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STATEMENT OF THE BUREAU OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE ON
THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

17 October 2023

**BUREAU CONDEMNS KILLING AND WOUNDING OF CIVILIANS IN GAZA AND
CALLS FOR AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE**

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People strongly condemns the killing and wounding of civilians and the targeting of civilian infrastructure in the Gaza Strip. It expresses grave concern at the humanitarian disaster being imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population.

It calls on the international community to put aside divisions and uphold the political, legal, humanitarian and moral obligations invoked by this dangerous crisis. The international community must act with urgency for an immediate ceasefire, to deliver humanitarian assistance to all those in need, and for a just and peaceful resolution to the conflict, which has been too long delayed.

International humanitarian law is unequivocal about the need to protect civilians and persons under occupation and during armed conflict. The current escalation in Gaza, coming after decades of denying the rights of the Palestinian people, has already broken the limits of international law and is providing ample evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Ongoing indiscriminate and collective punishment, military attacks on densely populated areas as well as against hospitals, places of worship, and schools where civilians seek refuge are war crimes under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The rapidly rising casualty toll, with thousands of civilians killed and wounded, including women and children, and the deliberate deprivation of food, water, electricity and medicines to the over 2.3 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are shocking and unjustifiable, constituting grave breaches of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law.

There is no military solution to this conflict. Only a solution that recognizes the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and freedom, can bring peace and security to the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

The Bureau appeals to everyone to work for an immediate ceasefire to halt the violence and bloodshed, to halt the evacuation orders and the forced displacement of traumatized civilians, and to ensure safe and unimpeded access for the delivery of humanitarian aid and medical assistance to civilians and protected persons. It calls on the International Criminal Court to dispatch an urgent fact-finding mission to the region to investigate potential war crimes and crimes against humanity.

END

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