



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
2 November 2023

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5

**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem
and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

Security Council
Seventy-eighth year

Identical letters dated 2 November 2023 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, is systematically targeting refugee camps across the besieged Gaza Strip, killing and injuring hundreds of civilians and causing vast destruction.

Over the past two days, Israeli occupying forces have repeatedly struck the Jabalia refugee camp in the north of Gaza, massacring at least 195 children, women and men and wounding hundreds more, many experiencing severe burns and critical injuries. Israel's attacks have destroyed entire residential blocks in the camp, leaving massive craters in places where hundreds of homes once stood. It is estimated that at least 120 people are missing, trapped under the rubble and ruin after the Jabalia attack.

None of the refugee camps in Gaza have been spared Israeli attack. Whether Jabalia, Nuseirat, al-Shati', Deir El-Balah, Al-Maghazi, Al-Bureij, Khan Younis or Rafah, all have been targeted, alongside other civilian areas across Gaza. In fact, Israel openly brags that it has so far launched 11,000 strikes against Gaza since this aggression began. Eleven thousand strikes against one of the most densely populated places on Earth, against a defenseless civilian population. Homes, hospitals, schools, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) shelters for the displaced, all continue to be attacked; even civilians waiting at a bakery in Gaza City for bread to feed their families have been targeted and killed.

These deadly attacks, deliberately and methodically perpetrated, constitute blatant war crimes for which Israel must be held accountable. The international community cannot relent in its demands for an end to all of the atrocities that Israel is committing in Gaza and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Moreover, we reiterate our standing calls for the protection of the Palestinian civilian population, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

In the absence of protection, the casualty toll caused by this Israeli aggression has now surpassed 9,000 Palestinians killed, the majority of them children and



women, and over 23,000 Palestinians injured. The death toll does not yet include over 2,000 people who are still missing, buried under the rubble, including more than 1,000 children, who are unlikely to have survived the brutality of Israel's lethal and destructive assaults.

The known death toll for children now stands at 3,760 Palestinian children killed in Gaza. This is equivalent to one child killed every 10 minutes by Israel since 7 October. Every 10 minutes that the international community fails to act, another innocent life is lost at the hands of this serial violator of child rights.

Palestinian children in the rest of Occupied Palestine also remain under threat as Israeli occupying forces and extremist Jewish settlers continue their violent attacks. Thirty-six children are among the 130 Palestinians killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in this same period, and over 1,960 civilians have been injured in Israeli raids on towns, villages and refugee camps, including at Jenin refugee camp. Israel is arresting Palestinians every day, including children and youth, especially males, and at least 872 people have been administratively detained since 7 October.

Palestinian civilian lives also continue to be endangered by Israel's relentless attacks on health care in Gaza. While Al-Ahli Arabi Baptist Hospital is still reeling from the carnage caused by the Israeli attack on 17 October, no fewer than 19 hospitals and 49 health clinics have been hit by Israeli fire. The Turkish-Palestinian Friendship.

Hospital, Gaza's main hospital for cancer patients, was attacked by Israel on 30 October and is no longer functional. The main generator at the Indonesian hospital has now run out of fuel. The Al-Quds and Al-Shifa hospitals continue to be threatened by Israel, with demands that they evacuate thousands of patients and civilians sheltering at the hospitals, even as they struggle to stay operational without fuel, electricity and medical supplies. As warned by Dr. Ghassan Abu Sittah, a surgeon at Al-Shifa: "Basically without electricity, this hospital becomes a mass grave."

We therefore again call for urgent international action for an immediate ceasefire and the unimpeded provision of humanitarian access and assistance to Gaza, as called for by the General Assembly during its tenth emergency special session on 27 October.

The humanitarian catastrophe caused by Israel's aggression against and siege of the Palestinian people demands responsible, collective mobilization without delay. The occupying Power must be compelled to respect its international legal obligations, including to cease forthwith its reprisals and collective punishment, and humanitarian aid must be permitted to reach all civilians in need in Gaza. Failure to expedite humanitarian assistance and ensure it is at scale to respond to the tremendous needs and devastation caused by Israel's attacks, and its forced displacement of over 1.4 million people from their homes in the past three weeks alone, will have grave repercussions as hunger, dehydration, sickness and desperation spread.

Humanitarian officials and organizations continue to sound alarms that must not be ignored. Just some of the many urgent warnings and appeals of recent days include:

- "Gaza has become a graveyard for thousands of children. It's a living hell for everyone else." (United Nations Children's Fund Spokesperson James Elder, 31 October 2023)
- "In Gaza, women, children and men are being starved, traumatized and bombed to death. They have lost all faith in humanity and all hope of a future. Their despair is palpable ... This cannot go on ... Failure to act now will have consequences far beyond the region, because this is a global crisis." (Under-

Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
Martin Griffiths, 1 November 2023)

- “The scale of the tragedy is unprecedented ... The levels of distress and the unsanitary living conditions were beyond comprehension ... Instead of being at school, learning, children were asking for a sip of water and a piece of bread. It was heart-wrenching. Above all, people were asking for a ceasefire. They want this tragedy to end ... A humanitarian ceasefire is long overdue. Without it, more people will be killed, those who are alive will endure further losses, and the once vibrant society will be in grief, forever.” (UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini, 1 November 2023)
- “The severity of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza that is unfolding as a result of Israel’s siege of the area is worse than anything international disaster relief organization Oxfam has seen in its 80-year history ... The humanitarian rulebook has been thrown out, and polite pleas from politicians to ‘minimize civilian fatalities’ are naive at best, and at worst seem blind to the unimaginable horrors already taking place in Gaza.” (Oxfam International, 1 November 2023)
- “[The World Health Organization] calls for sustained access at scale for humanitarian aid – including fuel, water, food and medical supplies – into Gaza. We also call for the active protection of civilians and health care.” (1 November 2023)

We urge the international community, and especially the Security Council, to heed these calls and to act responsibly to avert further deterioration of this grave situation, first and foremost to save civilians’ lives. There must be collective efforts to uphold international law and implement United Nations resolutions, including for the protection of civilians in armed conflict, for the protection of children in armed conflict and for the protection of medical and humanitarian personnel and journalists.

It is a priority to prevent the death and injury of more innocent Palestinian children, women and men, to stop their forced transfer, to ensure their basic needs for survival are met and to spare them further assaults on their human dignity at the hands of Israel, which must be held accountable for all the war crimes and crimes against humanity it is committing on the Palestinian people under its illegal occupation, blockade, siege and apartheid regime.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 811 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 30 October 2023 (A/ES-10/963-S/2023/815) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Riyad **Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer