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## UAWC Welcomes ICJ Decision Affirming Israeli Occupation is Unlawful

22 July 2024

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) welcomes the historic [advisory opinion](#) issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on July 19, 2024. The ICJ's ruling highlights the severe legal consequences of Israel's persistent violations of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. This landmark decision unequivocally affirms that Israel's occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip is illegal and must end immediately.

The world's highest court has determined that Israel must cease settlement activities, dismantle the apartheid wall, and withdraw all settlers from the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In addition, it has affirmed the right of return for Palestinians and determined that Israel has an obligation to provide reparations for Palestinians. The Court condemned the Israeli occupation's settlement and expansionist policies as flagrant violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, noting that extensive land confiscation deprives Palestinians of basic livelihood resources, leading to their forced displacement.

The ICJ reaffirmed that the Israeli occupation remains bound by international humanitarian and human rights law, including the Hague Regulations and the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Further, the ICJ recognized that Israel's policies and practices constitute apartheid, as they systematically oppress and dominate the Palestinian people through an institutionalized regime. The ruling also highlights the illegality of extending Israeli law to the West Bank and East Jerusalem and condemns the exploitation of natural resources in these territories. While the case presented to the ICJ was temporally limited to the Israeli occupation since 1967, it serves as a critical step towards legal justice for all of historic Palestine and the right of return of Palestinian refugees since 1948.

Since the beginning of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza in October 2023, the [intensity of the occupation](#) and the pace of its land theft in the West Bank has rapidly escalated. In 2024 alone, the Israeli occupation illegally confiscated [23.7 square kilometers](#) (9.15 square miles) in the West Bank, marking a record high that surpasses the combined total of the past 20 years. Over 700,000 Israeli settlers now live in nearly 300 illegal settlements and outposts in the West Bank, and there are at least [790 movement obstacles](#) that restrict Palestinian movement. Constant presence of the occupation forces, daily military raids, and increasing [settler attacks](#) have [killed](#) nearly 600 and injured over 5000 Palestinians. This land theft, resource exploitation, military and settler attacks,



and consequential forced displacement of Palestinian communities are tools that Israeli settler colonialism has been utilizing for decades. In both the [Gaza Strip](#) and the [West Bank](#), the Israeli occupation targets the land and its stewards with the intention of destroying Palestinian food systems and means of sustenance. As such, UAWC affirms the centrality of Palestinian land, farmers, and sovereignty in achieving justice.

The UAWC stands firmly with the ICJ in demanding that the Israeli occupation cease all illegal activities, dismantle settlements, and provide restitution for affected peoples, properties, and assets since 1967. It is critical that this moment be met with action: We urge the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly and Security Council, and all states to implement immediate and binding measures to end the Israeli occupation's illegal actions in accordance with the ICJ ruling. States have the legal obligation to comply with the ICJ ruling; failure to do so would constitute a violation of international law. This includes enforcing a trade embargo and sanctions against Israel. The international community must uphold its obligations by not recognizing or assisting in maintaining the Israeli occupation's unlawful presence in the occupied Palestinian territories. We call upon social movements, civil society, and people of conscience around the world to continue to apply pressure on all actors complicit in the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The ICJ's ruling marks a pivotal moment for justice and accountability, reinforcing the rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of international law. UAWC remains steadfastly committed to advocating for the rights and sovereignty of the Palestinian people, and we demand immediate and concrete actions to ensure compliance with this landmark ruling.