



Week 18: Freedom of Speech

WEEK
18 APR. 30
TO
MAY. 6

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

408 violations against journalists and media freedoms in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were recorded in 2020.

53% were by the Israeli occupation forces.

23% were committed by social media companies.

24% were committed by Palestinian parties.



Sources: Tamleh, MADA, Reporters Without Borders

<http://kuminow.com/FreedomofSpeech>

[Kumi Now](#)

[News](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Organizations in Action](#)

[Arts and Culture](#)

[You Should Know](#)

[View in browser](#)

Dear Kumi Now supporter,

You can [download this week's newsletter in PDF right here.](#)

Recently, **B'Tselem** made the historic step of [calling the Israeli occupation apartheid](#). **Human Rights Watch** joins in this conclusion with their report "[A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#)". There is a [3-minute summar video](#), or you can download the [full 224-page report in PDF](#). B'Tselem [welcomed the report](#).

And happy May Day! Or, if you prefer, happy **International Workers' Day**! On this May 1st you can watch **B'Tselem's** "[Even on May Day 2021, Palestinian workers at the checkpoint can only dream of an 8-hour workday](#)" and **Mondoweiss's** "[Palestinian workers at the Israeli Military Terminal](#)". And today sees the release of **Al-Haq's** report "[Captive Markets, Captive Lives | Palestinian Workers in Israeli Settlements](#)".

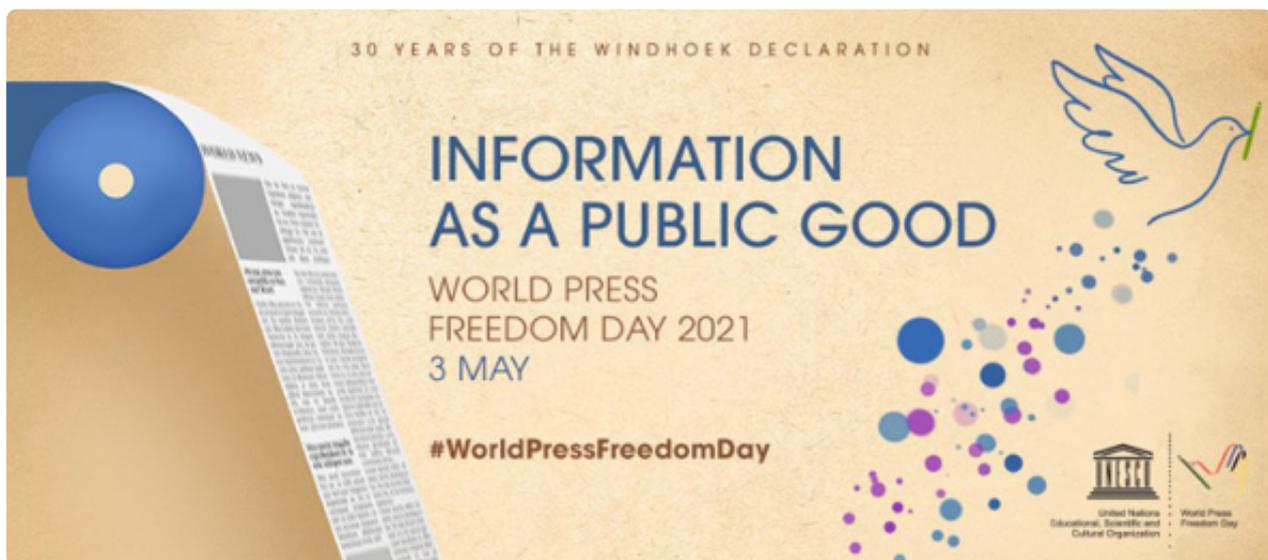
On Tuesday we had the pleasure of hearing **Jonathan Cook**, the award-winning author and journalist, discuss Israel's Nation-State Law and other forms of discrimination. The replay of the session is now available [on YouTube](#) and [on our website](#). The website includes his bio and all of the links shared during the gathering.

