

DRA X KUNO session ‘[What is the future of humanitarian action in Palestine](#)’

Extended speaker biographies, in speaking order



Hossam Almadhoun is child protection officer at MAAN Development Centre, a Palestinian NGO. Hossam has 25 years professional experience in the international and national humanitarian sector. At national level this has been in logistic, programs, base management, and child protection in non-governmental and multinational organisations. Hossam is for 29 years a drama activist, working as actor, writer, director and trainer in drama in civil intervention, in education and as drama therapist. He participated as an actor and director in more than 30 productions for children and adults. He also translated six theatre plays from English to Arabic, and wrote three theatre plays.



Dr. Yasser Abu-Jamei is a psychiatrist and the Director General of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. The organisation provides mental health services to Gaza’s residents and training to mental health professionals since 2010. Since October 7, 2023, Dr. Abu-Jamei has fought to maintain GCMHP's capacity to offer mental health interventions to traumatized children and adults in shelters and other displacement zones, amid terrible personal losses of homes, facilities, relatives, and staff. Dr. Yasser is a member of the Task Force that developed Palestine's National Mental Health Strategy 2015-2019. He co-led the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group in Gaza and, in 2020, co-founded the Palestine Global Mental Health Network. Besides his lauded research and (co-)authorship of about 20 academic papers, he is certified as a Trainer of Trainers in supervision care for caregivers by the Free University of Berlin.



Nina Goricar is the Gaza Joint Response Country Coordinator at War Child. Nina is a humanitarian professional with extensive experience in humanitarian response, coordination, and accountability in complex and protracted crises. Her work focuses on strengthening principled and effective humanitarian action, with a particular emphasis on accountability to affected populations, ensuring that humanitarian responses are informed by the perspectives, priorities, and rights of people affected by crisis. She has a longstanding commitment to the protection of civilians, including efforts to strengthen protection outcomes and promote greater accountability for violations and harm. Nina has worked across diverse humanitarian contexts, engaging with partners to advance coherent, rights-based, and people-centred responses.



Bushra Khalidi is Oxfam International's Global Humanitarian Policy Lead, where she helps shape the organisation's global policy and influencing on humanitarian crises, international humanitarian law, protection, and humanitarian system reform. Based in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, she engages with governments, United Nations institutions, donors, and civil society partners to promote principled, effective, and locally led humanitarian action. She regularly briefs senior policymakers and international forums, including the UN Security Council.

A UK-qualified lawyer and humanitarian policy specialist, Bushra has held senior policy, advocacy, and leadership roles with Oxfam in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, Save the Children, and the Office of the Quartet. Her work brings together legal and political analysis, humanitarian evidence, and the perspectives of crisis-affected communities.



Dr. Polly Pallister-Wilkins is an Associate Professor at the University of Amsterdam. She specialises in the intersection of humanitarianism and injustice especially mobility injustice, researching what she terms 'humanitarian borderwork'.

More recently she is researching the role of race and racism in humanitarianism and the possibilities for decolonisation. She is also specifically interested in the interplay between genocide and humanitarian action.

In the past, Polly worked as a humanitarian in Palestine, Gaza, and in other contexts. She left humanitarian action to join academia, as a political geographer, teaching across international relations and conflict resolution and governance. Her regional expertise is focused on the Mediterranean, specifically Greece, and the Middle East.



Nathalie Olijslager-Jaarsma is the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Directorate for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Assistance. Nathalie has worked for 25 years for the government of the Netherlands, in different positions and as a diplomat in South Africa, Hungary and the USA. She is particularly experienced in connecting different fields of experience and knowledge and bringing people from these different fields together, for example development cooperation and trade, NGO's and the private sector.

She was the Director of the UN Water Conference in 2023. Nathalie is specifically engaged to increasing the attention for mental health and psychosocial support.