



# General Assembly Security Council

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**General Assembly**  
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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 31 January 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**

In blatant defiance of the International Court of Justice's binding order indicating provisional measures in the case of South Africa against Israel under the Genocide Convention, Israel persists with its genocidal assault in the Gaza Strip, killing at least 700 more Palestinians and injuring over 1,000 others in just the few days since the Court's historic ruling on 26 January.

The Court ordered Israel to, inter alia, prevent the commission of all acts under article II of the Convention, in particular: "(a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group".

Yet Israel has ignored this order, permitting and commanding its ruthless occupying forces and settler militias continue to kill, maim and wreak more havoc and destruction, deliberately endangering the survival of Palestinian civilians and bent on inflicting maximum pain and loss. Israel's Prime Minister states: "No one will stop us, not The Hague, not the axis of evil and not anyone else".

Thus, another month of non-stop horrors has brought the casualty toll to 26,751 Palestinians killed and 65,636 persons injured by the Israeli occupation forces' bombardments in Gaza. Some 11,500 children, including babies and toddlers, are among the dead, nearly 2,000 more children since at the time of my previous letter of 19 January.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the casualty toll has risen to 370 Palestinians killed, including 94 children, and 4,386 injured since 7 October. In this month alone, 61 Palestinians, including 13 children, were killed by the Israeli occupation forces and/or settlers in raids targeting refugee camps in particular, including in Jenin, where yesterday Israeli occupation forces invaded a hospital and executed three men inside.



More than 8,000 humans – men, women and children – remain buried under rubble, denied in death the dignity they have been denied in life, along with the hundreds of bodies exhumed and defiled by Israel’s destruction of cemeteries and graves in Gaza as it continues bulldozing land to create a so-called “buffer zone”, in a blatant attempt at the acquisition of land by force. Again, Israel’s Minister of National Security, alongside dozens of other Israeli officials who participated in a “Return to Gaza” conference on 28 January, called for ethnic cleansing of Gaza and building Israeli settlements there.

It is the same dignity denied to the more than 2 million Palestinians in Gaza who are desperately struggling to survive the bombs, forced displacement, starvation, thirst, epidemics and traumas inflicted on them by Israel as it carries on with its genocidal rampage. Undeterred by the global calls for a ceasefire, and shielded by vetoes in the Security Council, Israel remains confident it will never face consequences for such grave breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights atrocities.

In contempt of the International Court of Justice, Israeli government officials and military commanders continue their barrage of incitement and dehumanization against Palestinians, unflinching in their calls for killing and annihilation in Gaza, flouting the order by the Court for Israel “to prevent and punish the direct and public incitement to commit genocide in relation to members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip”.

Israel also continues obstructing humanitarian assistance, including food, water, medicines and fuel, to the Palestinian population in Gaza, including more than 1.9 million people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes and are in dire need of emergency aid. Even Israeli citizens are joining the Government’s siege by blocking entry of aid, exacerbating conditions of hunger, which is at the level of mass starvation and imminent risk of famine, and dehydration, malnutrition and the spread of diseases and infections, with children most vulnerable to wasting leading to death.

The occupying Power is deliberately and systematically obstructing their sustenance and survival in direct breach of the Court’s order that Israel “take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip”. Moreover, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure continue to be systematically attacked and destroyed by Israel, undermining the provision of essential humanitarian services and hastening unlivable conditions in Gaza.

Where does the international community stand in the face of such defiance? Where is the outrage declared in regard to some incidents, yet absent in the face of such blatant war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide against the Palestinian people? Where is accountability? Where are the calls to stop arming an occupying Power massacring the people under its domination?

It is time to put an end to this impunity. The International Court of Justice’s provisional measures order must be respected. It is binding and obligatory. Israel cannot continue to evade accountability for its crimes, cannot continue to be permitted to act as a State above all norms and rules, trampling the law and undermining it for one and all, with far-reaching implications for the global order.

It is long past time for a ceasefire, to save civilian lives, and to enable and ensure the implementation of the provisional measures indicated by the Court. The international community must act with all seriousness and speed to make this possible, in the interest of the Palestinian people, the Israeli people, and regional and

international peace and security, which are being gravely threatened by Israel's criminal aggression and the consequent tensions and violence across the region.

Of immediate priority must be Security Council action to demand a humanitarian ceasefire, which has been the demand by the resounding majority of countries for months now to stop the slaughter and protect civilian lives. The International Court of Justice has upheld its role and responsibilities, swiftly indicating provisional measures; the Council must now uphold its role and responsibilities under the Charter.

Without a ceasefire, none of the atrocities will end and death, destruction and devastation will continue to be spread by Israel, which has made clear time and again that it neither respects international law nor the Palestinian people's rights, nor their rights to self-determination, to return and to be liberated from this illegal settler colonial occupation and apartheid regime, and most certainly not their right to life.

We thus reiterate our standing appeal for the Security Council to act without delay to demand an immediate ceasefire. The Council must compel Israel to change course, to stop its genocidal war, to stem the unravelling of the perilous situation in the region and salvage prospects for a just solution to this historic injustice.

In closing, I wish to put on record the State of Palestine's absolute rejection of Israel's continual, sinister efforts to libel and discredit the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) aimed at bringing the Agency to collapse and negating the inalienable rights of the Palestine refugees. UNRWA, through the tireless efforts of its leadership and staff, has continued to bravely uphold its mandated humanitarian mission in the most impossible and horrific conditions in Gaza and with the Agency itself also under constant assault.

A total of 152 Palestinian staff of UNRWA have been killed thus far in Israeli bombardments; 372 displaced Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed and 1,335 have been injured in Israeli attacks while sheltering at UNRWA schools, which have sustained extensive damage and destruction. Just two days ago, on 29 January, 10 displaced Palestinians were killed and many more injured in an Israeli missile strike on a classroom in a school in Gaza City, further terrorizing displaced families. Yet the shock and horror at the allegations by Israel against a few UNRWA staff members have not been replicated across the international community, further denigrating Palestinian lives.

Moreover, regrettably, some donor countries to UNRWA have announced the suspension of funding to the Agency in reaction to these as yet uncorroborated allegations and despite the swift measures taken by the Commissioner-General and the Secretary-General's launch of an investigation to ensure accountability. Such decisions collectively punish millions of Palestine refugees, including nearly the entirety of the Palestinian population in Gaza, and threaten the continuity of UNRWA's indispensable, life-saving humanitarian assistance and stabilizing role in the region at a time of extreme fragility and volatility, compounding needs and despair and risking further displacement in and outside Gaza as Palestinian families are pushed to the brink and desperately seek survival.

Palestine thus appeals for such decisions to be rescinded and for the resumption and increase of funding to UNRWA to ensure it remains a lifeline for the Palestine refugees, including in Gaza where their lives are in imminent danger. As stressed by the Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, "withdrawing funds from UNRWA is perilous and would result in the collapse of the humanitarian system in Gaza, with far-reaching humanitarian and human rights consequences in the occupied Palestinian territory and across the region. The world cannot abandon the people of Gaza".

This genocidal Israeli war against the Palestinian people, including our children, must be stopped and its illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime must be brought to an end. This must begin with a ceasefire now to save human lives and to save our collective future.

This letter is in follow-up to our 824 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 19 January 2024 ([A/ES-10/980-S/2024/84](#)), 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

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