



جامعة فلسطين الأهلية
Palestine Ahliya University



PALESTINE AHLIYA UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER

A monthly newsletter published by the
International Affairs and Public Relations Department

MAY 2024



Continuation of Israeli violations against Palestine and higher education institutions

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Ministry of Education
& Higher Education

Israeli Occupation Violations Against Education in Palestine

7 October 2023 - 28 May 2024

Students	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	62	349	130	6649 ⁺	10800 ⁺	-
Universities	26	115 ⁺	157 ⁺	547 ⁺	1100 ⁺	Unknown

Educational staff	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	1	9	88 ⁺	334	1089	Unknown
Universities	-	Unknown	7	95	1060 ⁺	Unknown

Attacks on Schools & Universities

West Bank		Gaza Strip	
Schools	Universities	Schools	Universities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (69) schools were subject to vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (5) Universities were subject to repeated intrusions, vandalism and tampering with their possessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (119) Schools severely damaged in Gaza, and more than (62) Schools completely destroyed. ● (126) government schools/attacks & vandalism ● (65) UNRWA schools/attacks and vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (19) Universities were severely damaged in Gaza. ● More than (31) university buildings were completely destroyed. ● Partial destruction of (55) university buildings

Since the outset of the aggression:

- (88) thousand students deprived to access to their universities.
- (620) thousand students deprived of access to their schools
- A significant majority of students undergo trauma and contend with challenging health conditions

The Right of the Palestinians to Education

International and local charters and treaties have guaranteed the right to education as a fundamental pillar of human rights, as stated in Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In turn, Article 2 of the Palestinian Higher Education Law stipulates that higher education is a right for every citizen who meets the necessary requirements. Therefore, we are facing a guaranteed and safeguarded right for the Palestinian people, who continue to struggle to attain their basic rights, including higher education, which should be enjoyed freely and safely within a system of equal opportunities for all. For decades



Dr. Imad Al-Zeer
University President

under Israeli occupation, this right has been continuously undermined, with educational infrastructure, students, and academic staff being systematically targeted. Despite these challenges, Palestinians have demonstrated resilience and innovation in maintaining and developing their educational system. The higher education sector is a cornerstone of sustainable development for Palestinian society, representing history and shaping future generations. It serves as a source of qualified human resources capable of innovation and leadership in various vital sectors such as health, education, and the economy. This article aims to highlight the challenges imposed by the occupation, how to maintain the continuity of the educational process under current conditions, the potential for considering the Palestinian educational experience as a model for countries affected by wars, and providing a roadmap to ensure the right to education and its quality amid ongoing conflicts worldwide.

The Israeli occupation has had a profound impact on the Palestinian educational system, through its continuous attempts to weaken the educational process and target students and academic staff. Since the first Palestinian uprising in the late 1980s, the occupation has sought to close Palestinian universities and disrupt higher education as part of its strategy to suppress Palestinian resistance. Educational institutions have faced repeated closures, curfews, military raids, and infrastructure destruction. In 2024, this onslaught was particularly severe; according to a report issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education, Israeli military operations destroyed 75% of the infrastructure of 19 educational institutions in Gaza. This destruction targeted physical infrastructure as well as the assassination and arrest of university presidents, faculty members, and students, significantly impacting the continuity of education. Additionally, restrictions on movement between Palestinian areas exacerbated the situation, preventing over 150,000 students from accessing higher education either fully or partially, and forcing institutions to rely on methods such as online and blended learning. Additionally, the occupation impedes the attraction of international academic expertise and participation in academic and student exchanges and global academic conferences, isolating Palestinian academia from the broader global educational community. This isolation not only affects the quality of education and research in Palestinian universities but also limits the opportunities for Palestinian students and professors to interact with their international counterparts and benefit from modern scientific and academic advancements. Despite these harsh conditions, the Palestinian academic community demonstrates resilience and creativity in finding alternative solutions to maintain and develop education, reflecting a strong determination to confront challenges and uphold the right to education as a fundamental right that cannot be compromised.

In response to the challenges imposed by the Israeli occupation, Palestinians have increasingly turned to e-learning and continuous education as vital tools to ensure the quality and continuity of education. Although e-learning platforms have helped educational institutions maintain educational activities despite material barriers and movement restrictions, there are serious concerns

about the quality of outputs from this system. One of the fundamental problems is that online education inhibits direct interaction with instructors, reducing the effectiveness of engagement and affecting the quality of education. Additionally, the available tools for e-learning are limited in virtual classrooms and some published materials, and there is no integrated system for e-learning that can meet all the needs of students and academics. Despite the regularity of the educational process through technological means, there has been a noticeable decline in students' academic achievement, which is not necessarily indicative of the quality of the educational process. Many students complain about their inability to concentrate and understand the material presented during online lectures, highlighting the need for constructive criticism to improve the e-learning process.

