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# Israel's War on Gaza: An International Humanitarian Law Perspective

Unit for Political Studies

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Israelis woke at dawn on Saturday 7 October, to find hundreds of Palestinian fighters storming military bases and residential areas near the Gaza Strip. The Hamas attack, which the group labelled "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood", saw its gunmen seize dozens of military outposts and clash with Israeli military and security services, leaving more than 1,400 people dead and wounding some 5,431 others, both military and civilian.<sup>1</sup> Palestinian fighters also managed to capture officers and soldiers as well as taking between 229 and 250 civilians hostage,<sup>2</sup> dozens of whom were later killed.<sup>3</sup>

The Israeli military responded the same day, with a full-scale assault on the Gaza Strip they dubbed "Operation Iron Swords", the seventh and most violent war on the overcrowded coastal territory since Israel's withdrawal from it in 2005.<sup>4</sup> Israeli leaders made no secret of their intention to take revenge on Gaza. As of October 27, the war had killed at least 7,326 Palestinian civilians,<sup>5</sup> including more than 3,038 children and 1,792 women, as well as wounding more than 18,967 people, mostly women and children. A further 108 Palestinian civilians had been killed in the West Bank by the army and Israeli settlers, including 33 children, with another 1,889 people injured.<sup>6</sup> About 1,700 others have been reported missing in Gaza, including at least 940 children, some of whom may still be trapped or have died under the rubble.<sup>7</sup>

## 1. Calls for Revenge and Genocide

Israel continues its illegal occupation of the Palestinian Territories it seized in 1967, and runs an apartheid regime designed to subjugate the Palestinian population. It has also annexed Jerusalem and laid the foundations for the annexation of Area C, which constitutes around 60 percent of the West Bank. Israel's claim that it ended its occupation of the Gaza Strip in 2005 has no basis in law or fact. Its withdrawal was merely a redeployment, despite the fact it dismantled its illegal settlements there. Israel legally remains the occupying power, by virtue of its effective control over the Gaza's land, sea and air space.<sup>8</sup> It has also imposed a crippling siege on the Strip for 16 years, an illegal policy of collective punishment against Palestinian civilians and a flagrant violation of international law and human rights, amounting to a war crime and a crime against humanity.<sup>9</sup> It also exerts total control over Gaza's population registry, its residents' ability to leave or return to the Strip, the flow of trade and the entry and exit of goods.<sup>10</sup>

1 "Hostilities in Gaza Strip and Israel," *UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)*, Flash Update 18, 24/10/2023, accessed on 25/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/3FvXls1>.

2 "240 abductees: the names, the faces, the stories," *Yediot Ahronot*, 23/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/40dfsN4>.

3 "Hamas says high-ranking officers among captives, issues death toll," *Sky News Arabia*, 16/10/2023 (in Arabic), <https://bit.ly/3tlo5Tq>.

4 "Israel's main wars against Gaza," *Al-Jazeera Encyclopaedia*, 11/10/2023, accessed 25/10/2023 (in Arabic), <https://bit.ly/3MiTanf>.

5 "Hostilities in Gaza Strip and Israel," *UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)*, Flash Update 21, 27/10/2023, accessed on 28/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/476uOF7>.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 Marko Milanovic, "Is Gaza still Occupied by Israel?" *EJIL: Talk! Blog of the European Journal of International Law*, 1/3/2009, accessed on 24/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/46Kmlrv>; Sari Bashi, "Israel still Blocking Aid to Civilians in Gaza," *OCHA Services Relief Web*, 23/10/2023, accessed on 24/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3Se2MDB>.

9 "Israel: Unlawful Gaza Blockade Deadly for Children: Denial of Water, Fuel, Electricity Endangers Lives" *Human Rights Watch*, 18/10/2023, accessed 23/10/2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/18/israel-unlawful-gaza-blockade-deadly-children>.

10 "Gaza up Close," *Gisha*, 28/6/2023, accessed on 23/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/46UHoac>.



Statements by Israeli officials clearly demonstrate the retaliatory nature of their latest war on Gaza and their intention both to inflict the greatest possible number of civilian casualties and to destroy the territory's infrastructure. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quick to announce Israel's intention to destroy Hamas: "We will destroy them and we will forcefully avenge this dark day that they have forced on the State of Israel and its citizens. All of the places which Hamas is deployed, hiding and operating in, that wicked city, we will turn them into rubble. I say to the residents of Gaza: Leave now because we will operate forcefully everywhere."<sup>11</sup>

Statements by Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Galant further indicate the vindictive mood among Israeli leaders and their intention to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity and even genocide against the Palestinians. On October 9, Gallant announced that Israel had imposed a total siege on Gaza, which has already been under blockade since 2007. "There will be no food, no water, no electricity, no fuel. Everything is closed. We are fighting human animals, and we will act accordingly."<sup>12</sup>

Giora Eiland, a retired Major General, said the country needed "to bomb Shifa Hospital and starve the people of Gaza," adding, "We should have done this on Saturday, October 7, 2023, at seven o'clock in the morning... when Hamas attack on Israel began."<sup>13</sup> The Energy Minister, Likud parliamentarian Yisrael Katz, said: "There is no water or electricity for the residents of Gaza after today. This is how we must deal with a people of murderers."<sup>14</sup>

In a similar vein, Israeli officials publicly announced their intention to purge the Gaza Strip of Palestinians and forcibly displace them to Egypt or to Jordan. It should be mentioned that 70% of the territory's residents are refugees who were forcibly displaced from their homes by Zionist forces during the Nakba (Catastrophe) in 1948. An Israeli army spokesman told foreign media on Tuesday, October 10 that the Palestinians should head to Egypt via the Rafah crossing. Amir Whitman, leader of the liberal wing of the Likud Party, called for international coordination to help transfer all residents out of the Gaza Strip.<sup>15</sup> Prominent business figures have called for Gaza to be "destroyed and razed to the ground, giving Jordan and Egypt a limited period of time to save the lives of the people of Gaza and absorb them into their countries."<sup>16</sup> On October 13, Israel ordered more than one million Palestinians to evacuate their homes in the northern Gaza Strip and move to the southern part of the territory, giving them six hours to do so.<sup>17</sup> The fact that Israel is continuing to bomb the entire enclave, including the southern areas where hundreds of thousands of displaced people have sought refuge, provides further evidence of the occupation's intention to cleanse the Gaza Strip of Palestinians, through killing, destruction, displacement, and imposing conditions that are so hard they amount to deliberate extermination.

11 Benjamin Netanyahu, statement on X, 8/10/2023, <https://twitter.com/netanyahu/status/1710828720041119818?lang=en-GB>.

12 "Statement by Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant" *KnessetTV*(Tiktok), 9/10/2023, accessed 22/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/3M4MN6W>.

13 "Giora: We need to bomb Shifa Hospital and starve the population of Gaza," *Rotter*, 10/10/2023, accessed 22/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/46QHgZF>.

14 "Minister Israel Katz: 'There is no more electricity and fuel for Gaza, this is what happens to a nation of murderers'," *Mivzak Live*, 10/10/2023, accessed 22/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/3Qpb8qQ>.

15 "Plan to transfer Gaza residents to Egypt: The head of Liberals in Likud proposes a systematic plan to transfer the residents of Gaza to Egypt after the settlement of the Strip," *Channel 7*, 12/10/2023, accessed 17/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/3rOEAwX>

16 "High-tech entrepreneur: 'It's not enough to destroy Hamas, we need to flatten Gaza'," *Globes.co.il*, 15/10/2023, accessed 17/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/3PZn8O3>.

17 "IDF to Gaza residents: 'You have a few hours to move safely south'," *Kan*, 14/10/2023, accessed 26/10/2023 (in Hebrew), <https://bit.ly/471JLZe>.



## 2. Position of International Law on Israel's War on Gaza

Since the beginning of its war on Gaza, Israel has been using destructive and disproportionate force that greatly transcends any level justified by military necessity. It has targeted highly crowded residential areas, committing dozens of massacres against civilians, such as the bombing of Al-Ahli (Al-Ma'amdani) Hospital on the evening of 17 October, which killed and injured hundreds of displaced civilians who were taking shelter there. This appeared to have the aim of leaving no safe places where the Palestinians could turn for shelter, thus leaving them no choice but to flee to Egypt.<sup>18</sup>

Statements by Israeli officials calling for revenge, destruction, killing and displacement of the population in the context of the brutal war on Gaza constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian law, both contractual and customary. The St Petersburg Declaration of 1868 stipulates that "the only legitimate object which States should endeavour to accomplish during war is to weaken the military forces of the enemy [and that] for this purpose it is sufficient to disable the greatest possible number of men."<sup>19</sup> Even to achieve this goal, the right of the parties to an armed conflict to choose methods and means of combat is not unrestricted. The use of weapons, missiles, materials and methods of combat that would cause unnecessary injury or suffering is prohibited.<sup>20</sup> States must also adhere to the principles of military necessity, proportionality and distinction between civilians and military personnel, refrain from targeting civilian objects such as schools and hospitals, and may not forcibly transfer the civilian population. This clearly applies to the case of approximately one million children trapped in Gaza without shelter, food, water, or electricity.<sup>21</sup>