We would love it if you could share the session with your community. You could use language such as:

Last week we learned how Israeli has codified decades of discriminatory laws and practices against Palestinians into the Nation-State Law. Our guest was the journalist and author Jonathan Cook. Learn more in the latest Kumi Now online gathering. <https://youtu.be/FeKmyJ7o4CA>

We were visited by some mildly annoying troublemakers before the session started. None of that made it into the video, but we might return to requiring a quick registration before you enter the webinars in the future. Regardless, the link stays the same, and is listed below.

And as usual, If you would like to speak for up to 5 minutes in a future meeting about how you are using Kumi Now or otherwise advocating for Palestine, or to promote your own events for Palestine, please [email us](#) at kumi@kuminow.com.



Today is [World Press Freedom Day](#). According to **UNESCO**, "3 May acts as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their commitment to press freedom and is also a day of reflection among media professionals about issues of press freedom and professional ethics. Just as importantly, World Press Freedom Day is a day of support for media which are targets for the restraint, or abolition, of press freedom. It is also a day of remembrance for those journalists who lost their lives in the pursuit of a story."

That is part of what we do this week, building on the work of the **Palestinian Center for**

Development and Media Freedoms (MADA) in our [Kumi Entry](#). So let's move on to this week's Kumi Now online gathering, where we will address freedoms of speech and the press:



May 4: Week 18 - Freedom of Speech

[Read the full entry online.](#)

As we celebrate World Press Freedom Day on May 3, we want the world to know that Palestinian journalists face regular threats of censorship and violence. Frustratingly, this censorship has been aided and abetted by tech giants such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Zoom.

Our guests will include **Donna Baranski-Walker**, founder and executive director of **Rebuilding Alliance**, and others.

Time: Tuesday, May 4, at 6:00pm East Jerusalem, Palestine time (UTC+3) That's...

- Pacific (Seattle/Vancouver): 8am
- Central (Chicago): 10am
- Eastern (New York/Toronto): 11am
- Atlantic: 12pm
- Newfoundland: 12:30pm
- Greenwich (London): 4pm
- Central Europe (Paris/Stockholm): 5pm
- South Africa: 5pm
- Manila: 11pm

Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94679502800> (You might need to do a quick registration. This link is the same, either way.)

Remember, if you'd like to receive a reminder about the gathering an hour before it begins, please use the [registration form at the bottom of the page](#).

And here's what we have coming up in May so you can plan ahead and decide how you want to be a part of Kumi Now:



EVERY TUESDAY | 6PM PALESTINE TIME | KUMINOW.COM

Coming up in Kumi Now

Each week below will have an online gathering with a guest or guests speaking on the topic. The time and Zoom registration link will be the same each week.

The weekly newsletter will always contain reminders of the upcoming online gatherings and the Zoom link. But if you're like me and need a reminder right before the sessions begin, you can [register to receive a reminder email one hour prior to each online gathering](#). And no more digging through your inbox looking for the Zoom link! Just [use the registration form at the bottom of the page](#).



May 11: Week 19 - Nation-State Law

[Read the full entry online.](#)

Palestinians in the occupied territory have long suffered as a result of U.S. support of Israel. The Trump administration's decisions to move the embassy to Jerusalem on May 14, 2018, cut aid to Palestine, and recognize Israel's claims to the Syrian Golan are only a few of the markers of America's neglect of Palestine.

For our Kumi Action we will research and publicize our local governments' support for Israel.



May 18: Week 20 - The Ongoing Nakba

[Read the full entry online.](#)

For Palestinians, May 15 is Nakba Day. That is the day following the Israeli Independence Day on the Gregorian calendar. The term Nakba refers to the 1948 catastrophe when over 1,000,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes or fled in fear for their lives. But this use of the term in the past tense suggests that the Nakba was over and done 70 years ago. This is not the case, as the events of 1948 were just part of a consistent and ongoing process that dates back to the Balfour Declaration and continues today.

For our Kumi Action we will work to rename a street or roadway in our community.



May 25: Week 21 - Preserving History and Culture

[Read the full entry online.](#)

The United Nations celebrates May 21 as the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. The day was declared following UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, a document that clearly sees cultural diversity and tolerance as key to developing the dialogue necessary to achieve peace and sustainable development around the world.

However, Israel continues to build and plant over Palestinian history and culture while simultaneously erasing it from street signs, historical markers, and history books.

