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

Security Council
Eightieth year

Identical letters dated 25 July 2025 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

There are no words to truly convey the depths of agony and suffering of the Palestinian people as Israel continues tormenting them under its illegal foreign occupation.

Nowhere has this torment been more brutal and cruel than in Gaza. There, for 656 days, Israel has waged genocide on Palestinian children, women and men, undeterred by any words, warnings or condemnations, and unmoved by any appeals for humanity, from its assaults and starvation of the population.

And, in the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Israel's occupying forces, including armed settler militias, continue to terrorize Palestinians, bent on violently dispossessing and displacing them and stealing their land, equally undeterred by condemnations and demands for a halt to these crimes.

This decades-long Israeli colonization and annexation campaign in Palestine has reached fever pitch, with the expansion of settlements and demolition of Palestinian homes; settler terrorists, backed by the army, attacking Palestinians and destroying property every day; constant dehumanization of and incitement against the Palestinian people, and even the denial of their existence; threats against our holy sites, especially the Aqsa Mosque; and Israeli government ministers declaring plans to ethnically cleanse and annex Gaza, with a scheme entitled "The master plan for the settlement of Gaza", and some even openly calling for Gaza's annihilation.

And now the Israeli Knesset brazenly adopted a declaration on 23 July calling for the imposition of sovereignty over the West Bank, in further flagrant breach of international law, including the prohibition by the Charter of the United Nations on the acquisition of territory by force, the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and in blatant contempt of the advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice.



We condemn all these Israeli crimes against our people and in our land. This occupation is illegal in every manifestation, as clearly determined a year ago by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion of 19 July 2024, and, as demanded by the General Assembly in its resolution [ES-10/24](#) of 18 September 2024, it must be brought to an end immediately and completely.

We recall that Israel is not the sovereign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Its presence and all actions aimed at annexing our land, forcibly transferring our people and denying their rights, including to life, to self-determination, to return and to independence, are unlawful and must be halted, including any measures to impose its sovereignty on our land.

In this connection, we underscore the positions affirmed in the 24 July statement by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nigeria, Palestine, Qatar, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which stressed, inter alia, that the Israeli Knesset declaration “has no legal effect and cannot alter the legal status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, foremost among it East Jerusalem, which remains an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory”, and called on “the international community, including the Security Council and all relevant actors, to shoulder their legal and moral responsibilities, and to act to halt Israel’s illegal policies aimed at imposing a fait accompli by force, undermining the prospects for a just and lasting peace, and the prospects of the two-State solution.”

In its quest to annex the Palestinian territory and destroy the two-State solution physically, Israel is likewise intent on destroying Palestinian life. However, casualty figures, reports of malnutrition and famine and the numbers of the forcibly displaced, no matter how stark and soaring, also cannot truly convey the depths of trauma, loss and grief borne by the Palestinian people in the face of this inhumanity.

As of today, Israel’s assault on life in Gaza has caused over 200,000 Palestinian casualties. In the past 20 months alone, Israel has killed and wounded nearly 9 per cent of Gaza’s population.

In just the four months since Israel broke the ceasefire on 18 March, Israeli occupying forces have killed over 8,363 Palestinians and injured over 31,004 people. In the West Bank, the death toll is fast approaching 1,000 Palestinians killed by Israeli occupying forces or settlers. Israel is now killing an average of 100 Palestinians a day.

Of the over 60,000 Palestinians killed by Israel in Gaza, the majority were women and children. Of the thousands of souls whose bodies are missing under the rubble or elsewhere in the ruins of Gaza, the majority are women and children. Of the over 143,000 Palestinians injured, many permanently disabled, including thousands of amputees, the majority are women and children.

According to UNICEF (see <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-executive-director-catherine-russells-remarks-humanitarian-situation-children>), “an average of 28 children have been killed each day... A whole classroom of children killed, every day for nearly two years. These children are not combatants. They are being killed and maimed as they line up for lifesaving food and medicine.”

And Palestinian children are being killed as they shelter under the United Nations flag in schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); as they and their families are ruthlessly chased by “evacuation orders” that have pushed the population into less than 12 per cent of Gaza’s territory, which lacks the most basic civilian infrastructure and any means of survival; as they are repeatedly displaced, forced to search for refuge in tents or in

the homes, hospitals, churches or mosques that remain standing, only to be bombed, burned alive or crushed to death; as they await medical treatment for wounds, infections and disease that are spreading like wildfire absent critical medicines and medical care; and as they await their next meal, suffering the unbearable pain of hunger, their organs and bodies wasting away.

