

Open Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza, Lebanon and Israel and End to Impunity amid a Spiralling Humanitarian Catastrophe and Escalating Regional Conflict

24 October 2024

We, the undersigned organisations, appeal to all UN member states to secure an immediate ceasefire across Gaza, Lebanon, Israel and the region, and to end the impunity that has allowed atrocities by Israeli forces against civilians to continue and escalate. Without accountability, there will be no red lines and no rock bottom.

Israel's war in Gaza, following the deadly attacks by Palestinian armed groups on 7 October 2023, is the latest and most horrific onslaught of violence in the decades-long Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. After a year of unfathomable killing and destruction, patterns of civilian harm by Israeli forces are spreading and escalating from Gaza to Lebanon, while rocket attacks by armed groups in Lebanon continue. We are now on the precipice of even greater devastation across the region.

Failure to act now is a choice - a choice that will fail to stop and prevent future atrocities. The UN Commission of Inquiry [concluded](#) last week that Israel has committed war crimes and the crime against humanity of extermination with relentless and deliberate attacks on medical personnel and facilities in Gaza, and called on member states to "[cease aiding or assisting in the commission of violations](#)."

Over the last 12 months, the UN Security Council has passed four resolutions on Gaza, including one calling for a ceasefire, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ordered Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II of the Genocide Convention. The ICJ also issued an Advisory Opinion that found that Israel's occupation¹ and annexation of Palestinian territory is illegal, and the UN General Assembly passed a resolution demanding that Israel end its unlawful presence in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) within 12 months. Despite this, none of these measures have been implemented or adhered to.

The international community's egregious disregard for international law and the government of Israel's unchecked impunity in Gaza, the West Bank and now Lebanon, has set dangerous new precedents for the conduct of war.

For civilians in the occupied Palestinian territory, Lebanon and Israel this has resulted in:

- Israeli military actions killing over [43,000 Palestinians](#) across the oPt and more than [2,000 people in Lebanon](#).
- Israeli forces issuing displacement orders covering over [84% of Gaza's territory](#) and now [25% of Lebanon's territory](#). These orders, combined with Israel's bombardment, have forcibly displaced [around 90% of Gaza's population](#) and [over 800,000 people in Lebanon](#).
- An estimated 400,000 Palestinians are under siege and relentless bombardment in northern Gaza without access to food, water, fuel, or medical care. ([UNRWA](#))

¹ For more on what international humanitarian law says about occupation, please see commentary by [ICRC](#).

- The killing of [over 300 Palestinian and international aid workers](#), and over [1000 health care workers](#) in Gaza and [95 in Lebanon](#). UN peacekeeping forces in Lebanon are also coming under attack by Israeli forces ([UNIFIL](#)). Israeli military attacks on hospitals, clinics, and ambulances have decimated the health care system in Gaza, and are [destroying it in Lebanon](#) - leaving millions without access to care.
- Countless children and adults are dying of malnutrition and facing the risk of starvation, directly induced by the Israeli government's siege on Gaza, which includes systematic obstruction of humanitarian aid and essential services. ([IPC](#))
- The killing of nearly 1,200 people in Israel during the Palestinian armed group led attacks on October 7, 2023 ([OCHA](#)).
- Rockets fired by Palestinian and Lebanese armed groups have killed and injured dozens of people ([Amnesty International](#)) and displaced over [140,000 Israelis](#).
- [101 hostages](#) remain held by Palestinian armed groups, and thousands of Palestinians are unlawfully [detained](#) by Israeli forces in detention centers, including children, many whose whereabouts are unknown and have effectively disappeared.

Many among us have repeatedly called for a permanent and unconditional [ceasefire](#), [hostage release](#), a [halt to arms transfers](#), and [de-escalation of tensions](#) in the region, and yet the violence only appears to be intensifying. Again, we call on all Heads of State and Governments, the UN Security Council, and actors on the ground to prioritise the preservation of human life above all else by:

- Securing an immediate ceasefire by all parties to the conflict and an end to the indiscriminate attacks that kill civilians and destroy civilian infrastructure;
- Halting the transfer of weapons, parts, and ammunition to parties to the conflict that may be used to commit violations of international humanitarian law (IHL);
- Enabling unhindered humanitarian access for the delivery of lifesaving assistance, including food, medical supplies and fuel, and the safe movements of civilians and aid workers.
- Ensuring the protection of civilians from further forced displacement, and the right to return for those forcibly displaced. Civilians who choose to stay or are unable to leave remain protected under international law.
- Securing the release of all hostages and detainees.
- Immediately activating independent international investigations into all apparent violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes committed by all parties.

Governments must do everything in their power to end this growing catastrophe and cycle of impunity. It is not only a moral imperative but a legal obligation. All Member States must prevent further atrocities and ensure that those responsible for any violations of international law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, are held accountable. Failure to act now risks further eroding international norms and emboldening perpetrators. The cycle of violence against civilians needs to stop.