The ongoing war on the Gaza Strip and associated actions constitute a grave violation of Article 54 of the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions (1977), which prohibits the use of starvation as a means of warfare, attacking, destroying, removal or obstructing access to things that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as food. Israel is also in violation of Rule 53 of Customary International Humanitarian Law, which prohibits starvation, and the 1998 Rome Statute founding the International Criminal Court, which rules that killing the populations and subjecting them to difficult living conditions with the intent of wiping them out, in whole or in part, or depriving them of the basic supplies necessary for their survival, such as food, clean water and medicine, constitutes a war crime, a crime against humanity and genocide.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> "Al-Aqsa Flood: 500 killed in Baptist [hospital] massacre, Biden backs the Israeli version," *Al-Jazeera*, 18/10/2023, accessed 22/10/2023 (in Arabic), <https://bit.ly/400tLEq>.

<sup>19</sup> "Declaration Renouncing the Use, in Time of War, of Explosive Projectiles Under 400 Grammes Weight. Saint Petersburg, 29 November / 11 December 1868," *International Humanitarian Law Databases (International Committee of the Red Cross)*, accessed 7/10/2023, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/st-petersburg-decl-1868>. See also: Jean-Marie Henckaerts, Louise Doswald-Beck, "Customary International Humanitarian Law - Volume 1 : Rules," (ICRC/Cambridge University Press: 2005).

<sup>20</sup> "Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), Article 35," *IHL Databases*, 8/6/1977, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977>.

<sup>21</sup> "EU Leadership must Put an End to its Double Standards and Complicity in Israel's Crime against the Palestinian People," *Al-Haq*, 14/10/2023, accessed on 18/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/3s10A7C>.

<sup>22</sup> *Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court* (United Nations, 1998), Articles 6, 7, 8, accessed on 27/10/2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/rome-statute-international-criminal-court>. See also: "Urgent: Israel Announces Total Warfare on Gaza's Civilian Population, Employing Starvation as Weapon," Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, 9/10/2023, accessed on 18/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/48ZfNXr>.



The Israeli military's disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force against defenceless and innocent Palestinian civilians, along with the mass killing and widespread destruction arising from the indiscriminate bombing of all parts of the Gaza Strip, thus constitute flagrant violations of IHL that amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

## A. War Crimes

The Israeli military's attacks on the Gaza Strip and its population amount to war crimes, which are being committed *en masse* in the context of a systematic policy. They include: premeditated killing following public announcements demonstrating intention; the launching of attacks in the knowledge that they will cause loss of civilian life, severe suffering or serious harm to body or health; intentionally directing attacks against targets of a non-military nature with the aim of causing widespread destruction, despite the lack of military necessity; illegal displacement of the population; the targeting of religious, educational, artistic, or scientific facilities, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are gathered, provided that they are not military targets; directing attacks against medical buildings, materials and units; and deliberately starving civilians for military ends by depriving them of materials indispensable for their survival, including by deliberately obstructing relief supplies, as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions in 1949, the First Additional Protocol in 1977,<sup>23</sup> and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998.<sup>24</sup>

## A. Crimes Against Humanity

Under the Rome Statute, the actions of the Israeli military in the context of the war on the Gaza Strip, based on orders issued by Israel's top civilian and military officials, amount to crimes against humanity, committed within the framework of a systematic or widespread attack against the civilian population, in full knowledge of the attack and its consequences.<sup>25</sup> These acts, crimes against humanity committed against the Palestinians in the context of the war on Gaza, include: premeditated killing and extermination by deliberately imposing hardship on the population, such as depriving them of access to food and medicine with the intention of wiping part of the population; deporting or forcibly transferring the population despite the absence of any of the justifications permissible under international law; the continued persecution of the residents of the Gaza Strip by deliberately and severely depriving them of their basic rights guaranteed by international law, due to their Palestinian identity; and apartheid, also a crime against humanity, committed in the context of an institutional system of oppression and control in order to maintain and perpetuate Israel's domination over the Palestinians, including in Gaza.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, (Fourth Geneva Convention), 12/8/1949, Article 35, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949>.