In addition, the current generation of students has experienced the COVID-19 crisis, which has led to their disruption from traditional education in one way or another, adding new challenges for them. There should be a focus on developing educational strategies that go beyond the current challenges and ensure better interaction between students and instructors. Enhancing direct interaction by developing educational tools and platforms that enable students to interact better with lecturers and peers, such as live discussion sessions and hands-on workshops, and improving educational tools through investing in the development of a comprehensive system for online education including comprehensive digital libraries and updated and diverse educational resources, are considered priorities. Additionally, training instructors through providing training programs on the best practices in online education, and providing psychological and educational support to students to help them adapt to the online learning environment and improve their academic performance, are essential. Furthermore, regular assessments of the quality of online education and its outcomes should be conducted, and the roles of accreditation and quality assurance bodies should be developed, utilizing these assessments to continually improve the educational process. Amid challenging circumstances, the Palestinian academic community demonstrates resilience and creativity in finding alternative solutions to maintain and enhance the continuity of

education. However, it is essential to address existing challenges to ensure that online education is not only a means to overcome current barriers but also an effective tool for achieving high-quality education for all students.

To enhance the right to education for Palestinians, it is necessary to develop a roadmap towards maintaining the continuity and improving the quality of the learning process within the context. This roadmap includes key measures and strategies to address challenges and enhance the continuity and quality of education. Firstly, it is essential to reform and develop the educational infrastructure, conduct a comprehensive assessment of the educational infrastructure, and prioritize areas for reform and development. Securing funding from international donors, government budgets, and partnerships with the private sector is crucial for rebuilding and developing educational facilities. Additionally, investing in technological infrastructure to support models of online and blended learning is necessary to ensure the continuity of the educational process amidst current challenges.

On the other hand, financial sustainability is crucial for the success of maintaining the education system. Establishing endowment funds for higher education to provide sustainable financial support and enhancing partnerships with the private sector to obtain funding through corporate social responsibility initiatives are essential. Additionally, frameworks for quality assurance and accreditation must be established to ensure that educational programs meet international standards and align with the needs of the job market. This requires developing a comprehensive framework for quality assurance, including regular assessments and feedback mechanisms, and regularly updating curricula to incorporate modern educational methodologies and align them with the evolving needs of the labor market.

Priority should be given to investing in research and innovation. Key steps include allocating funding for research and development within university budgets, establishing research centers focus-

ing on priority areas such as health, technology, agriculture, and environmental sustainability. Additionally, incentives should be provided to faculty and students to participate in research projects, and partnerships with international research institutions and organizations should be enhanced for joint projects and knowledge exchange.

Programs for exchange and partnerships with international universities should be established to facilitate the mobility of students and faculty members, and joint degree programs with reputable international institutions should be developed to offer dual qualifications. Additionally, participation in international conferences, workshops, and seminars should be encouraged to promote knowledge exchange and networking. In addition to capacity building through providing continuous professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, establishing mentoring programs to support academics and administrators at the beginning of their careers is crucial. To ensure inclusivity and equity, scholarship and financial aid programs should be developed to support marginalized and disadvantaged students, and awareness programs should be implemented to increase awareness of higher education opportunities among underrepresented communities. Furthermore, support services should be provided, including academic advising, career advice, and promoting policies and practices that enhance diversity and inclusivity within higher education institutions.

In conclusion, preserving Palestinians' right to education amid the challenges imposed by decades of Israeli occupation can be achieved through following a roadmap based on community engagement, international partnerships, technology, and continuous support. By learning from the Palestinian experience and implementing a strategic roadmap, other conflict-affected areas can also strive to ensure the continuity and quality of education. Collaboration between the government, universities, civil society, and international partners is essential to achieve these goals and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to pursue higher education and contribute to the sustainable development of their nation.

Top news

The Board of Directors of the Arab Council for Academic Exchange holds its first meeting



The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Arab Council for Academic Exchange was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab Universities Union in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The meeting was chaired by His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Arab Universities Union, Prof. Amr Ezzat Salama, and the Chairman of the Board of the Arab Council for Academic Exchange, Dr. Imad Al-Zeer, President of Palestine Ahliya University, which hosted the council's headquarters. The meeting was attended by the members of the Board of Directors physically and via Zoom.