For our Kumi Action we will write profiles of different aspects of Palestine culture and history and share them with the world.

Kumi Now

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FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Just the facts...

Israel ranked 86 and Palestine ranked 132 (of 180) in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index.

Two Palestinian journalists were killed by Israeli snipers and dozens wounded while covering the "March of Return" protests.

At least three West Bank Palestinian journalists have permanently lost the use of an eye from IDF live fire.

The IDF have harassed or closed many Palestinian media outlets in recent years for allegedly inciting violence.

408 violations against journalists and media freedoms in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were recorded in 2020.

215 (53%) were by the Israeli occupation forces.

95 (23%) were committed by social media companies.

96 (24%) were committed by Palestinian parties.

Israel arrested more than 5,500 Palestinians from the occupied territory using information from social media under broad definitions of "incitement" in 2019.

From January 2018 and March 2019 the PA detained 1,609 persons for insulting "higher authorities" and creating "sectarian strife."

752 of these detentions were related to social media posts.

Sources: 7amleh, MADA, Reporters Without Borders

<http://kuminow.com/FreedomofSpeech>

Please note: To match the dates in the book, we will now be posting a new entry each Friday, and this newsletter should go out each Friday or Saturday.

Sharing and publicizing: The graphics in this newsletter are designed to be the perfect size and shape to share to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. So each week you can help the cause simply by sharing these images online. It's one more option you have to help.

Kumi Week #18: Freedom of Speech

Week 18 of Kumi Now is now available [on the website](http://kuminow.com/FreedomofSpeech). As we celebrate World Press

Freedom Day on May 3, we want the world to know that Palestinian journalists face regular threats of censorship and violence. Frustratingly, this censorship has been aided and abetted by tech giants such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Zoom. This week, the Kumi Now community is working to defend Palestinian voices and those speaking for Palestine in Palestine, Israel, and around the world. Here's what you need to know and what you can do so that together we can *rise up*.

Please read the essay on this issue and the story from Yasmin Akram Al-Na'ouq, freelance photographer. And here are a few more facts for you:



Understanding Freedom of Speech: Just the Facts...

- Israel ranked 86 and Palestine ranked 132 (of 180) in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index.
- Since May 2018, two Palestinian journalists have been killed by Israeli snipers and dozens have been wounded while covering the “March of Return” protests in the Gaza Strip.
- The IDF have harassed or closed many Palestinian media outlets in recent years for allegedly inciting violence.
- At least three West Bank Palestinian journalists have permanently lost the use of an eye through live fire from Israeli Defense Forces.
- 408 violations against journalists and media freedoms in the West Bank (including occupied Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip were recorded in 2020.
- The Israeli occupation committed 215 of these attacks (equivalent to about 53%).
- Palestinian parties committed a total of 96 violations (about 24%).
- Social media companies committed 95 violations (about 23%).
- Israel arrested more than 5,500 Palestinians from the occupied territory using information from social media under broad definitions of “incitement” in 2019.
- Between January 2018 and March 2019 the Palestinian Authority detained 1,609 persons for insulting “higher authorities” and creating “sectarian strife.”
- 752 of these detentions were related to social media posts.

These facts are drawn from:

- [“Know Your Digital Rights: Towards a Safe, Fair & Free Palestinian Digital Space”](#) from **7amleh**.
- [“#Hashtag Palestine 2019: An Overview of Digital Rights Issues of Palestinians”](#) from **7amleh**.
- [“Violations of Media Freedoms in Palestine: Annual Report 2020”](#) from the **Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)**.
- **Reporters Without Borders'** entries on [Israel](#) and [Palestine](#).

Learning More

To learn more, you should:

- Read [“Israeli repression aims to silence Palestinian journalists”](#) by Greg Shupak for **The Electronic Intifada**.
- Watch **7amleh's** [“Palestinian Digital Rights”](#) webinar, held last year in partnership

with **Oxfam Novib**.

- Watch **Palestinian Return Centre's** [“Reporting on Palestine: Behind the Headlines”](#).

Our Just the Facts and Kumi Now entry focus on the silencing of Palestinian voices in Israel and Palestine. However, the silencing of voices for Palestine in the U.S. and the weaponization of the IHRA definition of antisemitism to silence voices for and from Palestine are also important violations that we should know about. To learn about these issues you could start with:

- The [“Not Backing Down: Israel, Free Speech & the Battle for Palestinian Rights”](#) panel in 2019 featuring Roger Waters, Linda Sarsour, Marc Lamont Hill, and others.
- [“Weaponizing Anti-Semitism: IHRA and Ending the Palestine Exception”](#) from **USACBI** featuring Cornel West, Dima Khalibi, Raymond Deane, and Richard Falk
- [“Free Speech & the Right to Protest”](#) from **FMEP**, featuring Dima Khalidi (Palestine Legal), Yousef Munayyer (non-resident fellow at Arab Center DC), and Hadar Susskind (Americans for Peace Now) with Khaled Elgindy (Middle East Institute) and Lara Friedman (Foundation for Middle East Peace).

To go deeper, we are developing an extensive list of [Additional Resources](#) at the bottom of this week’s entry as well as a [YouTube playlist](#) on the subject.

Once you understand the situation you'll want to get involved. Here's the Kumi Action for this week:

Kumi Action



When dissent and the truth are repressed, the best response is to shout your dissent louder and share the truth widely. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have cooperated in allowing the Israeli government to monitor and censor online Palestinian content. This censorship has limited the ability of human rights activists and organizations to speak openly and legally under international law. And, of course, there is no similar agreement allowing Palestine to monitor and censor Israeli individuals and organizations.

As such, pledge to share at least one piece of well-written, eye-opening Palestinian reporting, or one of the articles/reports listed in the Additional Resources section of this entry on the website, each day this week. If you are unsure as to which news organizations routinely produce legitimate journalism from Palestinian journalists, you can start with:

- [+972 Magazine](#)
- [Electronic Intifada](#)
- [IMEMC](#)
- [Mondoweiss](#)
- [Palestine Chronicle](#)
- [Palestine News Network \(PNN\)](#)
- [WAFA](#)
- [This Week in Palestine](#)

When you share these articles across your social networks include a link to this page of the Kumi Now website along with the hashtags #KumiNow and #Kumi18.

News

Important news going on in Palestine, Israel, and the diaspora, from trusted sources of news.

News

- Four families totaling around 30 people have been ordered to leave their homes by May 2nd in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem or face forced eviction by Israeli forces. **Al-Jazeera** has the [latest rundown on the situation](#). **Palestine Portal** has a [whole page of background information and links and ways that you can get involved](#).
- For more information, you can watch the recent **Al-Haq** webinar, "[The Ongoing Nakba in Shaikh Jarrah](#)". You can also watch the documentary "[My Neighborhood](#)" from **Just Vision**, listen to the **IMEU This Is Palestine** podcast episode "[The Ethnic Cleansing of Sheikh Jarrah](#)", or read Yumna Patel's "[It is a Nakba': Campaign to save Sheikh Jarrah builds momentum as forced displacement looms](#)" for **Mondoweiss**.
- President Mahmoud Abbas has postponed the upcoming Palestinian elections, arguing that Israel will not allow residents of occupied East Jerusalem to vote. Thousands of protestors took to the street in Gaza in response. ([WAFa](#)) ([WAFa](#)) ([Palestine Chronicle](#))
- Hamas rejected the delay, calling it a 'coup'. ([AP](#))
- The United Nations urged a for a new election date to be set quickly. ([Palestine Chronicle](#))
- As mentioned above, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published the report "[A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#)", in which it concludes that Israel's policies and practices towards Palestinians cross the line to apartheid.
- Gaza has reimposed mandatory quarantines in response to COVID-19. ([Mondoweiss](#))

Opinion and Analysis

- **Asa Winstanley**, investigative journalist with **Electronic Intifada**, published the video report on "[How Israel helped bring down Jeremy Corbyn](#)".
- **Palestine Chronicle TV** did an [extended video](#) trying to make sense of what has been happening in the Jerusalem Uprising.

Publications

- **This Week in Palestine** has released their [April 2021 issue](#), focused on "Our Environment".
- **Washington Report on Middle East Affairs** has released their [March/April 2021 issue](#).
- **The Institute for Palestine Studies** has released the [newest issue](#) of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.
- **The Institute for Palestine Studies** has released the [Winter 2020 edition](#) of *Jerusalem Quarterly*. You can [download the PDF edition](#) for free. It is part 2 of a "Home and House" theme. You can find the [first issue here](#).

