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Note to Editors: This is a selection of news wire reports that have been edited to be relevant for audiences for the next two weeks. You are welcome to select and publish individual items or the whole stack.

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[NEWS ITEM TEXT]

Doctors Without Borders Asks Israel to Stop Forceful Displacement of Palestinians From Masafer Yatta

[225 words]

Doctors Without Borders (MSF), in a [report](#) published on April 30, asked Israeli authorities to [immediately halt](#) the forceful displacement of Palestinians from Masafer Yatta, in the occupied West Bank.

MSF called on Israeli authorities “to stop implementing restrictive measures that impede the ability of Palestinians in Masafer Yatta to access basic services, including medical care.”

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More than 1,000 Palestinians living in and around 14 villages in Masafer Yatta have been displaced or faced threats of displacement since May 2022, when the Israeli Supreme Court dismissed Palestinians' petition against the forceful displacement. In [January](#) of this year, Israeli authorities gave notice to the villagers, and since then have been carrying out demolitions of Palestinian houses, schools, and other civilian infrastructure in the area.

MSF claimed that their findings were based on extensive one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with the villagers in Masafer Yatta. The report asks Israelis to stop nightly raids on the villages and notes that the displacement and raids have not only psychologically impacted the Palestinians, but also hampered their access to medical care and other basic services.

MSF also claimed that illegal Israeli settlers often carry out [attacks](#) against the residents of Masafer Yatta and prevent them from carrying out their daily affairs. According to MSF, violence against Palestinians by Israeli forces and settlers are violations of international humanitarian laws.

Why 340,000 UPS Workers Are Preparing to Strike in the U.S.

[244 words]

United Parcel Service (UPS) workers are gearing up for a potential strike as they hold contract negotiations with the company. Talks between the company and the union representing UPS workers, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, opened on April 17. Teamsters President Sean O'Brien says that workers are ready to walk off the job if UPS fails to reach a deal on a strong contract before the current one expires on July 31.

Workers are demanding better pay, more full-time work, better job security, and an end to the two-tier "22.4" job classification. The deeply unpopular "22.4" provision creates a lower-paid tier of workers who essentially perform the same work as senior drivers, but receive lower pay.

The workers are also demanding an end to excessive overtime, better protections against company harassment, the elimination of driver-facing cameras, and protection from hot weather. Drivers reported extreme temperatures inside their delivery trucks in posts that went viral last summer, and workers, like 24-year-old [Esteban Chavez Jr.](#), have died due to extreme heat.

A strike may have a formidable impact. UPS workers move [6 percent](#) of U.S. GDP every day. The last time UPS Teamsters went on strike was in 1997 when 185,000 workers walked off the job in one of the largest strikes in U.S. history. The work stoppage cost the

company \$850 million despite only lasting for 15 days. There has been no larger work stoppage in the US since then.

Colombian Government and ELN to Hold Third Round of Peace Talks in Cuba

[249 words]

On April 25, Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla reported that the third round of the peace talks between the Colombian government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla group would begin in Havana, Cuba, on May 2.

Last month, Colombian President Gustavo Petro [met](#) with the members of his peace negotiating team and instructed them to try to reach agreements on a bilateral ceasefire and mechanisms for the participation of civil society in the process by the end of the third round of talks.

The meeting was held after an attack by the ELN against a military unit in Norte de Santander left nine soldiers dead and another nine wounded. The ELN explained that the group has the right to defend itself and respond to the attacks it faces from the military forces, recalling that it has not yet agreed to a bilateral ceasefire with the government.

“We will host from May 2, with the traditional willingness and impartiality of Cuba as guarantor and alternative venue, the celebration in Havana of the Third Round of the Peace Negotiating Table between the Colombian government and the ELN,” [wrote](#) Rodríguez.

For its part, Colombia’s High Commissioner for Peace [reiterated](#) the government’s “willingness to move forward in the process” and thanked Cuba for its “invaluable support for peace in Colombia.”

In turn, the ELN [said](#) that in the upcoming round, the delegations would work to reach agreements on three topics: “participation of civil society, bilateral ceasefire, and humanitarian actions and dynamics.”

As UN ‘Reviews’ Its Presence in Afghanistan, Its People Continue to Suffer From Growing Hunger and Poverty

[307 words]

As Afghanistan’s economy continues to spiral, as many as 34 million Afghans are living below the poverty line, says a new UN [report](#). The “Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook 2023” report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on April

18 highlights the impact of cuts in international aid to Afghanistan since the Taliban took power.

The report notes that the number of people below the poverty line in Afghanistan has increased from 19 million in 2020 to 34 million today. It also adds, “Even if the UN aid appeal for international assistance to reach \$4.6 billion in 2023 succeeds, it may fall short of what is needed to improve conditions for millions of Afghans.”

The UNDP report comes after the UN said that it was [“reviewing its presence”](#) in Afghanistan following the Taliban’s [ban](#) on Afghan women from working for the international organization earlier this month. The UN statement suggested that it may be planning to suspend its operations in the country.

The report also notes that Afghanistan is currently facing a severe fiscal crisis after the ending of foreign assistance “that previously accounted for almost 70 percent of the government budget.” A severe banking crisis also continues. In 2022, Afghanistan’s GDP contracted by [3.6 percent](#). The report adds that the average real per capita income has also declined by 28 percent from the 2020 level.

On May 1, the UN began holding crucial talks regarding Afghanistan in Doha. The participants include the five permanent UN Security Council members, countries in the region such as Pakistan, India, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, and key players such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Notably, the de facto Taliban government of Afghanistan was not invited to participate. “Any meeting about Afghanistan without the participation of the Afghan government is ineffective and counterproductive,” [said](#) Abdul Qahar Balkhi, Taliban foreign ministry spokesman.