More than 80 children in Gaza have now died of malnutrition. They are among the 113 people starved to death by Israel as it deliberately deprives Gaza of the essentials of life, including food and water. Many thousands more lives are in imminent danger, especially those of children and babies.

The impact of Israel's aggression specifically on Palestinian women and girls has been highlighted by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, Reem Alsalem, who deems what is happening in Gaza to be an "unfolding femi-genocide", as women and girls are estimated to account for 67 per cent of Palestinians killed since October 2023.

In a recent statement (see www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/07/gaza-un-expert-denounces-genocidal-violence-against-women-and-girls), she stressed that the scale and nature of the crimes inflicted by Israel on Palestinian women and girls are so extreme that existing concepts in legal and criminal frameworks are no longer adequate; that their plight, including due to reproductive violence, is not the collateral damage of war, but rather "the intentional destruction of their lives and bodies, for being Palestinian and for being women"; and that Israel's destruction of Gaza's health system has "left 150,000 pregnant and lactating women without access to essential care."

Underscoring that "there is more than one way to subject a people to genocide", one of them being psychological destruction, the Special Rapporteur also stated that "the horrors that Palestinian mothers, in particular, continue to endure – watching their children slowly starve, killed, maimed, and buried alive – is killing them repeatedly in a single day."

Such horrors are escalating as Israel continues its mass collective punishment of the population, imposing draconian restrictions on humanitarian access, using starvation as a weapon of war, massacring aid seekers, executing doctors – at least 70 doctors and medics have been killed since March 2025 – and destroying the health system, all while intensifying bombing raids, air strikes and the forced displacement of the population across Gaza.

Israeli soldiers and mercenaries have killed at least 1,060 Palestinians and injured another 7,207 people desperately attempting to get aid. This includes the shooting of starving civilians, mostly women and children, waiting for a World Food Programme convoy, while the majority have been killed seeking food from the "Gaza Humanitarian Foundation". This militarized Israeli aid scheme has been described as a "death trap", "dangerous", "contradictory to humanitarian principles", "depriving Palestinians of human dignity" and a "tool for forced displacement" of Palestinians.

Despite near-total rejection of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation across the international community and repeated calls for restoration of access of the United Nations humanitarian system, including UNRWA, and other international humanitarian organizations so that they are able to do their life-saving work to address this unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe, Israel remains intransigent.

Such demands were overwhelmingly reaffirmed in the Security Council open debate of 23 July on the Palestine question and in numerous other statements calling for Israel to stop its forced starvation of the population and for immediate action to address the colossal human suffering it is causing.

This includes the 21 July statement by the United Kingdom and 30 international partners (see www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-statement-on-the-occupied-palestinian-territories), which, inter alia, condemned “the drip feeding of aid and the inhumane killing of civilians, including children, seeking to meet their most basic needs of water and food”, and called on “the Israeli government to immediately lift restrictions on the flow of aid and to urgently enable the UN and humanitarian NGOs to do their life saving work safely and effectively.”

Likewise, a group of States that are supporters of action on conflict and hunger issued a statement (see www.ireland.ie/en/un/newyork/news-and-speeches/speeches-archive/statement-on-gaza-by-a-group-of-states-that-are-supporters-of-action-on-conflict-and-hunger/) on 23 July calling on “Israel as the occupying power to adhere to its obligations under international law and UN Security Council Resolution 2417” and stressing that Israel must, inter alia, “lift its restrictions on humanitarian aid and facilitate immediate, safe, rapid, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access by the UN and humanitarian organisations that ensures relief supplies at scale to civilians in need throughout Gaza.”

These and other similar statements (see www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2025/07/gaza-fieldworker-we-are-torn-apart-watching-our-children-suffer-from-hunger/) have been echoed by civil society, and include an urgent appeal on 23 July (see www.savethechildren.net/news/mass-starvation-spreads-across-gaza-more-100-ngos-make-urgent-plea-allow-life-saving-aid) by over 100 non-governmental organizations for immediate action to alleviate mass starvation. The appeal stresses: “Just outside Gaza, in warehouses – and even within Gaza itself – tons of food, clean water, medical supplies, shelter items and fuel sit untouched with humanitarian organisations blocked from accessing or delivering them. The Government of Israel’s restrictions, delays, and fragmentation under its total siege have created chaos, starvation, and death.” It calls on governments “to take decisive action” to, inter alia, demand an immediate, permanent ceasefire; open all land crossings; reject military-controlled distribution models; restore a principled, United Nations-led humanitarian response; fund principled, impartial humanitarian agencies; and take measures to halt the transfer of weapons and ammunition to Israel.