Get Involved

Updates on how Kumi Now partner organizations and other organizations are engaging in the struggle for Palestinian human rights and equality, and ways that you can help.

This Week

- **May 1 to 5: UK ONLY! Medical Aid for Palestinians** will host a "Double Online Screening of *Gaza Surf Club* and *What Walaa Wants*". [Buy your tickets here](#).
- **May 2, 6, 8, 11: Eyewitness Palestine** is hosting virtual field trips with **Mesarvot**, a network of Israeli activists that supports conscientious objectors in their refusal to become soldiers and take part in the occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people. Register [here](#).
- **Tuesday, May 4:** Join us for the latest **Kumi Now** online gathering. Information is near the beginning of the newsletter.

Future

- **Wednesday, May 12: ICAHD** will host a webinar with Jeff Halper interviewing residents from Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah from 5.00-6.15pm (UK time). Register [here](#).
- **Tuesday, May 18: UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People** will organize the virtual event on "International Parliamentary Support to the Question of Palestine" from 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. (New York time). The event will be livestreamed on UN Web TV. More information to come.

Ongoing Campaigns

- **NEW:** Those in the United States should sign [this petition for Sheikh Jarrah, aimed at U.S. Secretary of State Tony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin](#), as well as [this one](#).
- **NEW:** Canadians, meanwhile, should sign [this petition regarding Sheikh Jarrah](#).
- **NEW:** Those in the UK can [make sure their MPs get a copy of the Human Rights Watch report](#).
- **NEW: Palestine Portal** has a [full list of actions you can help take for Sheikh Jarrah](#).
- **Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA)** would like you to [sign the petition](#) "No Dispossession in Silwan". And you can watch the replay of FOSNA's [session on Silwan](#).
- **PSC** ask for residents of the UK to help stop the Defence and Security Equipment International, the world's largest arms fair, which returns to London in September 2021. At DSEI, weapons and military technology will be marketed to representatives of repressive states fuelling racism and injustice. Israel is a seasoned attendee of the fair, buying weapons to maintain its domination of the Palestinian people. Along with Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), PSC is asking you to take action. Do so [here](#).
- The **Palestinian Feminist Collective (PFC)** has released a statement affirming Palestine as a feminist issue. You can [sign the petition here](#).
- Join **Stop the Wall** and **Al-Haq** and over 550 organizations calling on the UN Human Rights Council to stop Israel's impunity in repeatedly destroying the village of Humsa. [Sign the petition](#).

Organizations in Action

Kumi Partners

Updates on how Kumi Now partner organizations are engaging in the struggle for Palestinian human rights and equality.

- **Addameer Association** published a [press release](#) on a letter sent by families in Sheikh Jarrah who face imminent home demolitions.
- **Al Mezan Center For Human Rights** published a [press release](#) on Israel's total closure of the Gaza fishing zone.

- ICAHD released their [April 2021 Newsletter](#).
- **Palestinian Centre for Human Rights** released their "[Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory \(22 – 28 April 2021\)](#)".
- **Sabeel** published the [Wave of Prayer for the week of April 29](#).

Other Organizations

Updates, reports, and actions from the United Nations, governments, and other international organizations that relate to Palestine.

