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Week 51: Syrian Golan



Dear Kumi Now supporter,

Israel occupied the Syrian Golan in 1967, then passed the [Golan Heights Law](#) (yet another annexation law which aims to create a legal defense for the application of Israeli law in the Golan Heights) in December of 1981, a move condemned by the United Nations at the time but backed by the United States in 2019.

As we take action for the Syrian Golan this week, we are also excited to take part in the release of Sabeel's latest publication, *Challenging Religious Extremism*. Join us this Tuesday to celebrate the launch and learn more:

Next Online Gathering

WEEK 51	CHALLENGING RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM
featuring the Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek and other contributors	KUMI NOW ONLINE
	TUESDAY DECEMBER 20 6PM (UTC+2)
	

December 20: Week 51 - Book Release: Challenging Religious Extremism

[Full information on the gathering is here.](#)

The event will include reflections by Cedar Duaybis, Jonathan Kuttub, Tina Whitehead, Hadar Cohen, Angela Godfrey-Goldstein, Samia Houry, Fr. David Neuhaus, and of course Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek.

Time: Tuesday, December 20, at 6:00pm East Jerusalem, Palestine time (UTC+2) 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: 6pm
- Manila: 12am
- Sydney: 3am (+1 Day)
- Auckland: 5am (+1 Day)

Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94679502800> (There might be a quick registration form, and please set an alarm for yourself for Tuesday.)

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](#).

This Week's Entry

Kumi Week #51: Syrian Golan

Week 51 of Kumi Now is now available [on the website](#). The Syrian Golan (or Golan Heights) is a mountainous region in southwest Syria. During the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Israel occupied over two-thirds of the Syrian Golan—a land mass slightly smaller than Greater London. Today, this area is known as the occupied Syrian Golan/Golan Heights.

Following the Israeli occupation, approximately 95% (130,000) of the native Syrian population was forcibly transferred or displaced from their homes and forbidden from returning. Subsequently, the Israeli military began a widespread campaign to demolish homes, destroying one city and 340 villages and farms. These were replaced by Israeli agricultural settlements, often built with stones from the destroyed villages and farms. In 1981, Israel enacted the Golan Heights Law which purported to annex the territory into the State of Israel, an illegal action widely condemned by the international community.

Please read the essay on the Syrian Golan along with the story of Saleh Abu-Arrar. And here are some facts for you:

Understanding the Syrian Golan. Just the facts...

- In June 1967, Israel seized and occupied 1,250 km² of the Syrian Golan (over 2/3 of the total land mass).
- Israel forcibly transferred or displaced over 130,000 native Syrian inhabitants from their homes.
- More than 26,000 Israeli settlers live in over 34 illegal settlements in the Syrian Golan.
- Together with the Israeli military and authorities, they control 95% of the land.
- The international community has repeatedly stated that the settlements are illegal under international law.
- The native Syrian population of the Occupied Syrian Golan are recognised as having an 'undefined' citizenship, thus denied their basic right to a nationality.
- Around 100 native Syrian inhabitants of the Occupied Syrian Golan have had their permanent residency status revoked since 1982 following travel and residency abroad for study or work. These people are unable to return back to their homes and join their families in the Occupied Syrian Golan.

- More than 9000 acres – the equivalent of over 6000 football pitches – are suspected to be mined in the Occupied Syrian Golan.
- At least 69 Syrians have been victims of landmines in the Occupied Syrian Golan. Among these, 18 died, half of whom were children.
- 60% of Israeli Jewish employers refuse to apply laws that prohibit discrimination against Israeli Palestinians in the labour market.
- Violations of Syrian workers' labour rights started with the banning of Syrian-based labour unions in the 70s and continued with the prohibition of grassroots organizations to take their place.
- The remaining Syrian population of 25,000 live in 5 severely overcrowded villages located in the extreme north.
- As a result of severe restrictions imposed by Israeli planning committees, it is close to impossible for the Syrian population to obtain building permits.
- Israeli authorities seek to appropriate 20,000 acres of land that has been used by the native Syrian residents since Ottoman rule under the guise of the 'Hermon National Park' plan from around two of the Syrian villages.
- President Trump's recent recognition, in violation of international law, of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan endangers regional and international peace and security.

