



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
6 June 2024

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5

Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-ninth year

Identical letters dated 24 May 2024 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, continues waging an all-out assault on the Gaza Strip, besieging and indiscriminately and deliberately targeting all areas in a most grotesque form of collective punishment against the Palestinian people aimed at inflicting maximum devastation, sparing no man, woman or child. The West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is also under constant assault by Israel's occupying forces, including settler militias, who are terrorizing Palestinians across cities, towns, villages and refugee camps.

From Jabaliya to Rafah, Khan Younis to Gaza City, Jenin to Nablus, Nur al-Shams to Jerusalem, no Palestinian is safe from Israel's onslaught, all are endangered, all lives at risk.

By the time you will have received this letter, and at the pace of the slaughter of Palestinians being carried out by the Israeli occupying forces, the casualty toll in Gaza will have surpassed 36,000 children, women and men, alongside more than 80,200 wounded and maimed. The toll of Israeli violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem – the latest shocking attack perpetrated in the Jenin refugee camp – has risen to 493 Palestinians killed, including 117 children, and more than 5,000 injured, since October 2023.

These barbaric acts are being perpetrated in contravention of all human norms and moral standards and in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity and genocide against the Palestinian people. The grave reality of genocide in Gaza has become undeniable, including as acknowledged by hundreds of scholars and jurists, among them Jewish and Israeli scholars.

For all of these heinous crimes, we reiterate our standing demand that Israel, the occupying Power, be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law aimed at bringing to a halt its criminal actions, protecting the Palestinian people, ensuring justice for the victims and salvaging a future where peace and security and freedom and human dignity can actually be realized, not just theorized about.



In this regard, we stress the binding nature and absolute imperative of respect for the provisional measures order rendered today, 24 May 2024, by the International Court of Justice, alongside the orders indicated on 26 January 2024 and 28 March 2024, in the case brought by South Africa against Israel under the Genocide Convention.

Following prior orders attesting to the plausible risk of genocide and of irreparable harm being done to the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza and indicating that Israel must, inter alia, prevent the commission of acts of genocide and immediately enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in Gaza, today the Court, noting further deterioration of the catastrophic situation there and worsening conditions of life in Rafah and doubting that evacuation measures claimed by Israel to have been taken for the security of civilians in Gaza, especially those recently displaced from Rafah, are sufficient to alleviate the immense risk to which the Palestinian population is exposed as a result of Israel's military attacks, the Court ordered Israel, inter alia, to:

Immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah Governorate, which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

Maintain open the Rafah crossing for unhindered provision at scale of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance;

Take effective measures to ensure the unimpeded access to the Gaza Strip of any commission of inquiry, fact-finding mission or other investigative body mandated by competent organs of the United Nations to investigate allegations of genocide.

Despite such binding orders by the principal judicial organ of the international system, Israeli government and military officials continue boasting of their insolence and intentions to disrespect the Court and continue flagrantly and systematically violating every single measure of the orders.

Clearly, it matters not to Israel that the International Court of Justice has ruled; it matters not to Israel anything that the Security Council or General Assembly have demanded; it matters not to Israel that the international community with near unanimity is demanding a cessation of its siege and onslaught on Gaza and an end to its illegal occupation of the State of Palestine. Israel firmly believes that the law does not apply to it and remains fully confident that it will never suffer the consequences of its criminal actions, not even when it is committing genocide.

In fact, just minutes after the International Court of Justice order, Israeli occupying forces carried out air strikes on the Shaboura camp in the centre of the city of Rafah and at Al Mawasi near Khan Younis, killing and destroying as it has been for over seven months now in Gaza, acting with wanton aggression, hatred and spite against the Palestinian people as it has been for all the decades of its imposition of its colonial occupation and apartheid regime in our land.

As Israel presses on with its assault on Gaza, attacking all areas by air, land and sea, we are compelled to again make our appeal for global action to demand and enforce a ceasefire for the protection of the over 2 million civilian lives that remain in danger, children, women, men, humanitarians, medical personnel and journalists alike. The situation across Gaza is grave, but particularly at this moment in Rafah, as Israeli troops have not only surrounded and laid siege to Rafah, including seizure of the border crossing, but are striking it with bombs and missiles and have now reached the centre of the city, killing, injuring, terrorizing and destroying everything in their path.

As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 815,000 Palestinians have fled Rafah in recent days and weeks, forcibly displaced yet again in fear of their lives from Israel's attacks. That hundreds of thousands of civilians can be so cruelly uprooted, so callously targeted, over and over with no refuge for safety is both horrifying and unconscionable, betraying every rule of international humanitarian law.

