

BADIL welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. Access to affordable water and sanitation is crucial for the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation, as well as for development goals. Yet, in some parts of the world, access to water is still a denied right.

BADIL would like to highlight the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Israel denies access to water to the Palestinians living in the OPT through different measures. Israel has extensively and unlawfully appropriated Palestinian water resources in the OPT for the sole benefit of those living in Israel and Israeli settlements. Furthermore, Israel also practiced numerous destruction of Palestinian water infrastructure. As such, Israel is violating article 43, 46 and 53 of the Hague Regulations and articles 49 and 53 of the 4th Geneva Convention. Countless resolutions issued by the General Assembly and the Security Council have all affirmed the de jure applicability of the 4th Geneva Convention to the OPT.

The limited access to water increases the dependency of the OPT's population on Israel. Israel's recurring denial to provide permits to build water and sanitation infrastructures further exacerbates this dependency. The consequence of such policies are a limited amount of water per person and a high cost for the supply of water, both in terms of time and of financing. For instance, the average consumption of water in the West Bank is of 50 liters per capita per day, well below the 100 liters recommended by the World Health Organization, with marginalized communities surviving on less than 20 liters per capita per day, the minimum amount that the WHO recommends to sustain life in emergency situation (Ewash website).

Furthermore, as the land remains an important source of income for most people in the OPT, limited access to water affects and threaten people's livelihood. This is a serious violations to the right of development of the population in the OPT. Another outcome of this denied access to water is the forced displacement of Palestinian people from their land (violates art.49 of the 4th Geneva Convention).

The right to water is protected by IHRL which entails specific obligations on states relating to the access to safe drinking water for personal and domestic use (Article 11 of the ICESCR). Back in 2001, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reviewed Israel for compliance with the ICESCR, including in the OPT. It published its concerns in regards with the lack of sufficient and safe drinking water and adequate sanitation given to Palestinians living in the OPT. It further deplored the continuing destruction of the water infrastructure in Gaza and the West Bank (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2011)

We urge the Special Rapporteur, the respectable Human Rights Council and the distinguished delegates to condemn the underlying root causes of these violations, namely the unlawful occupation of the OPT and the unlawful blockade of t