



contact@al-shabaka.org

www.al-shabaka.org

al-shabaka executive summary

DONOR COMPLICITY IN ISRAEL'S VIOLATIONS OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

[Click here to read or download the full paper by Nora Lester Murad.](#)

October 2014

Palestinians have a right to request international aid and donors have an obligation to provide it. The manner in which this aid has been provided, however, has facilitated violations of Palestinian rights under international humanitarian law (IHL). There are three primary reasons for this: Aid projects are seen as temporary or stopgap; donors maintain a policy of non-confrontation with Israel; and there is no mechanism of oversight or accountability within the aid system.

Hard questions must be asked of the aid system, beginning with whether aid projects have actually assisted Israel in violating the Fourth Geneva Convention. This might include donor efforts to provide aid in ways that have actually accommodated Israel's siege of Gaza. Military aid provided to Israel that is used to violate Palestinian rights could also violate the Fourth Geneva Convention. Additionally, the fact that Israel gains from aid projects should come under scrutiny.

There are other aid practices that need to be questioned. For example, poorly conceived anti-terrorism policies may be a violation of the humanitarian principle of impartiality. Aid to the Palestinian Authority must also come into question; is it in fact entrenching a denial of Palestinian rights? Finally, has the aid structure reinforced Israeli exceptionalism at the cost of Palestinian rights and eroded the very notion of universalism that international law is based on?

While it is unlikely that the courts will provide remedies given the complex limitations of jurisdiction, truth commissions or public enquiries could be alternatives to redress aid complicity. Additionally, boycott, divestment, and sanctions provide an example in which public pressure can be put on those complicit in the violation of Palestinian human rights. Before this can happen, however, Palestinian and international civil society should engage constructively with international organizations to better understand how existing codes, standards, and legislation apply in situations of prolonged military occupation. Without concerted efforts such as these, aid practices will not change.

Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit organization whose mission is to educate and foster public debate on Palestinian human rights and self-determination within the framework of international law. Al-Shabaka policy briefs may be reproduced with due attribution to Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network. For more information visit www.al-shabaka.org or contact us by email: contact@al-shabaka.org. The opinion of individual members of Al-Shabaka's policy network do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization as a whole.