Everywhere they run to is unsafe, unsanitary and unliveable as Israel has methodically dismantled and destroyed conditions of life in Gaza. Homes and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East schools sheltering the displaced all continue to be targeted, including a strike on a school yesterday in Gaza City, killing an entire, among them children, that had desperately sought safety there in a place that has tragically become known worldwide as a place where no living being is safe as Israel carries on with its ethnic cleansing and genocide against our people.

Hospitals also continue to be besieged, attacked and destroyed by Israeli soldiers, with the latest being the siege of Al Awda hospital in the north of Gaza, where at least 150 people, including patients, among them newborn infants, doctors and staff were trapped without access to water and food and left totally unprotected as Israeli soldiers bombed and fired all around the hospital.

This scene of terror is reminiscent of that perpetrated against Al-Shifa, Al-Nasser, Kamal Adwan and numerous other hospitals in Gaza, where the health system has been decimated by the occupying Power. Today Al-Awda, which was one of the only hospitals that had still been functional in northern Gaza, was forced to close, leaving no accessible hospital in the area, further depriving sick and injured civilians of health care and thousands of displaced persons of shelter.

In fact, by all of its actions Israel has ensured the severe deprivation of Gaza's civilian population at all levels, true to its sadistic pledge to deny them of food, water, medicine, fuel and electricity and to treat them like "human animals". Needs and despair have thus continued growing, reaching unprecedented and inhuman levels, as an entire population is being systematically starved, a weapon of war openly employed by Israel as it continues to close border crossings and impose every possible obstacle to the entry and distribution of humanitarian assistance. On 22 May, the World Food Programme warned that "humanitarian operations in Gaza are near collapse" and "if food and humanitarian supplies do not begin to enter Gaza in massive quantities, desperation and hunger will spread".

Denied the essentials of life, the survival and existence of more than 2 million Palestinians who remain in Gaza are at risk, i.e. a genocide is under way, demanding immediate international action.

The Security Council must act to demand and enforce a ceasefire now and ensure protection for the civilian population, in line with international law and the Council's own resolutions, including, inter alia, resolutions [2712 \(2023\)](#), [2720 \(2023\)](#) and [2728 \(2024\)](#), all resolutions relevant to the protection of civilians, including children and women, and the protection of humanitarian workers, including resolution [2730 \(2024\)](#) adopted today concerning the protection of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associate personnel and their premises and assets. This must of course include the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and its schools and facilities that have been the shelters for over 1.7 million Palestinians forcibly displaced in Gaza.

In regard to the situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as stressed earlier, Israeli soldiers and extremist settler gangs and militias continue to run rampant targeting Palestinian civilians and their properties for death and destruction.

On 21 May, Israeli occupying forces launched an invasion of the Jenin refugee camp again, deploying tanks and snipers, trapping civilians in their homes, tearing up roads and infrastructure, and killing 12 Palestinians and injuring at least 27 others. Among those killed were two children on their way to school, a doctor on his way to work at Jenin hospital, and a teacher shot to death near a school.

Israeli occupying forces also continue to carry out mass arrests of Palestinians, mostly men, including youth, subjecting them to gruesome, inhumane treatment and torture in detention, including stripping them, beating them, allowing dogs to attack them, spitting and urinating on them, shackling them, including to their beds, humiliating them and treating them like animals, depriving them of food and medical care, and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment.

Over 9,000 Palestinians, including children, are being held captive by Israel, many whose whereabouts and conditions are unknown, and their lives are in danger. In fact, it has been revealed that, since October 2023, at least 14 Palestinians from the West Bank imprisoned by Israel have died in captivity and at least 27 Palestinians from Gaza have died. Those, however, are the known fatalities as the fate of many others remains in question.

There must be a halt to this cruelty and barbarism against the Palestinian people. There must be a halt to Israel's sheer impunity. The international community must act now, responsibly and seriously to impose accountability measures on Israel, the occupying Power, including sanctions. The Security Council, General Assembly, International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court and all components of the international system must uphold their respective duties and mandates to urgently redress this grave crisis and bring a halt to this threat to international peace and security and the historic injustice perpetrated against the Palestinian people.

This must begin with a halt to Israel's genocidal onslaught in Gaza, demanding all efforts to secure a ceasefire. The lives of millions of innocent civilians are dependent on this. We plead with the international community to act forthwith to give true meaning to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the obligations incumbent on all States under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. Civilians must be protected, justice must be prioritized, peace and security must be pursued, and Israel must be stopped from shredding the law and making a mockery of the international system.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 835 letters on the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 ([A/55/432-S/2000/921](#)) to 16 May 2024 ([A/ES-10/994-S/2024/390](#)) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations against our people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer