

**Urgent Appeal to UN Special Procedures concerning Restrictions on
Freedom of Movement and Degrading Treatment of Palestinian Travelers
at Al-Karama (Allenby/King Hussein) Crossing**



Submitted by:

The Balasan Initiative for Human Rights – Palestine (BIHR)

For the attention of:

- Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories since 1967, Ms. Francesca Albanese;
- Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel.

Date Of Submission: 7 July 2026

Your Excellencies,

The Balasan Initiative for Human Rights – Palestine (BIHR) respectfully submits this urgent appeal concerning the ongoing violations of Palestinians' right to freedom of movement and lack of minimum conditions required to ensure safe, dignified, and humane passage, resulting from the dependence of more than three million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank on Al-Karama (Allenby/King Hussein) Crossing as their sole international gateway, under conditions where Israel exercises effective control as the occupying power over the movement regime governing the crossing. In addition, administrative and operational deficiencies in the management of the crossing further

significantly exacerbate the situation and largely undermine a wide set of fundamental rights for Palestinian travelers.

I. Background and Context

Since the destruction of Gaza International Airport by Israeli occupation forces (IOF) in 2001 and Israel's continued prevention of the establishment or operation of any Palestinian airport in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt),¹ Palestinians have been deprived of a national air gateway through which they can independently travel abroad. At the same time, Palestinians in the occupied West Bank are not permitted to use Israeli airports for international travel, except a small minority of special airport “permit” holders. Consequently, Al-Karama (Allenby/King Hussein) Crossing has become the only possible international gateway for Palestinians in the West Bank, which more than 3 million Palestinians depend on to access the outside world through Jordan.²

Consequently, this structure means that any restriction affecting the Crossing operation or accessibility directly impacts Palestinians’ ability to leave and re-enter the oPt and engages the full spectrum of rights associated with freedom of movement under Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).³

Although the Al-Karama (Allenby/King Hussein) Crossing physically connects the occupied West Bank with Jordan, Israel, as the occupying power, exercises effective control over key operational aspects of the movement regime governing the Crossing, including the regulation of passenger flow, security procedures, operational capacity, opening hours, and movement restrictions. This control effectively determines who may exit or enter the oPt and under what conditions, thereby shaping the exercise of freedom of movement in a manner that is structurally dependent on Israeli administrative and security decisions.⁴

II. Current Humanitarian Situation

Following 7 October 2023, Israel largely restricted the freedom of movement for Palestinians across the West Bank. The aggravated restrictions included the Allenby Crossing, as Israel

¹ [Gaza's Destroyed International Airport](#)

² Palestinian Press Network (PALPS), 2026

³ [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights | OHCHR](#)

⁴ Palestinian Press Network (PALPS), 2026

introduced extensive restrictions on its operation, including substantial reductions in operating hours to approximately five hours per day,⁵ repeated closures, and increased controls on passenger movement, as part of broader measures imposed in the context of collective punishment, thus significantly deteriorating the situation for Palestinian travelers. These measures considerably reduced the Crossing's operational capacity, resulting in the daily accumulation of large numbers of Palestinian travelers, unprecedented waiting times, and repeated disruptions to travel for essential purposes, including access to healthcare, education, employment, family reunification, and religious pilgrimage.⁶

Alongside this, the administrative and operational arrangements on the Jordanian side of the crossing, implemented within the framework of bilateral arrangements under the 1994 Jordan–Israel Peace Treaty,⁷ have contributed to procedural inefficiencies, delays in passenger processing, and deficiencies in queue management, services, and infrastructure, including the absence of minimum conditions and essential facilities necessary to ensure safe, dignified, and humane travel.⁸ These conditions have been further exacerbated by a new administrative measure known as the electronic booking (Manassa) platform, which has become, and is reportedly being investigated, as a space for unlawful brokerage and intermediary activity through the leakage of appointment slots and their resale at exorbitant prices, exploiting Palestinians' urgent need to travel and their pressing circumstances requiring return to their homeland.⁹ This further compounded the indignity, suffering and socio-economic burdens on Palestinian travelers trying to return home through the only gateway possible.

While these aspects do not alter the underlying legal framework governing movement in the oPt, they are relevant to the overall factual assessment of the conditions under which the crossing operates and is managed in practice. These operational shortcomings must be understood within the broader structural context in which millions of Palestinians are compelled to rely on a single international gateway whose operational mechanisms are subject to external control over its key components.

⁵ [Allenby Bridge Crossing \(King Hussein\) The Ministry of Regional Cooperation](#)

⁶ Alaraby, 2026.

⁷ [j120jo941026peacetreatyisraeljordan.pdf](#)

⁸ Kuttab, 2026.

⁹ *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 2025hotel accommodation.

The violations occurring at Al-Karama Crossing are not limited to prolonged delays or administrative restrictions on movement; It also violates Palestinians' right to movement, health, education, family, among other fundamental rights that must be guaranteed to ensure they live their lives normally, respond to the circumstances of their daily lives, and meet their basic personal, family, professional, and social needs, instead of exposing to conditions that violate their human dignity and compromise their fundamental rights to health, education, social development, and physical and psychological well-being. Currently, Palestinian students studying abroad are unable to return home to their families. Patients in need of specialized medical treatment unavailable in Palestine are unable to travel to receive the care they require since there are no guarantees of the possibility of return in these circumstances. More broadly, Palestinians who need to travel for work, education, or other essential purposes are effectively unable to do so, except at the risk of becoming stranded in Jordan for an indeterminate period and facing repeated, undignified attempts to return home.

During the summer months, Palestinians are left in harsh climatic conditions in the Jordan Valley, where temperatures may exceed 50°C, amid a severe lack of basic facilities. Many are forced to wait in exposed and overcrowded areas lacking adequate shade, proper ventilation, seating, clean drinking water, sanitation facilities, and access to affordable food. During the winter, travelers are exposed to low temperatures that may exceed 0 or 1°C in the absence of suitable waiting areas that protect them from cold and rain. These conditions disproportionately affect the most vulnerable groups, particularly children, older persons, pregnant women, and individuals with chronic illnesses, as prolonged waiting periods frequently lead to severe exhaustion, dehydration, fainting, and the deterioration of medical conditions, requiring in some cases first aid or transfer to hospitals for treatment.

This suffering is further exacerbated by the persistent uncertainty surrounding crossing procedures, remaining for long hours without any clear information regarding when they will be permitted to continue their travelling, forcing many families, including those travelling with children or sick relatives, to remain at or near the crossing for extended periods, which in many cases stretch into days, in condition that lack even the minimum standard of humanity, comfort or appropriate places for the rest and sleep. In many cases, travelers who have no relatives in Jordan, or whose financial circumstances do not allow them to afford hotel accommodation for an undetermined number of nights, are compelled to spend the night in the crossing area to try to cross the next day again. This includes travelers returning from

long international journeys who have no access to facilities for bathing, changing clothes, or obtaining adequate rest before continuing their journey home, thereby directly undermining their human dignity and exposing them to further physical and psychological exhaustion.

All of this imposes a significant economic burden on Palestinian travelers and their families who are forced to bear additional costs related to transportation (from Amman or Amman Airport to the Crossing - Vice versa), accommodation, food, and the postponement of travel, medical treatment, work, or studies. Many Palestinian families are unable to absorb such expenses given the difficult economic conditions they face.

The cumulative effect of these practices transforms the exercise of the rights to freedom of movement from fundamental right guaranteed under international law into an exhausting, degrading and costly experience that undermines human dignity, disproportionately harms the most vulnerable groups and and negatively affects a range of fundamental rights, including the rights to health, education, work, family life, and freedom of movement, in a manner inconsistent with the obligations of the relevant authorities to respect human dignity and ensure humane treatment for all travelers without discrimination or arbitrary restrictions.

III. Legal Standards Violated

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has affirmed the unlawful character of Israel's continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory(oPt) in its 2024 Advisory Opinion: "[Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.](#)" Accordingly, the situation at the crossing must be assessed within the framework of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) applicable to the oPt, where Israel exercises effective control as the occupying power.¹⁰

Accordingly, measures governing movement and access must comply with the cumulative requirements of legality, necessity, proportionality, and non-arbitrariness. Under Article 43 of the Hague Regulations, the occupying power is further obligated to restore and ensure public

¹⁰ [Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024 | INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE](#)

order and civil life, including facilitating ordinary civilian life and ensuring the functioning of essential movement systems within the occupied territory.¹¹

Restrictions on movement must therefore not result in unnecessary hardship, nor may they operate in a manner that produces systemic or cumulative barriers to the enjoyment of fundamental rights. Security-related measures, while permissible in principle, must remain strictly individualized, proportionate, and subject to effective safeguards against arbitrariness.