Signatories:

1. ABCD Bethlehem
2. Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)
3. AFSC, American Friends Service Committee
4. ALEF - act for human rights
5. Alternatives Internationales
6. Amos Trust
7. Anglican Pacifist Fellowship
8. Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem
9. Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP)
10. Asociación Otra Escuela
11. Association Switzerland-Palestine (Gesellschaft Schweiz-Palästina)
12. Avaaz
13. Baytna pour le soutien de la société civile
14. Belgium Palestine Mental Health Network
15. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
16. Caritas Internationalis
17. Caritas MONA (Middle East and North Africa)
18. CCFD-Terre Solidaire
19. Children Not Numbers
20. Christian Aid
21. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)
22. CIVICUS
23. Clowns Without Borders Sweden
24. Clowns Without Borders UK
25. CNCD-11.11.11
26. Collective Aid
27. Comisión de Justicia y Paz de Confregua
28. Cordaid
29. Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
30. Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu)
31. Danish Refugee Council
32. DAWN
33. Egala Association
34. Emmaus International
35. Equal Legal Aid
36. EuroMed Rights Network
37. Europe Cares e.V.
38. European Alternatives
39. Fellowship of Reconciliation - USA
40. Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid
41. Firefly International
42. Forces Watch
43. FORO SALUD NACIONAL
44. France Palestine Mental Health Network
45. FSMAGH (Forum des alternatives Maroc - FMAS)
46. Fund for Global Human Rights
47. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
48. Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)

49. Global Witness
50. Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)
51. HelpAge International
52. Hivos
53. Human Rights & Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"/Palestine
54. Human Rights Sentinel
55. Human Security Collective
56. Humanity & Inclusion/Handicap International
57. ICNA SISTERS CANADA
58. Initiatives et Changement
59. International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
60. International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
61. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
62. International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR)
63. International Peace Bureau (IPB)
64. INTERSOS
65. Ireland Palestine Mental Health Network
66. Islamic Relief Worldwide
67. Jewish Network for Palestine
68. Jewish Voice for Peace-Health Advisory Council
69. KAIROS Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
70. Kenya Human Rights Commission
71. KinderUSA
72. Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law
73. Lebanese Center for human Rights
74. MADRE
75. Mayworks Kijipuktuk/Halifax
76. Médecins du Monde International Network
77. medico international
78. Medicus Mundi Italia
79. Migrant Roots Media
80. Minnesota Peace Project
81. Movement for community-led Development
82. MPower Change Action Fund
83. Muslim Association of Brantford
84. Muslim Delegates and Allies
85. Musulmanas de Guatemala por Palestina
86. NO NAME KITCHEN
87. Nonviolence International
88. Nonviolent Peaceforce
89. Norwegian Refugee Council
90. Olof Palmes Internationella Center
91. Omega Research Foundation
92. Oxfam
93. Palestinian Assoc. of Brantford
94. PAX
95. Pax Christi Australia
96. Pax christi Deutsche Sektion
97. Pax Christi England and Wales
98. Pax Christi Flanders

99. Pax Christi International
100. Pax Christi Scotland
101. Pax Christi USA
102. Peace Boat
103. Peace Direct
104. Peace SOS
105. Peace Watch Switzerland
106. Peace, Justice, Sustainability, NOW!
107. People's Health Movement (PHM)
108. Permanent Peace Movement
109. Plan International
110. Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine
111. Polish Medical Mission
112. Première Urgence Internationale
113. Progressive Democrats of Pennsylvania
114. Protection International
115. PVE Works
116. Quakers in Scotland (Religious Society of Friends)
117. Resource Centre for human Rights & Civic Education (CHRICED)
118. ReThinking Foreign Policy
119. Rethinking Security
120. Righting Relations Canada
121. Saferworld
122. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties
123. Seenaryo
124. Share The World's Resources
125. SOS Children's Villages UK
126. Ster Organization for human development
127. Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)
128. Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights
129. Terre des Hommes Netherlands
130. The Advocacy Academy
131. The Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace, and Security
132. The Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation
133. The International Federation for Rights and Development - IFRD
134. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
135. The Namibia NGO Forum Trust
136. The National Organization of Yemeni Reporters SADA
137. The socio-economic Justice Initiative-MAAN
138. The Syria Campaign
139. Train of Hope Dortmund e. V.
140. UK Palestine Mental Health Network
141. United Nations Association - UK (UNA-UK)
142. University Network for Human Rights
143. US Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO)
144. Vision GRAM-International
145. War Child
146. WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
147. WeWorld
148. WILPF US

149. Women for Women International
150. Women's International League for Peace & Freedom-Minnesota, USA, Branch
151. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
152. Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
153. مؤسسة لاجلك للاستجابة والتنمية
154. مؤسسة مدافعات للحقوق والحريات