Yet, still, Israel continues to weaponize hunger, gravely affecting the Palestinian civilian population and risking irreversible physical, psychological and societal consequences that will last for generations, as history and extensive research on starvation and famine have proven (see <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16778567/>). Israel does so in systematic and grave breach of its international legal obligations, including as the occupying Power under international humanitarian law, and in deliberate violation of United Nations resolutions and the 2024 provisional measures orders of the International Court of Justice, adding to the catalogue of war crimes and crimes against humanity it is perpetrating with impunity.

Israel persists with these crimes while flagrantly dismissing the calls and demands of the international community, including by disrespecting its own allies and framing everyone as lying about the reality of the situation on ground. It does so even as it continues to prevent the entry of international journalists into Gaza and even as it targets, kills and starves Palestinian journalists, impeding their efforts to report this reality to the world, and similarly continues to prevent independent international investigations, including as mandated by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

Moreover, Israel continues its pressure campaign against civil society, its ban on UNRWA and its expulsion of United Nations representatives from Occupied Palestine, revoking and denying visas as though it is the sovereign, rather than the illegal occupant of the Palestinian land that it is, and flagrantly violating the Charter

and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. The latest target has been Jonathan Whittall of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, cast out for speaking up on the horrors he has witnessed in Gaza.

This is happening in conjunction with relentless Israeli attacks on United Nations personnel – with over 400 humanitarians killed since October 2023, 333 of them UNRWA staff, many killed alongside their families, including 500 children – and unprecedented incitement and attacks on the United Nations leadership.

From declaring the Secretary-General, António Guterres, *persona non grata*; to barring the entry of the UNRWA Commissioner-General, Philippe Lazzarini; to the incitement campaign against Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese, and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel; to the attack on the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Sima Bahous; to the attack on the International Criminal Court and its Prosecutor; and, most recently, the defamation of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Tom Fletcher, all have been attacked by Israel for upholding their mandates, for speaking the truth, for reporting on the facts.

Israel shamelessly claims that they are all anti-Semites and that their reports are false, even if gathered by United Nations staff on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and offensively and racistly claims all Palestinian figures to be lies. It equally has no qualms about deriding and dismissing factual, evidenced reporting by other humanitarian and human rights groups, whether Palestinian, international or even Israeli, claiming that they, too, are liars.

This is all part of Israel's war of erasure of the Palestinian people and of Palestine. It needs to get rid of those witnessing, documenting and reporting on its war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. It needs to get rid of those standing in the way of its annexationist designs, foremost the Palestinian people.

That is why the Israeli occupying forces, under the command of Israel's Prime Minister and military leaders, have carried out massacre after massacre and have forcibly displaced nearly the entire population of Gaza, who have been driven from their homes in a calculated, ruthless campaign as Israel bombs every inch of Gaza, destroying all components of life – every home, every school, every hospital, every shelter, every mosque, every church and every family a target.

Israel's strike on the Holy Family Church in Gaza on 17 July, in which it killed three Palestinian civilians sheltering at the church and wounded nine others, is only the latest attack on holy sites, as almost all mosques in Gaza are damaged or destroyed, deepening the fears of the Christian community and all civilians that nowhere is safe, not even houses of worship, and that they cannot remain in Gaza.

Similarly, the Israeli strike on the World Health Organization's staff residence and warehouse in Dayr al-Balah on 21 July is part of a long series of attacks on United Nations premises, and is clearly aimed at spreading fear and pushing what remains of the United Nations out of Gaza to facilitate Israel's ethnic cleansing objectives.

To this end, Israel's "Defense Minister" has gone so far as to announce plans to establish so-called "humanitarian cities", to which Palestinian civilians in Gaza would be moved and from which they can leave only if they migrate to another country, never to return to their homeland. This abhorrent scheme has been widely deemed as forced transfer and the proposed cities as "concentration camps", including by a former Israeli Prime Minister.