This meeting marks the first gathering of the Board of Directors, which was formed by the decision of the General Conference of the Arab Universities Union during its fifty-sixth session held at the University of Baghdad in March 2024.

International and Local Cooperation

The Faculty of Administrative and Financial Sciences participates in preparing the Financial Culture Textbook for Palestinian universities in collaboration with the Palestinian Capital Market Authority and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). Dr. Adnan Qabajah prepared the chapter on Risk Management.



Palestine Ahliya University participates in the 29th Arab Forum for Exchange of Training Opportunities in Kurdistan, Iraq, hosted by Erbil Technical University. It was represented by Mr. Wajdi Al-Jaafari, Head of the Alumni and Training Unit, along with 65 higher education institutions from 13 countries.



Palestine Ahliya University has signed several memoranda of understanding with local institutions to organize the field training process for students, aiming to provide them with practical skills and experiences to prepare them for the labor market.

Conferences

Dean of the College of Administrative and Financial Sciences at Palestine Ahliya University, Dr. Adnan Qabajah, presented four research papers at the International Conference on Technology for Innovation Management, held in Amman, Jordan, from May 19th to 20th, 2024

LEADING THE FUTURE OF TECH INNOVATION

THIS CAPTION EMPHASIZES YOUR COMMITMENT TO BEING AT THE FOREFRONT OF TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION MANAGEMENT.

Mrs. Shereen Al-Dabbas from Palestine Ahliya University is participating in the 8th International Educational Conference titled

“Visions and Ideas for Hot Issues in Education in the Arab World: Challenges of Reality and Future Prospects”

held in Aqaba. The research is titled: “The Awareness Level of Postgraduate Students in Palestinian Universities of the Concepts and Apps. of Artificial Intelligence, and Proposed Educational Policies to Enhance it.



Exhibitions and Workshops

The students from the Graphic Design program at the Faculty of Professions and Applied Sciences at Palestine Ahliya University organized an exhibition titled

“No Sugar in the City”

featuring 70 artistic works including paintings, prints, and digital images. In these works, the students expressed an artistic vision that reflects the harsh reality experienced by the Palestinian people.



Palestine Ahliya University inaugurates the third exhibition for students of the

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The Humanities Department at the Faculty of Humanities and Educational Sciences is organizing a workshop titled “Palestinian Legislation and Human Rights in Palestine (Political Systems).”



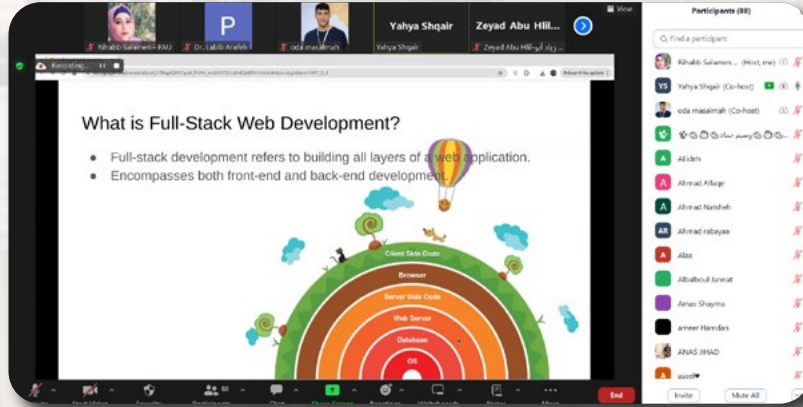
The Engineering Department at the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at Palestine Ahliya University, in collaboration with the Engineers Syndicate, is organizing a workshop titled (Applications of Green Buildings in Palestine), led by Dr. Mahmoud Shakarneh.



The Faculty of Humanities and Educational Sciences at Palestine Ahliya University is hosting a workshop titled “Labor Law, Changes in the Job Market, and Volunteerism Culture” in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor in Bethlehem Governorate.



The Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at Palestine Ahliya University is holding a workshop titled “Problem Solving and Full Stack Development,” presented by Engineer Odeh Masalmeh from Asal Company, and Engineer Yahya Shuqeer from i3hub Company.



Palestine Ahliya University, through the Department of Consultations and Mental Health in the Deanship of Student Affairs, in collaboration with “Ana Jawwal” team, is organizing a series of meetings on “The Impact of War on Our Mental Health and Self-Care,” presented by the Head of the Counseling and Mental Health Department, Mrs. Ameera Danoun.