A. The Right to Freedom of Movement

Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) guarantees the right of everyone lawfully within a territory to liberty of movement and freedom to leave any country, including one's own, subject only to lawful, necessary, and non-arbitrary restrictions.¹² The situation at Al-Karama Crossing raises serious concerns in relation to these obligations. The crossing constitutes the primary external gateway for residents of the occupied West Bank, in the absence of alternative sovereign infrastructure for international travel, including the absence of a functioning Palestinian airport.

This structural reality creates a condition of systemic dependency on externally controlled movement regimes, whereby access to international travel is mediated through multiple layers of border control beyond the effective control of individuals concerned. Such conditions affect the practical enjoyment of freedom of movement, in a manner that may limit not only its implementation but also its substantive exercise.

B. Systemic Impact on Interrelated Rights

Restrictions on movement through the crossing do not operate in isolation, but have direct and foreseeable implications for the enjoyment of a range of interdependent rights under international law. For many Palestinians, access through the crossing is a prerequisite for the effective enjoyment of rights to education, health, and family life. A significant number of students pursue higher education abroad, underscoring the essential role of international mobility in accessing educational opportunities.

¹¹ [IHL Treaties - Hague Convention \(IV\) on War on Land and its Annexed Regulations, 1907 - Regulations: Art. 43](#)

¹² [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights | OHCHR](#)

Accordingly, restrictions on movement may interfere with the right to education under Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)¹³.

Also, this adversely affects family unity and the right to family life, particularly in the case of Palestinians, whose protracted refugee situation and the complex system of identity and residency classifications governing their legal status further complicate cross-border movement and family reunification.¹⁴

C. Arbitrary, Discriminatory, and Collective Restrictions

Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits collective penalties against protected persons,¹⁵ while Articles 2, 17, and 26 of the ICCPR prohibit arbitrary interference with protected rights and guarantee equality before the law without discrimination.¹⁶

The restrictions imposed at Al-Karama Crossing, including closures, reduced operating capacity, travel bans, security classifications, and heightened procedural requirements, have a broad and cumulative impact on the protected Palestinian population, restricting access to healthcare, education, employment, family reunification, and other essential aspects of civilian life.

Palestinian travelers are subjected to travel restrictions and security-related measures without individualized reasons or effective opportunities for review. The absence of transparent procedures and accessible remedies raises serious concerns regarding arbitrariness, while the differential regulation of Palestinian travelers compared with other travelers using Israeli-controlled international gateways may amount to prohibited discrimination where it lacks objective and reasonable justification.

D. Right to Humane Treatment and Dignity

¹³ [d\) General Comment No. 13: The right to education \(article 13\) \(1999\) | OHCHR](#)

¹⁴ [Rights_No_pics-3.pdf](#)

¹⁵ [IHL Treaties - Geneva Convention \(IV\) on Civilians, 1949 - Article 33](#)

¹⁶ [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights | OHCHR](#)

Articles 7 and 10 of the ICCPR prohibit cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment and require that all persons deprived of liberty or otherwise subject to state authority be treated with humanity and respect for inherent dignity.¹⁷

Palestinian travelers, including children, older persons, pregnant women, and individuals with medical conditions, are frequently subjected to prolonged waiting periods in overcrowded conditions, with limited access to seating, drinking water, sanitation facilities, and adequate information.

These conditions have reportedly resulted in exhaustion, fainting, and significant distress among travelers, including vulnerable groups. When assessed cumulatively and in light of their repetitive nature, such conditions may raise concerns under the prohibition of degrading treatment under international human rights law.

III. Recommendations:

1. Demand that Israel fulfil its obligations in its capacity as occupying power under international law, to ensure the full accomplishment of the Palestinian right to the freedom of movement and establish and guarantee access to independent and sovereign international travel infrastructure for Palestinians, including the facilitation of an operational airport, as a structural requirement for the effective enjoyment of the right to freedom of movement.
2. Demand that Israel ensure full compliance of Al-Karama Crossing operations with international human rights and humanitarian law, and its full opening based on 24 hours a day, all week, particularly ensuring the freedom of movement, dignity, and humane treatment, and prevent arbitrary or disproportionate restrictions on civilian mobility.
3. Urge Crossing Parties to address structural delays by improving coordination among all responsible authorities and ensuring consistent, transparent, and foreseeable procedures.

¹⁷ [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights | OHCHR](#)

4. Urge Crossing Parties to ensure minimum standards of humane treatment at all stages of the crossing, including safe waiting areas, seating, drinking water, sanitation facilities, and adequate arrangements for children, older persons, pregnant women, and persons with medical conditions.

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