At the same time, entire Palestinian communities in the West Bank are also being violently forced from their land in the Jordan Valley, Masafer Yatta, East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the territory (see www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/07/un-experts-call-end-israeli-state-and-settler-violence-west-bank). Armed settler terrorists, backed the Israeli occupying forces, continue to intimidate, kill and injure Palestinian civilians. This includes the recent killing of two young men in the town of Sinjil on 11 July – Saifullah Kamel Musallet, a 20-year-old Palestinian-American citizen who was visiting his family and who was beaten to death by settlers, and 23-year-old Mohammad Shalabi, who was shot and killed in the same attack. All these heinous, illegal actions are aimed at displacing the Palestinian people, taking over their land and replacing them with Jewish settlers, part of Israel's long-running annexationist plans.

And, still, the Palestinian people continue to be denied the protection that civilians in armed conflict anywhere in the world should be accorded in accordance with international law. And, still, there are no consequences for Israel as it continues to be shielded from accountability for its crimes.

This appalling situation compels us to call once again for serious, collective action, including concrete measures of accountability, to stop Israel's destruction of Palestinian life and its annexation of Palestinian land. The cardinal principles at the foundation of the international system – the right to self-determination and the prohibition on the acquisition of territory by force – are being systematically violated by Israel, and it cannot be allowed to get away with these crimes any longer.

We therefore welcome the decisions by several countries to act to fulfil their obligations towards the question of Palestine in the light of the Security Council's continued paralysis and Israel's continued impunity. For example, the commitment to concrete action by The Hague Group, as affirmed in the joint statement adopted on 16 July in Bogota, Colombia (see <https://dirco.gov.za/joint-statement-by-the-hague-group-on-the-conclusion-of-the-emergency-conference-on-palestine-at-the-bogota-conference-in-bogota-republic-of-colombia-from-15-to-16-july-2025/>), is a clear indication of significant shifts underway in the international community, with growing numbers of States acting on their obligations to uphold international law and ensure accountability – whether via judicial processes at the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, including advisory opinions and the case brought by South Africa and several other countries against Israel under the Genocide Convention, or via sanctions, arms embargoes or other lawful measures – and insisting on justice and rights as fundamental for achieving lasting peace and security. We urge States to join and endorse The Hague Group joint statement and undertake the necessary actions.

The General Assembly's decision to convene the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia, is another very significant reflection of the commitment by a vast majority of the international community to multilateral action based on international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions as the path to a peaceful solution that is just, lasting and comprehensive.

It is time for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the rest of Occupied Palestine to bring an end to Israel's genocidal war on the Palestinian people and to release the Israeli hostages and all Palestinians unlawfully detained.

It is time to protect Palestinian civilians, including children, and to preserve their right to life, including by the dispatch of an international protection force to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the acceleration of unfettered humanitarian

assistance by the United Nations and international organizations. It is time for recovery and reconstruction in Gaza to restore life to this integral part of Palestine. It is time to end Israel's colonization, annexation schemes and apartheid regime. It is time to end this illegal occupation.

This is the most viable way in which the international community can assist and enable the Palestinian people to realize their inalienable rights to self-determination, return and independence, as enshrined in international law and countless United Nations resolutions, and it must be urgently pursued to end this cruel Nakbah and historic injustice.

There is no other way to realize the vision of two States, the long unfulfilled covenant of the international community since the General Assembly's fateful decision to partition Palestine, leaving the Palestinian people to languish without their rights, without liberty, denied existence and driven from their homeland to this day. It is time to recognize the State of Palestine as inherent to the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people; it is not a "reward" or an act of charity, as some cynically claim.

It is time to act, in line with the Charter of the United Nations and all other obligations under international law, to attain justice, realize the freedom of the Palestinian people and the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and achieve the just, lasting and comprehensive solution that will establish Palestinian-Israeli peace and security and peace and security for the Middle East region as a whole, which the international community has sought for decades but has failed to do the necessary to achieve.

The moment has arrived for these long-overdue undertakings with the convening of the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.

We appeal to all States to seize the occasion to implement their words and commitments with real, collective action to fulfil their legal, political, humanitarian and moral obligations to stop the genocide in Gaza and to finally end Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine. The Conference provides a historic opportunity to come together to mobilize the political will to transform promises and pledges into action for justice and for peace and security. That opportunity must not be missed.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 871 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 3 July 2025 (A/ES-10/1040-S/2025/449), 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 brought to justice. This illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime must end now.

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) Riyadh **Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer