question of Palestine at the UN. The ideas raised in the Arria-Formula meeting will, hopefully, encourage the Security Council to engage in renewed negotiation to end the blockade and unsustainable situation in Gaza and catalyze a new course of action that leads to an end to the occupation and a peaceful future for the people of Gaza, and, indeed, for all Palestinians and Israelis.

Speaking to the Security Council were Mr. Vance Culbert, Country Director for the Norwegian Refugee Council, Ms. Wafaa Kafarna, Deputy Project Manager for the Norwegian Refugee Council (via pre-recorded video), Dr. Ardi Imseis of Cambridge University (via pre-recorded video), Ms Tania Hary, Deputy Director of Gisha—Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, and Dr. Sara Roy, Senior Research Scholar, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University. The Israel-Palestine NGO Working Group

at the UN was pleased to assist with the preparations for this event, to contribute to bringing new voices to the Security Council.

For further information on the situation in Gaza as of July 2015, see the following:

**Children in Armed Conflict, A/69/926–S/2015/409**

Report of the Secretary General, 5 June 2015

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/926&Lang=E&Area=UNDOC](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/926&Lang=E&Area=UNDOC)

**Gaza in 2020: A liveable place?**

United Nations Country Team in the occupied Palestinian territory

<http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/publications/gaza/Gaza%20in%202020.pdf>

**The Gaza Strip: The Humanitarian Impact of the Blockade**

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory

[http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha\\_opt\\_gaza\\_blockade\\_factsheet\\_july\\_2015\\_english.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_blockade_factsheet_july_2015_english.pdf)

**Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict, A/HRC/29/52**

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/ColGazaConflict/Pages/ReportColGaza.aspx#report>

**Charting a New Course: Overcoming the stalemate in Gaza**

This report was initiated by members of the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA). Signatories to this report include AIDA members and members of other regional coordination networks.

[https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/bp-charting-new-course-stalemate-gaza-130415-en.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp-charting-new-course-stalemate-gaza-130415-en.pdf)