



3 December 2023

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Al Mezan, and Al-Haq strongly condemn the ongoing Israeli genocidal campaign in Gaza, which has seen the mass killings of Palestinians through the destruction of residential neighborhoods and buildings with their occupants still inside, and the issuance of more so-called ‘evacuation orders’. This constitutes the practical implementation of Israel’s plan declared from the onset of this aggression, which is to create a new *Nakba* for the Palestinians. The unfolding developments require immediate intervention from the international community to cease Israeli aggression and the unfolding crime of genocide against the Palestinian People and ensure accountability for Israeli crimes.

Based on our teams’ monitoring and documentation, since the end of the humanitarian pause on 1 December 2023, Israeli forces have intensified their military attacks against Palestinian civilians from the air, land, and sea across the Gaza Strip. On 2 December 2023, Israeli warplanes targeted a five-story residential building of the Obeid family in Jabaliya refugee camp, housing tens of displaced people, killing around 100 Palestinians, including many children and women.

Later that day, Israeli warplanes conducted another appalling attack, targeting a residential area in the Al-Sheja’eyya neighborhood, comprising around 50 houses, and completely destroying it. Videos and images of the aftermath of the attack captured the widespread devastation, with rescue teams struggling to locate survivors under the rubble. The area housed hundreds of residents, and reports by governmental authorities indicated that hundreds were killed, including women and children, with many still missing.

Furthermore, Israeli forces targeted seven residential buildings in Hamad residential city in Khan Younis, and destroyed four mosques in Khan Younis and Deir al-Balah.

Concerning the ongoing forced displacement, Israeli authorities released new evacuation orders in the form of an interactive map on 2 December 2023, dividing the Gaza Strip into zones and blocks. Each block is assigned a specific number, and residents of the block that planned to be targeted will be notified to relocate to another block on the map. These recent evacuation orders encompassed several areas in Khan Younis, namely Al-Mahatta, Al-Katiba, Hamad, Al-Satar, and Ma'an, categorised as “combat zones”. Residents of these areas were instructed to evacuate to Rafah. These orders followed previous directives to residents of the eastern areas of Khan Younis, including Khuza’a, Bani Suhaila, Abasan, and Al-Qarara. The population of these communities exceeds 200,000 civilians, in addition to thousands who evacuated to these areas from northern Gaza areas.

Notably, the map published by Israeli authorities includes a part of Egyptian territory, labelled as the "buffer zone between Sinai and Gaza."

Palestinian human rights organizations emphasize that the purpose of the map is to mislead the world, creating an impression that Israeli occupying forces provide warnings before initiating airstrikes. However, the reality is that the lack of electricity and internet in most of the Gaza Strip renders it impossible for civilians to access the map or determine their location within it. Additionally, Israeli occupying forces continue to bomb various areas throughout the Gaza Strip, targeting houses beyond the specified blocks on the map, and doing so without prior warning.

Similar orders were also issued for residents of Jabaliya, Al-Sheja'eyya, Al-Zaytoun, and the Old City in Gaza, and they included assigned block numbers. The orders instructed the residents to evacuate to the designated shelter centres and schools in the Al-Daraj and Al-Toffah neighborhoods, as well as the western areas of Gaza City.

These orders are leading to a new wave of displacement affecting tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians who find themselves relocating multiple times. This situation unfolds amidst overcrowded schools and shelters, unable to adequately accommodate the growing number of displaced people. It's estimated that around 1.9 million Palestinians have been displaced after 58 days of the military offensive.

Additionally, Israel continues to deprive Gaza's residents of essential needs such as food, water, electricity, fuel, and medicine. The limited aid that entered the Gaza Strip in the past days is insufficient, and the distribution mechanisms are ineffective; it has failed to meet the needs of the displaced people in overcrowded shelters and doesn't reach displaced people in homes or elsewhere.

Our organizations reiterate that despite Israel's orders for residents east of Khan Younis to relocate to Rafah and other neighborhoods in Gaza which are supposedly "safe zones", Israeli airstrikes have targeted these areas too resulting in numerous casualties. The latest attack which occurred on the morning of Sunday, 3 December 2023, killed 12 Palestinians, including six women and three children, and injured others as Israeli authorities targeted the Azzoum family home in the Al-Jenina neighborhood east of Rafah.

Our organizations also warn that these alarming developments indicate Israel's commitment to its plan to forcibly displace the population of Gaza beyond its borders, as initially declared by its Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the first day of the aggression. Netanyahu informed U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on 1 December 2023 that Israel plans to establish a "buffer zone" from the north to the south of Gaza without specifying its depth. Additionally, it has been reported that Israel aims to retain security control over Gaza after the end of the aggression, with some Israeli ministers calling for the re-establishment of settlements in the Strip.

We emphasize that there is no safe place in Gaza and that Israeli orders for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to move to Rafah and locations near the Egyptian border, raise concerns about a new *Nakba* for Palestinians.

According to the latest update by the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MOH), between 7 October and 2 December 2023, at 3 p.m., the ongoing Israeli military offensive has killed 15,207 Palestinians and injured 40,652 others. More than 70% of the casualties are children and women.

According to MOH, the Israeli violations against the health system have killed 280 health workers and injured hundreds. Israeli forces detained 31 health workers from Gaza, including Dr. Mohammed Abu Salmiya, the General Director of Al-Shifa Hospital. Israel targeted 130 health institutions, rendering 20 hospitals and 46 health centres inoperable.

Our organizations have received information about the arrest of dozens of civilians, including women, by Israeli forces during the ground invasion in Gaza and while fleeing from the north to the south. While being arrested, the detained Palestinians were used as human shields, and were subjected to abuse, and detained under harsh conditions.

In light of these serious developments, we call upon the peoples of the world, civil society organizations, and influential forces to reinforce their efforts and exert more political and legal pressure on their governments, especially in Europe and the US, to change their stance and cease support for the unfolding genocide against Palestinians, and comply with the rules of international humanitarian law.

Our organizations call on the international community to take serious and immediate action to stop the Israeli aggression on Gaza, prevent Israeli plans and arrangements for implementing a second *Nakba* for Palestinians, and take effective measures to ensure accountability for the gross violations committed by Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people amounting to war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

We further call on the international community to ensure the end of the Israeli occupation, genocidal campaign in Gaza, and the dismantling of Israel's settle-colonial and apartheid regime. We call for the repeal of all discriminatory and inhumane laws, policies, and practices against the entire Palestinian people, and to enable them to exercise their right to self-determination.