The Continuing Education Center at Palestine Ahliya University, in collaboration with Al-Istiqlal University, Ural Federal University in Russia, and Al-Quds Open University, is organizing an international lecture titled “Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Medical Fields.”



Student Initiatives and Activities

As part of the Legal Clinic course, students organized several field visits to local community institutions under the supervision of Mrs. Rasha Suboh:



Visiting the Women and Family Protection and Empowerment Center (Mehawer).



Educational visit to the Directorate of Transportation and Communications in Bethlehem Governorate.



Educational visit to Bethlehem Magistrate Court and Public Prosecution

Within the Community Service course, students implemented a variety of initiatives including:



Student initiative at "Diwan Umm Tuba" in Jerusalem targeting women in the village.



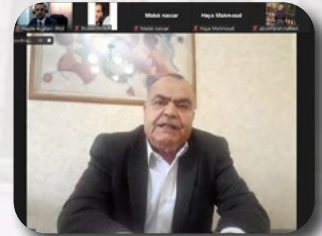
Student initiative at "Ibdaa Kindergarten" consisting of recreational activities and entertainment for children.



Initiative: Painting a mural on the walls of the entrance of the Occupational Therapy Department at Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital with the assistance of patients in the hospital.

Within the Global Culture course, a group of experts in their fields deliver lectures to students in the presence of the course coordinator, Mr. Wajdi Al-Jaafari:

Dr. Ahmed Rafiq Awad, the head of the Jerusalem Studies Center, delivers a lecture titled “Landmarks of Palestinian Identity and Pride in Them”



Dr. Jamal Amr, specialist and expert in Jerusalem affairs, presents a lecture on the Judaization of Jerusalem.

Dr. Iyad Abdullah, Director of the Master’s Program in Physical Education and Sport Sciences at Birzeit University, delivers a lecture on sport and health.



The writer and author, Mr. Aziz Al-Asa, delivers a lecture titled “The Multifaceted Nakba: The Evacuated Villages.”

Dr. Omar Rahhal, Director of the Media Center for Human Rights and Democracy - Shams, presents a lecture on human rights.



Students of the Life Skills course, under the supervision of Mrs. Aya Shatreet, organize an educational visit to the Saint Nicholas Home for the Elderly in Beit Jala. During the visit, students distribute flowers to the elderly.



Palestine Ahliya University and Bethlehem Sports Club for the Disabled organize an exhibition wheelchair basketball match at Abu Ammar Sports Hall in Bethlehem.

The Continuing Education Center at Palestine Ahliya University celebrates the graduation of students from the Cupping Therapy course.



The Law Faculty Club, in collaboration with the Dean-ship of Student Affairs at Palestine Ahliya University, organizes a farewell and honoring ceremony for the graduates of the Faculty of Law for the academic year 2023/2024.

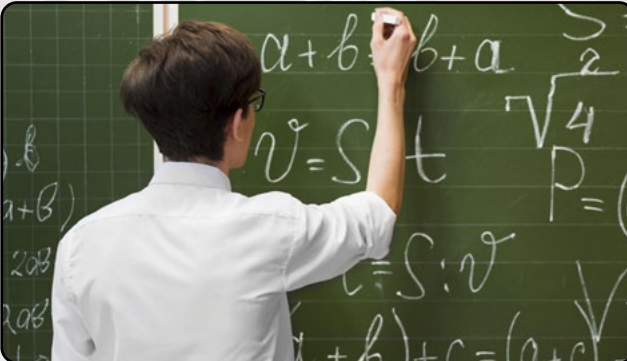
Scientific Research Corner



Dr. Ahmed Al-Bataran participates in publishing a new research paper titled **“Traditional Ophthalmology Practice and Its Determinants among Eye Patients in the West Bank.”**



Dr. Faeyz Abuamria and Dr. Mousa Ajouz participate in publishing a new research paper titled **“Exploring Sequencing: How Buy Now, Pay Later Platforms Work and Their Impact on Consumer Impulse Buying and Sustainability.”**



Mrs. Asmaa Hussein participates in publishing a new research paper titled **“The Impact of Implementing PIQMAS on Engagement Processes among Upper Elementary Students in Mathematics and Science.”**



Dr. Montaser Sayed Ahmed participates in publishing a new research paper titled **“Rationales for Conducting Urgent Brain Computed Tomography in Palestinian Government Hospitals.”**

Palestine Ahliya University is pleased to open its doors for productive research partnerships with academic institutions and distinguished researchers in various fields. You can contact us via email at: research.clinic@paluniv.edu.ps



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