- **Foundation for Middle East Peace** published their [Settlement & Annexation Report: April 29, 2021](#).
- **IMEU** published the latest episode of their ***This Is Palestine*** podcast, "[Groundbreaking Bill on Palestinian Human Rights](#)".
- **Ir Amim** published the report "[The Right of Palestinian Residents of East Jerusalem to Participate in the 2021 Palestinian Elections](#)".
- **The Jerusalem Fund & Palestine Center** held "[A Conversation With Dr. Hanan Ashrawi About the Upcoming Palestinian Elections](#)".
- **Middle East Institute** hosted "[Iran, Israel/Palestine, Egypt, and Turkey](#)".
- **Mondoweiss** released the newest episode of their podcast, "[Students for Justice in Palestine: The past, present and future of the student movement for Palestine](#)".
- **Palestine Deep Dive** posted [part 2](#) and [part 3](#) of "Art as Resistance with Palestinian Cartoonist Mohammad Sabaaneh"
- **PIPD and PSC UK** [streamed and discussed Rabet/PIPD's documentary, "Colonial Economy"](#).
- **Rabet's** documentary "Colonial Economy" can be watched [on its own](#).
- **SabeelCanada** released "[Encounter the Holy Land: Samia Khoury](#)".
- **United Nations** released [NGO Action News – 29 April 2021](#).
- **Washington Report on Middle East Affairs** held their second "End US Support for Israeli Apartheid?" session. The full program is [here](#) and they released the segments individually:
 - "[J Street and the Limitations of Liberal Zionism](#)" with Philip Weiss
 - "[How the Israel Lobby Intervenes in Progressive Party Politics](#)" with Asa Winstanley
 - "[The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism](#)" with Thomas Suárez
 - "[Ideological Underpinnings of the War on Terrorism](#)" with Scott Horton
 - "[Palestinians Confronting the Giant of Christian Zionism](#)" with Alex Awad
 - "[From an Israel-Centric to a Rights-Based Approach](#)" with Zaha Hassan
 - "[Resisting Israel's Lobby on Campus and in the Community](#)" with Robin Kelley

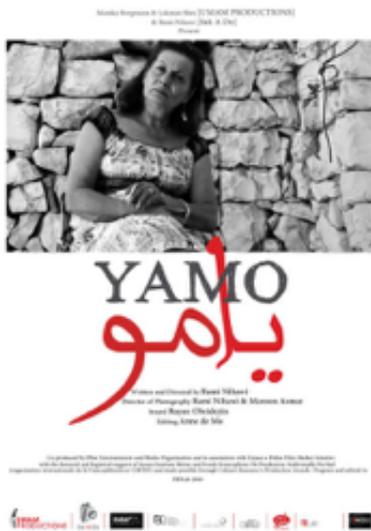
Arts and Culture

Recent and not-so-recent films, books, music, and other arts related to Palestine, as well as news about festivals and other events

- **American Muslims for Palestine** released "[Turning Tables w/ Nur Ashour](#)".
- **Center for Palestine Studies** held the interesting webinar "[Nothing New, Nothing Old with Bilna'es](#)".
- **Middle East Eye** published the video "[From Gaza to Mars: The journey of Palestinian NASA engineer Loay Elbasyouni](#)".
- **Stories from Palestine Podcast** released their latest episode, "[Aida refugee camp and Noor WEG](#)".

Yamo

The **Palestine Film Institute's** film of the week is **Yamo** (Documentary, 2011, 66 minutes). You have until Wednesday to watch it for free [on their website](#). About

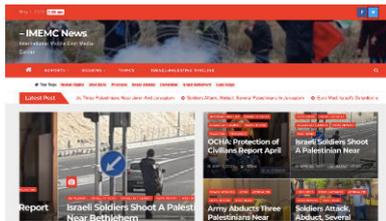


the film:

"It's a film about today, about the choices we make in life. A film about time fleeing at full speed and time suspended. This is not a portrait of my mother, nor of my memory, nor of my house, nor of my family. Yamo is the mixture of all these elements which brings us towards a cut-down dialogue between two generations. A dialogue about dreams, failures, the present, and the future."

You Should Know

One or two people, companies, or organizations you should know, and how you can follow them online.



IMEMC News International Middle East Media Center (IMEMC)

IMEMC News is one of the daily news sources focused on Palestine that we mention in this week's Kumi Action. It truly is one of the best sources for keeping current on the daily realities of the occupation and life in Palestine.

IMEMC News (International Middle East Media Center) was founded by the [Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People](#) in 2003. According to their website, "Being a joint Palestinian-International effort, IMEMC combines Palestinian journalists' deep understanding of the context, history, and the socio-political environment with International journalists' skills in non-partisan reporting."

You can find the IMEMC on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

What's Next

We hope to see you in the online gathering on Tuesday, after which you'll receive another newsletter next Friday/Saturday, focused on our next issue, [U.S. Support of Israel](#). As always, there is more to come!

Sincerely,

The Kumi Now Team

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