



Date: 10 December 2023

On Human Rights Day, observed annually on December 10th, Palestinian human rights organizations—The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Al Mezan, and Al-Haq—call on the international community to promptly intervene for an immediate ceasefire, pressure Israel to halt its aggression and genocide in the Gaza Strip and its violations in the entire occupied Palestinian territory, and ensure accountability and justice.

As the world marks Human Rights Day today, commemorating the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948; Israel blatantly and systematically violates the majority of the declaration's articles. It subjects 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza to a genocidal campaign while enjoying complete immunity and support from the United States. Despite the US providing Israel with weapons and munitions and vetoing the UN Security Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the international community has yet to take effective positions to halt the genocide of an entire people.

According to our monitoring, Israeli forces have continued to attack with hundreds of missiles and shells through air, land, and sea, houses, residential neighborhoods and shelters, particularly in northern Gaza, for 65 consecutive days of the aggression. The relentless indiscriminate artillery shelling has resulted in significant casualties and an immense state of fear among the population.

Our teams also investigated numerous videos and testimonies from northern Gaza, revealing that Israeli forces targeted several schools sheltering thousands of displaced people, by shelling and shooting fire towards these schools. Israeli forces also detained, undressed, tortured and interrogated hundreds of males from these schools. While some of the detainees were released later, the fate of others, including Ayman Lubad, a researcher at the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, remains unknown. Lubad was arrested from his residence in Beit Lahiya on December 7, 2023.

Our teams continue to receive information and pleas from residents to evacuate victims, wounded individuals, and those stranded in areas subjected to intense Israeli ground attacks and airstrikes. Ambulance and civil defense teams are unable to reach them.

Similar to the events during the year the UDHR was adopted in 1948, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their homes and lands during the *Nakba*, these days we witness a second *Nakba*. Approximately 2.3 million Palestinians are now under the threat of displacement beyond the borders of Gaza, following the forced displacement of over 85% of them from their homes within the Gaza Strip.

Under these unprecedented circumstances, the humanitarian conditions in Gaza continue to deteriorate, as hundreds of thousands of displaced people endure real hunger and are denied access to water. The number of displaced has risen to nearly two million, with hundreds of thousands finding no place of refuge. Most shelters, including those managed by UNRWA, lack essential services such as food, water, sanitation, and bathing facilities. This dire situation portends the outbreak of various diseases, creating a catastrophic scenario.

According to the latest update from the Palestinian Ministry of Health as of 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, 9 December 2023, Israeli attacks on Gaza have killed 17,700 Palestinians and injured 48,780 others since October 7th, with %70 of the victims being children and women.

Our teams emphasize that the actual number of Palestinian casualties is significantly higher than the figure announced by the Ministry of Health, given the large number of victims under the rubble or in the streets. According to the estimates of the Ministry of Health, 8,000 people are missing, a significant number of whom are children and women. Among them, there are many whose bodies have decomposed, as shown in videos reviewed by our teams, portending the potential spread of diseases and epidemics.

As per the Ministry of Health, Israeli forces targeted 132 health facilities, rendering 22 hospitals and 46 health centers inoperable. The operational hospitals and health centers are grappling with significant challenges, given the massive shortage of medical supplies and the exhaustion of medical teams after more than two months of continuous work. The death toll among these medical teams has reached 295.

The situation in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, has been also alarming. Since the beginning of this year, Israeli forces have escalated their attacks and extrajudicial killings in the West Bank. From the

beginning of the year, Israeli occupying forces, and Israeli armed settlers killed 470 Palestinians including 109 children until 9 December, 2023.

Among them, 270 were killed since October 7th with thousands more injured. Additionally, Israeli forces have arrested over 3,700 Palestinians, subjecting them to serious violations in Israeli prisons. Restrictions on the freedom of movement for Palestinians in the West Bank have been intensified, with numerous checkpoints erected, where Palestinians face humiliation and degradation.

At the same time, settler crimes under the protection of the Israeli army have increased, fueled by escalating settlement policies, Judaization, land appropriation, and the demolition of Palestinian homes. Under the current Israeli government, known for having the most extreme stance in Israel's history, Israeli authorities have further intensified their collective punishment measures. Over the past decades, successive Israeli governments have unlawfully expanded settlements, confiscated land, and persistently implemented these policies, all of which constitute war crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Regrettably, the ICC has yet to take action against these and other serious crimes committed in Gaza.

Our organizations reiterate their call on the international community to take serious and immediate action to stop the Israeli aggression on Gaza, prevent Israeli plans for implementing a second *Nakba* for Palestinians, and take effective measures to ensure accountability for the war crimes and genocide committed by Israeli forces in the occupied Palestinian territory.

On the 75 anniversary of the UDHR and after 75 years of Israeli settler-colonial apartheid, where full control has been imposed over the Palestinian people, violating their fundamental and inalienable rights—primarily their right to self-determination, and return—we stress the imperative to end Israel's immunity and hold the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity accountable before the International Criminal Court.