<sup>24</sup> *Rome Statute*, Article 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 7.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



## B. The Crime of Genocide

The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Rome Statute founding the International Criminal Court in 1998 define genocide as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.<sup>27</sup>

In the context of the war on the Gaza Strip and repeated inflammatory statements by Israeli officials, some 800 researchers and jurists in the field of international law and genocide studies, including prominent scholars in the field of the Holocaust, issued a statement on October 15 warning that Israeli forces could commit genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.<sup>28</sup> United Nations Special Rapporteurs repeated this warning on 19 October, saying: "We are sounding the alarm: There is an ongoing campaign by Israel resulting in crimes against humanity in Gaza."<sup>29</sup>

Palestinian and international human rights organisations have warned in the past that Israel, by cutting off Gaza's water, electricity and internet connection, preventing the entry of humanitarian convoys delivering food, medicine and other supplies necessary for the survival of the population, could constitute concrete steps to implement its officials' statements vowing to commit genocide. This could include such actions as the following, committed with intent to destroy the Palestinians, in whole or in part, as a national group: killing; causing serious physical or mental harm; and deliberately imposing hardship on them with the intention of wiping them out. Israel appears to be aiming, through its siege of Gaza and continuation of its brutal and indiscriminate bombing, to inflict the maximum possible loss of human life and destruction of infrastructure, to impose hardships on the Palestinians and destroy them physically, in whole or in part.<sup>30</sup>

In light of this, it can be concluded that Israeli officials' repeated calls for vengeance, including Netanyahu's vow to turn the Strip to rubble and Gallant's announcement that food, water, electricity and other basic supplies necessary for human survival would be cut off to a territory already subject to an unjust siege since 2007 and which has repeatedly experienced intense military attacks targeting the civilian population, may amount to the crime of genocide. This is especially true given Israel's clear intention of punishing the residents of Gaza by depriving them of basic necessities, inflicting serious physical or mental harm on them, or deliberately subjecting them to living conditions intended to destroy them in whole or in part.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Article 6. See also: "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," 9 December 1948, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/genocide-conv-1948>.

<sup>28</sup> Public Statement: Scholars Warn of Potential Genocide in Gaza," *Third World Approaches to International Law Review (TWAIR)*, 17/10/2023, accessed on 25/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/406QsHf>.

<sup>29</sup> "Gaza: UN Experts Decry Bombing of Hospitals and Schools as Crimes against Humanity, call for prevention of genocide," statement, 19/10/2023, accessed on 25/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/3MbU3ht>.

<sup>30</sup> "Open Letter to the UN Security Council: Palestinian Civil Society Organizations Call for a Ceasefire," 22/10/2023, accessed on 22/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/3Ss1zsD>.

<sup>31</sup> Rome Statute, Article 6.





### 3. Western Complicity and the Failure of the International Community

Despite the gravity of the crimes being committed against the Palestinians, which amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, the United States and its Western allies have provided Israel with diplomatic cover to continue its aggressive campaign against the Palestinian people. This cover has facilitated Israel's acts of premeditated killing,<sup>32</sup> genocide,<sup>33</sup> intentionally causing severe suffering or serious harm to body and health,<sup>34</sup> widespread destruction or confiscation of property without military necessity and in clear violation of international law,<sup>35</sup> and deliberately starving civilians as a tactic of war by depriving them of necessities for their survival, including by obstructing the relief deliveries provided for in the Geneva Conventions of 1949.<sup>36</sup>

Western countries have also ignored repeated calls by Israeli leaders and officials to destroy the Gaza Strip and commit horrific crimes against its residents, including explicit calls to exterminate and displace them, statements that are fully in step with Israeli actions since the beginning of the war. These countries have continually pursued a policy of double standards by highlighting the deaths of Israelis while paying little attention to the plight of the Palestinian civilians killed and maimed as a result of Israeli massacres and military reprisals.<sup>37</sup> On October 9, the U.S., Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, issued a statement condemning the Hamas attacks and supporting "Israel's right to self-defence". This gave the occupying power a comprehensive mandate to continue to direct destructive and lethal force against civilians in Gaza, which is inhabited by more than 2.2 million Palestinians, half of whom are children.<sup>38</sup>

Western governments have not stopped at giving Israel a green light to continue its war on the Gaza Strip. They have also obstructed any draft resolution presented to the UN Security Council, calling for a ceasefire. These include draft resolutions submitted by Russia and Brazil,<sup>39</sup> calling for an immediate and permanent humanitarian ceasefire and condemning all acts of violence and hostilities directed against civilians and denouncing acts of terrorism. The resolutions demanded the release of hostages, the provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance without hindrance, and the creation of the necessary conditions for civilians in need to be safely evacuated. However, Western governments have justified blocking these resolutions on the grounds that they did not condemn Hamas or include "Israel's right to self-defence".<sup>40</sup> Russia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations,

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., Article 8(2) (A) (i).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., Article 7(1) (A) (B) (d).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., Article 8 (2) (a) (iii).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., Article 8 (2) (a) (iv).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Article 8 (2) (b) (XXV).