Source

These facts all come from the **AI-Marsad** 'Issues' pages, which you can access from the menu on their [homepage](#).

Learning More

To learn more about the Syrian Golan you can read the AI-Marsad 'Issues' articles on their [website](#) and check out their [map](#) and accompanying [booklet in PDF](#). They also have a [series of reports](#) on various aspects of the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan.

And we have a [playlist of related videos](#) on YouTube.

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

Kumi Action



Photo by Tracy Hunter used under a Creative Commons [license](#).

Write to international travel companies such as Airbnb, Booking.com, eDreams, Expedia, and Lonely Planet that misrepresent the occupied Syrian Golan as part of Israel and promote accommodation and tourist activities in illegal Israeli settlements. Tell them that this misrepresentation is false advertising and violates consumers' rights. Request that these companies comply with international human rights and humanitarian law standards and stop promoting accommodation and tourism in illegal Israeli settlements.

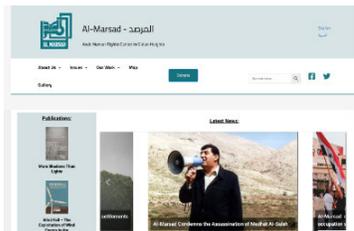
- Booking.com's customer service email is customer.service@booking.com and Booking.com's press office email is lon-booking@ketchum.com.
- Contact Lonely Planet by visiting this [link](#). It provides options to give feedback on guidebooks and email addresses to contact Lonely Planet.

- You can find email addresses for Airbnb’s press offices around the world by visiting this [link](#).

Share your messages to the travel companies on social media along with the phrase “Don’t exploit the occupied Syrian Golan!” Include a link to [this page](#) of the Kumi Now website along with the hashtags #OccupiedGolan, #KumiNow, and #Kumi51. If on Twitter, also tag @GenieEnergy.

You Should Know

One or two people, companies, or organizations generally related to the issue of the week you should know, and how you can follow them online.



Al-Marsad, the Arab Human Rights Centre in the Golan Heights

Al-Marsad, the Arab Human Rights Centre in the Golan Heights, is an independent legal human rights organisation. The organisation was founded in 2003 by members of the remaining Syrian population and is the only human rights organisation operating in the occupied Syrian Golan. Its mission is “to protect and promote human rights and respect for the rule of law in the occupied Syrian Golan, with a commitment to the overall application of international law, in particular: international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”

You can find Al-Marsad on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Upcoming Weeks

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

KUMI NOW ONLINE: DECEMBER, 2022

Week 49	Week 50	Week 51	Week 52
December 6 <i>Human Rights</i>	December 13 <i>Right of Return</i>	December 20 <i>Syrian Golan</i>	December 27 <i>Christians in the Holy Land</i>

EVERY TUESDAY | 6PM PALESTINE TIME | KUMINOW.COM

Each week below will have an online gathering with a guest or guests speaking on the topic. The time and Zoom link are 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](#).



December 24 to 30: Week 52 - Christians in the Holy Land

[Read the full entry online.](#)

Palestinians in the occupied territory face increasingly difficult circumstances due to the Israeli occupation. This has led many Palestinian Christians to emigrate, leading to a diminished Christian presence in the Holy Land. This week, as the World Council of Churches publishes the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle for Palestine and Israel, the Kumi Community is focusing on this problem.

For our Kumi Action we will be encouraging our local churches to preach on Palestine.

Closing Thoughts

On Tuesday, Umar al-Ghubari of Zochrot spoke about the Palestinian Right of Return. The replay of the session is now available on YouTube and on our website. The website includes the advocacy instructions and links shared during the gathering.

We hope to see you in the online gathering on Tuesday, after which you'll receive another newsletter next Saturday, focused on our next topic, [Christians in the Holy Land](#). As always, there is more to come!

Sincerely,

The Kumi Now Team

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