

9 October 2023

**To the attention of:**

- Ms. Francesca Albanese - Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967,
- The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel
- Professor Obiora C. Okafor - Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity
- Dr. Alice Jill Edwards - UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng - UN Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health
- Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal - Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing

**ICHR's Letter on the Deterioration of the Situation of Human Rights in the Gaza Strip Due to Israeli Military Attacks**

**Dear Esteemed Experts and Rapporteurs,**

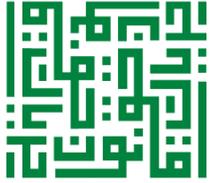
On behalf of Palestine Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), we extend our warmest greetings and express our deep appreciation for your commitment to human rights and justice, especially regarding Palestinian rights.

I am writing to urgently draw your attention to the dire situation unfolding in Gaza. Since October 7, 2023, when Palestinian factions in Gaza launched the "Al-Aqsa Storm" operation targeting settlements near Gaza, Israel has responded with intense retaliatory missile attacks on densely populated areas. This has resulted in significant loss of life, including many children and women, and the destruction of residential homes without warning.

As of now, Israeli attacks have killed at least 576 people, including 91 children and 61 women, with over 2,300 injured. Additionally, 15 fatalities, including children, have occurred in the West Bank, with approximately 80 people injured. The number of casualties continues to rise, as many are trapped under the rubble in Gaza. This ongoing military escalation threatens even more innocent lives, especially among children and women.

Israeli airstrikes have also targeted residential towers, civilian infrastructure, public facilities, hospitals, schools, and ambulances. Furthermore, Israel has imposed a fuel and goods blockade and cut off electricity to Gaza, compounding the humanitarian crisis that predated Saturday's events.

The ICHR warns of an impending catastrophe in Gaza due to the strained healthcare system, limited civil defense capabilities, and worsening conditions. Tens of thousands have been forcibly displaced, seeking refuge in UNRWA schools. Israeli threats conveyed via text messages have created fear and uncertainty among residents.



INDEPENDENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
I C H R

Israeli officials have openly stated their intent to intensively bomb Gaza, with residents having no access to bomb shelters or the ability to flee due to the blockade. The deliberate Israeli killings of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, who are protected under international humanitarian law, not only constitute a serious violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 but also undermine the principles of proportionality and necessity through the excessive use of force that results in the death or injury of protected persons, amounting to a war crime.

ICHR sounds the alarm about the possibility of the Israeli government exploiting certain international endorsements to commit further massacres against Gaza's civilian population and implement widespread displacement operations. ICHR also raises a red flag regarding the possible exploitation of the recent events by settlers in the West Bank to commit acts of terrorism and assaults against Palestinians. This is especially concerning in light of the dissemination of incitement messages and calls for vengeance.

The root causes of Israel's actions and crimes against Palestinians stem from its discriminatory policies based on the Apartheid. Addressing these root causes, including ending the occupation, colonial settlement, and racial segregation, while acknowledging the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, are imperative actions that the international community must take. It is essential to exert pressure on Israel, which has historically evaded accountability for its systematic assaults on Palestinians.

We urgently appeal to you to take all means to place pressure on Israel, the Occupying Power, to cease military attacks on Gaza and its civilian population, and to put an end to violations of international law.

The ICHR appeals to you to take urgent and effective measures to exert all possible pressure on international parties, UN institutions, and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Convention on the Protection of Civilians in Time of War of 1949, to fulfill their legal and ethical obligations under Article 1 of the Convention, to respect and ensure respect for the Convention in all circumstances. This is in addition to the call and demand to guarantee the Palestinian civilians' right to protection in the occupied territories.

Your prompt intervention is crucial. Reports to the Human Rights Council should include recommendations for protecting Palestinians under Israeli occupation, preventing Gaza aggression, and ensuring civilian safety.

Thank you for your immediate attention and dedication to justice and human rights.

Sincerely,

Issam Aruri  
Commissioner General