<sup>37</sup> "License to Kill: Third States Disregard their International Responsibility to Act to Prevent Israel's Violation of Jus Cogens Norms," *Al-Haq*, 23/10/2023, accessed 25/10/2023, <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/21873.html>.

<sup>38</sup> "UK, US, and Allies Offer Israel 'Steadfast Support' in a Joint Statement," *The Guardian*, 9/10/2023, accessed on 24/10/2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3tK5WVB>.

<sup>39</sup> "Israel-Gaza crisis: US vetoes Security Council resolution," *UN News*, 18/10/2023, accessed 27/10/2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142507>.

<sup>40</sup> "Security Council rejects Russian resolution on Gaza," *UN News*, 18/10/2023, accessed 27/10/2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142427>.



Vasily Nebenzia, blamed the "selfish intention of the western bloc" and said that Western countries' delegations had "basically stomped" on global hopes for the Council to put an end to violence.<sup>41</sup> The Council also failed to pass two competing draft resolutions submitted by the U.S. and Russia regarding the escalation of the situation and the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.<sup>42</sup>

The UN General Assembly did, however, adopt a resolution submitted by Jordan on October 26 on behalf of the Arab states and other countries, which expressed grave concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and its catastrophic repercussions for the civilian population, most of whom are children. The resolution called on all parties to comply immediately and fully with their obligations under international law, enable and facilitate humanitarian access to enable essential supplies and services to reach all civilians in need in the Strip, and protect civilians. It rejected any attempt at forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population and called on Israel to rescind its order for Palestinian civilians, UN personnel and other humanitarian and medical staff to evacuate all areas north of the Gaza Valley, to move to the south of the Strip.

The resolution demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all illegally detained civilians and urged that they be protected and treated humanely. It also called for guarantees of protection for the Palestinian civilian population and for the creation of a humanitarian notification mechanism to ensure the protection of UN and other humanitarian facilities, as well as unhindered movement for aid convoys. Finally, it condemned all acts of violence targeting Palestinian and Israeli civilians, including "all acts of terrorism and indiscriminate attacks, as well as all acts of provocation, incitement and destruction."<sup>43</sup>

The complicity of Western governments is most notable in their continued efforts to prevent the Security Council from carrying out its role of protecting international peace and security by compelling Israel to fulfil its obligations under international law, halt its aggressive war on the Gaza Strip, protect civilians and secure the arrival of aid. All this requires the General Assembly to take urgent measures in this regard, by implementing Resolution 377 (C5), which stipulates that if there appears to be a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression and the Security Council is unable to act because of a negative vote by a permanent member, the General Assembly must immediately consider the matter in order to issue recommendations to members on collective measures they may take to maintain or restore international peace and security.<sup>44</sup>

## Conclusion

As occupying power, Israel has imposed an air, land and sea blockade on the Gaza Strip since 2007, collectively punishing its residents. During this period, Israel has launched seven wars that have killed

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> "Gaza crisis: Deadlock deepens as Security Council rejects competing resolutions by US and Russia," *UN News*, 25/10/2023, accessed 27/10/2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142817>.

<sup>43</sup> "Gaza crisis: General Assembly adopts resolution calling for 'humanitarian truce', civilian protection," *UN News*, 27/10/2023, accessed 27/10/2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142932>.

<sup>44</sup> "UNGA Resolution 377 (V), United for Peace," *Research UN*, accessed on 27/10/2023, <https://bit.ly/473hmBS>.



thousands of Palestinian civilians, destroying buildings, homes and infrastructure. These illegal acts, mostly undertaken in the absence of any military necessity, are acts of collective punishment and revenge against Palestinians and amount to grave crimes against civilians in response to actions attributed to Hamas. However, the international community has failed to stop these attacks and ensure respect for IHL. This has contributed to supporting and perpetuating the aggressive war on Gaza - in which many Western governments are openly complicit - instead of addressing the fundamental causes of the ongoing violence: the settler-colonial system and apartheid that Israel continues to impose on the Palestinian people for 75 years.

The international community, especially Western governments, must activate the available international mechanisms – most notably the Security Council – to put an end to Israel's illegal behaviour as represented by its ongoing violations of the peremptory rules of international law. They should stop sending military equipment to kill Palestinians, and instead impose sanctions on Israel. Their inaction will only perpetuate the illegal occupation of Palestine under the guise of "self-defence." The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court must also seriously investigate Israeli crimes, in accordance with the Rome Statute, in particular the indiscriminate targeting of infrastructure and civilian homes and killings of entire families. The court should prosecute and hold accountable everyone who committed, ordered, planned or kept silent about these crimes.



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