

Urgent Appeal
Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law
Committed by the Israeli Occupation Authority
Against the Population of Gaza

We write to you as we witness the fragments of the bodies of children, women, and the elderly after the Israeli airstrikes on the evening of October 18, 2023, at Al-Mu'madani Hospital in Gaza. Health authorities estimate the number of casualties to be over five hundred, with the majority being children, women, and the elderly. The hospital was targeted after an Israeli warning to evacuate Gaza hospitals.

It is crucial to note that this is not the first time hospitals have been targeted; this is the 11th hospital in a series of attacks since October 7, 2023.

This latest crime is part of a series of severe violations following the declaration of a comprehensive war by the Israeli occupation army on Gaza, manifested by massive, indiscriminate, and violent bombardments on land, sea, and air throughout the region. This has resulted in the death of nearly 4,000 individuals, including over 1,000 children, and the injury of more than 11,000 others, along with unprecedented destruction of infrastructure, buildings, and facilities.

You should be aware that the Israeli government has decided to cut off water and electricity supplies to the population, close all border crossings, and prohibit the entry of any humanitarian or medical supplies into the area. This has severely affected the approximately two million people living there, exacerbated by a severe shortage of medical supplies and equipment at hospitals now receiving casualties and fatalities well beyond their capacity.

Documented information confirms that Gaza has become a disaster-stricken region due to Israeli punitive measures. The violent and brutal airstrikes against the population have destroyed 1,700 residential buildings, towers, and housing complexes. The number of wholly demolished housing units has risen to more than 7,000, with over 69,000 units partially damaged, including around 4,600 units no longer suitable for habitation. Furthermore, more than half a million Palestinian civilians have been displaced from their homes, and even the places they sought refuge in, like the hospital, have been targeted in the airstrikes.

What Israel is currently doing was not sudden but rather followed statements from prominent officials in its government:

- On October 7, 2023, Ghassan Alian, the coordinator of the Israeli government's activities in the territories, confirmed in an Arabic-language video message to the civilian population, "...the gates of hell have been opened on the Gaza Strip..."
- On October 9, 2023, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Galant announced the imposition of a "complete siege" on the Gaza Strip, declaring that he was fighting "human animals."
- On the same day, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, during an announcement of mobilizing 300,000 reserve soldiers, warned that "what we will do to our enemies in the coming days will reverberate with them for many generations."

Similarly, on October 10, 2023, in a new video in Arabic addressed to the civilian population, the coordinator of government activities in the territories said, "Israel has imposed a complete blockade on Gaza. There will be no electricity or water, and there will be destruction. You wanted hell, and you will get hell."

From what has been presented, it is evident that Israel is determined to commit severe violations of international humanitarian law without concern for the consequences.

These statements align with a political plan aimed at nullifying any place for the Palestinian people, thereby violating their right to self-determination. Notably, Israeli Minister of Economy Bezalel Smotrich affirmed on 20 March 2023, that "there is nothing called Palestinians because there is nothing called the Palestinian people."

These deliberate policies pursued by the Israeli occupation authorities against Gaza will ultimately lead to the partial or complete destruction of its population, amounting to a deliberate act of genocide against the Palestinian people there, in accordance with Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and Article 6 of the Rome Statute. War crimes and crimes against humanity are also being committed according to the provisions of Article 7 and Article 8 of the Rome Statute.

The absence of accountability and consequences has emboldened the occupying authorities to persist in their extensive violations against the Palestinians. Today, Israel receives encouragement through positions taken by high-level European officials, whether through visits or statements. This is deeply regrettable, as these officials are complicit in war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. It's well known that all these crimes fall under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

Therefore, we urge you, in line with your responsibilities, to take all necessary actions to compel the Israeli occupying authority to cease its ongoing aggression against Gaza and the Palestinian people as a whole and to require it to halt collective punishments such as cutting electricity and water and blocking the delivery of supplies and humanitarian aid. Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court must be urged to initiate an immediate investigation into the crimes of the occupation, and your countries should be called upon to cease all forms of support for the occupation to avoid complicity in the crimes committed against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

Please accept our utmost respect.

Sincerely,

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| International-Lawyers.Org International Organisation for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD) | Brussels Tribunal AFD International Investigation Organization for Development and Human Rights– Yemen. | Arab Council Foundation - Geneva European Palestinian Council for Political Relations- Brussels American Center for Justice (ACJ) |
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