



General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 March 2024

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Fifty-fifth session

26 February–5 April 2024

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of
the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 52/3. It provides an overview of the implementation of the resolution and developments relevant to the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 52/3 and covers the period from 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023. It draws on human rights monitoring conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and information from governmental sources, other United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations. Almost all the international staff of OHCHR continued to remain outside the Occupied Palestinian Territory during the reporting period due to the failure by Israel to grant entry visas.
2. For more than 56 years, the Occupied Palestinian Territory – the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza – has remained under occupation by Israel, affecting all rights of Palestinians, including the right to self-determination.
3. The human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory drastically worsened during the reporting period. There was an escalation of the use of lethal force in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and, in May 2023, there was an escalation of hostilities in Gaza.¹
4. On 7 October 2023, Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and other Palestinian armed groups and Palestinians infiltrated southern Israel and attacked civilians and civilian objects, as well as military objectives, while thousands of indiscriminate projectiles hit Israel. In response, Israel launched intensive strikes from the air, land and sea across Gaza. The escalation continued beyond the reporting period, with massive human suffering and an immense impact on civilians, especially women and children.
5. During the reporting period, Israeli security forces killed 338 Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in the context of law enforcement (including, 251 men, 3 women, 81 boys and 3 girls). In Gaza, in May 2023, Palestinians were killed in the context of an escalation of hostilities (33 overall, including at least 13 civilians – 4 men, 4 women, 3 girls and 2 boys) and another 2 Palestinian men were killed by Israeli security forces in the context of law enforcement operations. Between 7 and 31 October 2023, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health, at least 8,525 Palestinians were killed in Gaza, including at least 3,542 children and 2,136 women, and 1,870 persons were reportedly missing, including 1,020 children.² As in previous escalations, some Palestinian civilians may have been killed by Palestinian armed groups.
6. During the reporting period, 30 Israelis (20 men, 5 boys, 4 women and 1 girl) were killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, by individual Palestinians, and 1 Israeli woman was killed in Israel by a rocket launched from Gaza during the escalation of hostilities in May. Specifically, between 7 and 31 October 2023, according to Israeli authorities, at least 1,200 Israelis were killed in Israel, including 325 members of Israeli armed forces.
7. Due to the serious violations committed on 7 October 2023 in Israel and the military response of Israel in Gaza thereafter, and given the close link between impunity and continued violence, the present report includes a particular focus on the hostilities in Gaza and Israel since 7 October 2023, within the context of the ongoing occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israel.
8. The human rights situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was already grave prior to 7 October 2023. In parallel to an increase in settler violence and measures that could facilitate the de facto annexation of the West Bank, Israel increased the use of military tactics and weapons in law enforcement operations, leading to a massive increase in the number of Palestinians killed. State and settler violence³ against Palestinians exploded after 7 October 2023, entrenching the long-standing discriminatory system under which Israel exercises control over Palestinians.

¹ [A/78/502](#), para. 8.

² These numbers are not yet verified but, on the basis of past experience, they give an accurate and reliable approximation of the number of fatalities.

³ [A/HRC/55/72](#), para. 24.

9. OHCHR has requested full access to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory to investigate violations by all duty bearers but at the time of writing had not received a response from Israel.

10. OHCHR monitoring of incidents during the escalation of hostilities in Gaza between Israel and Palestinian armed groups indicated extensive disregard for international humanitarian law by all parties. The prevailing climate of impunity by all duty bearers, noted previously by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, persisted and has contributed to the commission of further violations of international law, some potentially amounting to international crimes.

II. Human rights situation

A. October 2023 escalation

11. On 7 October 2023, Israelis and Palestinians awoke to the heaviest barrage of explosive projectiles from Gaza in years. Thousands of members of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and Al-Quds Brigades, as well as other armed and unarmed Palestinians, had crossed into Israel. The fighters rampaged into areas close to the security fence with Gaza, attacking military bases, small towns, kibbutzim and a music festival.

12. It was rapidly apparent, from a variety of sources, including video material published by armed Palestinians engaged in the attacks, that Palestinian armed groups committed serious violations of international law on a wide scale, including attacks directed against civilians, wilful killing and mistreatment of civilians, wanton destruction of civilian objects and taking of hostages, which amount to war crimes and may also, depending on further investigation, amount to other serious crimes under international law. More than 1,124 persons were reportedly killed in the attacks of 7 October 2023, including 295 military personnel,⁴ and 4,834 persons were injured.⁵ Reportedly, some Israeli civilians were killed in the crossfire by Israeli forces.⁶

13. There are also accounts that members of Palestinian armed groups and other armed and unarmed Palestinians committed rape, sexual assault (see para. 72 below) and torture. Those accounts require thorough investigation, while ensuring full accountability in accordance with international law. Justice for crimes committed must be served and protection and full reparation afforded to all victims.

14. One of the most prominent attacks on civilians was the attack at the Nova music festival, which was attended by thousands. Evidence indicates that the attacks of Palestinian armed groups and other armed and unarmed Palestinians on the festival resulted in the mass killing of hundreds of Israeli civilians. Several reports, including eye-witness testimony, of rape and other sexual and gender-based violence have emerged.⁷

15. Many civilians, as well as military personnel, were taken to Gaza and held there. Israeli authorities have at different times estimated the number of individuals taken into Gaza to be approximately 242, including Israeli citizens, dual nationals and citizens of other countries.⁸ Families have suffered as the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones remain unknown at the time of writing, and they fear for their safety. Hostage-taking is a war crime.

⁴ See www.idf.il/59780?page=1 (in Hebrew).

⁵ See www.timesofisrael.com/the-israel-we-knew-died-on-october-7-the-new-nation-will-be-scarred-for-generations.

⁶ See www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/2023-11-18/ty-article/0000018b-e1a5-d168-a3ef-f5ff4d070000 (in Hebrew).

⁷ See www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67629181.

⁸ In total, and as of 30 November 2023, 109 civilians had been released alive (48 woman, 34 children and 27 men) and 1 woman soldier belonging to the Israel Defense Forces had been rescued. As of 15 December 2023, Israel Defense Forces had confirmed the death of eight civilian men, three civilian women and four soldiers belonging to the Israel Defense Forces (three men and one woman) held in Gaza.

16. The suspected perpetrators of those acts must receive due process and fair trials. Many detained in connection with those attacks and the resulting conflict are currently held incommunicado in Israel, exposing them to heightened risks of torture and other ill-treatment and raising concerns about the possibilities of fair trials. Israeli investigative and prosecutorial authorities and courts must ensure that the rights of Palestinian defendants are fully respected.

17. The barrage of indiscriminate projectiles launched by Palestinian armed groups on Israel has continued beyond 31 October 2023. Rockets have been fired across the south and reached the centre of Israel, including Tel Aviv, Sderot and the areas adjacent to Gaza, Beersheva and Jerusalem. Such strikes violate the prohibitions on indiscriminate attacks and the use of weapons, which are by their very nature indiscriminate under international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes.⁹

18. On 9 October 2023, the Minister of Defence of Israel announced that he had ordered a “complete siege” of Gaza, saying that “there will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed ... we are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly.”¹⁰ The “complete siege” and its implications for the population should be understood in the context of the preceding 16-year-old blockade of Gaza imposed by the Israeli authorities, which had already had far-reaching humanitarian and human rights consequences for the civilian population, including by devastating the local economy,¹¹ and which itself amounted to collective punishment.¹²

19. Between 8 and 21 October 2023, Israel completely closed all crossings into Gaza and prevented the entry of humanitarian aid, commercial goods, food, fuel and electricity, while at the same time only allowing a small supply of water to enter. After that date, only a minuscule amount of aid was allowed in.¹³ The Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt was also kept closed until 21 October 2023. That severe deprivation of the rights of Gazans to water, food, health and other basic necessities, compounded by attacks against essential civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals, bakeries and water wells, resulted in a preventable, man-made and unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

20. Senior Israeli political and military officials indicated on several occasions that the siege and other restrictions had been imposed deliberately and punitively, also evidenced by their refusal to reopen the Kerem Shalom crossing between Israel and Gaza and the speed at which aid was increased during the “humanitarian pause” in November 2023.¹⁴

21. The complete cut-off of the electricity supply to Gaza and the refusal to allow any fuel to enter Gaza led to the shutdown of the one power plant in Gaza and serious knock-on effects on health care, water supply and sewage services, worsening beyond the reporting period and resulting in preventable deaths.¹⁵ The degradation of the telecommunications network, including a complete blackout as Israel launched its ground operation into Gaza on 27 October 2023, also gravely affected service delivery and hindered reporting.

22. Between 8 and 15 October 2023, Israel completely shut off all three water pipelines into Gaza, representing almost 75 per cent of its supply of potable water. Limited supplies using the pipeline to eastern Khan Yunis were restored on 15 October 2023 and to Deir al-Balah on 31 October 2023. Supplies to northern Gaza have never been restored. The Minister for Energy and Infrastructure of Israel said that restoring the water supply to the

⁹ Jean-Marie Henckaerts and Louise Doswald-Beck, *Customary International Humanitarian Law: Volume I – Rules* (Geneva, International Committee of the Red Cross; Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Cambridge University Press, 2005), rules 11, 12, 71 and 156.

¹⁰ See www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/defense-minister-announces-complete-siege-of-gaza-no-power-food-or-fuel.

¹¹ See www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-unprecedented-devastating-impact-english_2.pdf.

¹² [A/78/502](#), para. 33; [A/76/333](#), para. 36; [A/75/336](#), para. 24; [A/74/468](#), para. 22; [A/73/420](#), para. 7; [A/HRC/52/75](#); [A/HRC/46/63](#), para. 7; [A/HRC/37/38](#), para. 4; and [A/HRC/34/36](#), para. 36.

¹³ A few trucks passed through the Rafah crossing on 8 October 2023.

¹⁴ See https://twitter.com/Israel_katz/status/1712356130377113904 (in Hebrew); and https://twitter.com/Israel_katz/status/1712876230762967222.

¹⁵ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-86.

south of Gaza “will push the civilian population to the southern [part of the] Strip”,¹⁶ suggesting that Israel may have been depriving civilians of access to goods essential to their survival as a means of forcing them to move.

23. Only limited aid was allowed into southern Gaza from 21 October: 217 aid trucks entered Gaza between 8 and 31 October 2023, an average of just over 9 a day. Prior to 7 October 2023, an average of 500 trucks entered Gaza every day, before the combination of hostilities, deprivation of access to basic services, malnourishment, dehydration and displacement had led to an exponential increase in needs.¹⁷ Israel also prevented the entry of commercial goods after 31 October 2023, resulting in the collapse of markets across Gaza.

24. The situation in northern Gaza was particularly bleak, with humanitarian access almost totally restricted and water supplies completely cut off. It was estimated that 300,000 internally displaced persons remained there in shelters and hospitals as of 31 October 2023.

25. The restrictions imposed during the reporting period laid the ground for a serious deterioration in the human rights and humanitarian situation in the ensuing months, raising the spectres of famine, dehydration and the spread of disease.¹⁸ The blockade and siege imposed on Gaza amount to collective punishment and may also amount to the use of starvation as a method of war, which are war crimes and which may also, depending on further investigation, amount to other serious crimes under international law.

26. The sheer scale and extent of damage to civilian homes and infrastructure wreaked by Israel during its massive aerial bombardment of Gaza, especially North Gaza and Gaza City, was unprecedented. By 31 October 2023, approximately 45 per cent of the housing units in Gaza had been destroyed or damaged.¹⁹ Many areas, such as Beit Hanun, were almost completely levelled, while an Israel Defense Forces spokesperson reportedly boasted of “focus[ing] on ... maximum damage” and that “thousands of tonnes of munitions” had been dropped on Gaza in a few days after 7 October 2023.²⁰

27. The widespread damage in northern Gaza raises serious concerns about the compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack. Civilians and civilian objects are protected from attacks and residential buildings are *prima facie* civilian objects. The expected civilian harm from an attack against a military objective must not be excessive in relation to the anticipated military advantage of the attack and all feasible precautions must be taken to protect civilians and civilian objects.

28. From the information available, it is difficult to see how so many *prima facie* civilian objects could be lawfully subjected to attack. The nature and impact of targeting patterns during the present escalation appears qualitatively different from recent escalations, contributing to extraordinarily high numbers of Palestinian casualties: approximately 355 a day since 7 October 2023, compared with 6 fatalities a day during the escalation in May 2023.²¹

29. Documentation of specific incidents by OHCHR reinforces those concerns, which persist beyond the reporting period. The Israel Defense Forces explicitly indicated an

¹⁶ See www.timesofisrael.com/israel-says-it-is-restarting-water-supply-to-southern-gaza-strip.

¹⁷ See www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/us-reveals-israel-let-commercial-goods-into-gaza-for-first-time-since-war-began and https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-01-14-24/h_602b15387f1a24676d480aba68df8087.

¹⁸ See www.emro.who.int/media/news/risk-of-disease-spread-soars-in-gaza-as-health-facilities-water-and-sanitation-systems-disrupted.html; and www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Nov2023_Feb2024.pdf.

¹⁹ See <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-31-october-2023-2359>. See also <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/shelter-crisis-joint-advocacy-statement-24th-november-2023>.

²⁰ See www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/10/right-now-it-is-one-day-at-a-time-life-on-israels-frontline-with-gaza.

²¹ [A/78/502](#), para. 8.

expansive approach to targeting,²² including apparently considering civilian members of Hamas not directly participating in hostilities, as well as civilian objects belonging to Hamas, as legitimate targets, in violation of the principle of distinction. Reports have also emerged that the Israeli military applied much broader targeting rules than previously.²³ Taken together, there is growing information not only of specific attacks that may amount to war crimes, but also of possible widespread and systematic unlawful targeting by Israel due to erroneous interpretations of international humanitarian law, possibly at the policy level.

30. OHCHR received reports of numerous incidents raising concerns about compliance with international humanitarian law. Three emblematic cases are included here. In those attacks, explosive weapons with wide-area effects were used in densely populated areas, resulting in enormous destruction and very high numbers of fatalities. In those cases, the strikes were attributable to Israel, raising, on available information, serious concerns in relation to their lawfulness.²⁴ Launching an indiscriminate attack that results in the death of or injuries to civilians, or an attack in the knowledge that it will cause excessive incidental civilian loss, injury or damage, is a war crime.²⁵

31. On 9 October 2023, between 10.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m., massive explosions were reported at Al Trance Street in the Jabalya Camp, in North Gaza, an overcrowded and especially dense neighbourhood. The explosions completely destroyed two multistorey buildings and severely damaged many other surrounding buildings. OHCHR verified that at least 39 people had been killed, including 11 children and 1 woman, and received information of an additional 20 fatalities. Reportedly, no warnings were issued, which is consistent with people going about their regular business in the then busy market.

32. Based on a review of the available documentation of the aftermath of that incident, those strikes appeared to use one or two GBU-31 air-dropped munitions due to the extent of the damage and the ground subsidence, indicating that Israel had carried out the strikes. The GBU-31 is a large, heavy munition used to penetrate through several floors of concrete, which can completely collapse tall structures.²⁶ It is unclear what the specific military objective was. Israel did not make any public pronouncement on that attack.

33. On 25 October 2023, at approximately 4.30 p.m., large explosions rocked the Al Yarmouk neighbourhood, in Gaza City, leading to extensive destruction and damage and hundreds of casualties. An area of at least 5,700 m² was almost flattened, with at least seven structures, including a residential high-rise, completely destroyed and other buildings showing signs of significant damage. OHCHR has verified that 91 persons were killed, including 39 children and 28 women, and received information on an additional 7 fatalities.

34. Based on an assessment of the dimensions of the structures destroyed and the crater sizes, several GBU-31 air-dropped munitions were likely used, indicating that Israel carried out the strikes. On 26 October 2023, the Israel Defense Forces stated that it had attacked 250 targets the previous day, but did not reference that specific attack.²⁷ It is unclear what the specific military objective was.

35. On 31 October 2023, at approximately 2.20 p.m., the Israel Defense Forces hit a residential block in the densely populated Jabalya Camp, resulting in extensive damage, with at least 10 structures destroyed and 10 more badly damaged. OHCHR verified that 23 persons had been killed, including 11 children and 2 women, and received information of an additional 63 fatalities.²⁸

36. The Israel Defense Forces confirmed that they had carried out the strikes, stating that they killed “Ibrahim Biari, the Commander of Hamas’ Central Jabaliya Battalion”, who had

²² See <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1712282365924343910>.

²³ See www.972mag.com/mass-assassination-factory-israel-calculated-bombing-gaza.

²⁴ OHCHR sent a letter to Israel in respect of these events dated 7 December 2023, but received no response.

²⁵ Henckaerts and Doswald-Beck, *Customary International Humanitarian Law*, rule 156.

²⁶ See www.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/104572/joint-direct-attack-munition-gbu-313238.

²⁷ See <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717442508563636455> (in Hebrew).

²⁸ See www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israeli-airstrike-hamas-commander-civilian-deaths-3b6be664.

allegedly been involved in the attacks on 7 October 2023. Moreover, the Israel Defense Forces stated that a large number of terrorists who were with Biari had been killed and underground terror infrastructure had collapsed after the strike.²⁹ It is unclear if Ibrahim Biari was targeted in the tunnels or above ground. Based on analysis of the level of damage and the crater sizes, the strike likely used at least four GBU-32s, although use of the larger GBU-31 cannot be discounted.

37. The use of a GBU-31 or a GBU-32, in such densely populated areas in the middle of residential neighbourhoods when extensive civilian harm would be foreseeable, raises very serious concerns that those attacks were disproportionate and/or indiscriminate, and that no or insufficient precautions were taken.

38. According to reports, no warning was given, nor any effort made to evacuate the residential buildings. A number of means may have helped reduce civilian casualties, notably a different choice of weapon to achieve the same effect with more limited destructive effect, as well as, for instance, a change in the timing of the attack, the use of air-raid sirens, flyovers, a “knock on the roof” or warnings to civilians at the scene to evacuate the vicinity.

39. The Israeli Defence Forces have used weapons with a more limited radius of damage and impact that could have been used for a specific target, such as part of a building used as a military objective. If the targets were combatants and the concern was that they would flee, then serious questions arise regarding how such strikes could be proportionate and why such wide-area-effect munitions were used to target individuals given the risks of such enormous civilian harm. The use of such weapons in densely populated areas to target a military objective beneath buildings raises serious concerns about how such attacks comply with the principles of proportionality and precaution, given the foreseeability of the extensive loss of civilian life. That is particularly the case when Israel can accurately assess the likely associated wide-area effects, notably in terms of civilian harm, that result from repeatedly using those weapons in such densely populated areas.

40. There was widespread damage to roads and essential infrastructure, such as power systems and distribution networks, water storage tanks, pipes, supply networks and drainage channels, as well as bakeries and water wells, which are indispensable to the survival of the population. In combination with the extreme restrictions on humanitarian access, those attacks led to a rapid deterioration in access to food and water and the beginning of a breakdown of sanitation and other essential services.

41. By 31 October 2023, 11 bakeries had been struck and destroyed, with only 9 bakeries left operational.³⁰ People queued for hours at the few remaining bakeries while being exposed to air strikes.

42. On 24 October 2023 at approximately 11.50 p.m., an Israeli air-dropped munition appears to have struck the New Al Maghazi Bakery. That was, at that time, the only bakery in Al Maghazi Camp, which ordinarily has a population of approximately 33,000 persons, not counting displacement from North Gaza and Gaza City.³¹ Strikes also damaged water wells, including two in Nuseirat on 30 October 2023.³²

43. Gaza witnessed an unprecedented number and scale of attacks striking hospitals, religious and cultural sites³³ and schools. Israel claimed that Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and other armed groups used civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and shelters, or tunnels underneath them, to conduct military operations. If armed groups did so with the intention of using protected places or the presence of civilians or persons hors de combat to prevent their military assets from being attacked, that would constitute a violation of the prohibition on the

²⁹ See <https://t.me/idfofficial/4826>; and www.reuters.com/graphics/ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS/GAZA-JABALIA/byprdygje.

³⁰ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-25.

³¹ See www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip/maghazi-camp.

³² See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-25.

³³ Between 7 and 31 October 2023, there were reportedly 29 hits on or in the vicinities of hospitals, at least 25 mosques were reportedly hit and destroyed and 3 churches were partially damaged.

use of human shields and would amount to a war crime. That would not, however, justify indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks by Israeli security forces.

44. As of 31 October 2023, the United Nations estimated that more than 62 per cent of the population of Gaza had been displaced, forcing approximately 1.4 million persons into overcrowded, unsanitary conditions without adequate access to the essential services that Israel, as the occupying Power, is legally obligated to provide or, at the very least in relation to areas not under its full control, not to raise obstacles to access. Those conditions continued to deteriorate significantly after the reporting period.³⁴

45. That displacement resulted not only from the conduct of hostilities and extremely heavy bombardment of Gaza by Israel, but also due to the evacuation orders issued by Israel and the conditions it imposed that pushed the population further south.

46. At approximately midnight on 12 October 2023, the Israel Defense Forces ordered about 1.1 million people in northern Gaza to evacuate south of Wadi Gaza within 24 hours, ahead of military operations, precipitating a mass flux of people south, even as air bombardment continued. The Israel Defense Forces said they would establish a humanitarian corridor, but people were reportedly killed while fleeing, the “corridors” were frequently shut at short notice and were unilaterally declared, so they could never be fully safe.³⁵

47. International law requires that any lawful temporary evacuation by the occupying Power, for the security of the population or imperative military reasons, must be accompanied by the provision of proper accommodation, carried out under satisfactory conditions of hygiene, health, safety and nutrition, and all possible measures must be taken to ensure family members are not separated. There appears to have been no attempt by Israel to comply with that obligation towards the 1.1 million ordered to evacuate. People were required to travel at least part of the journey on foot and no support was provided for those with limited mobility, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, families with young children, the injured and the sick.

48. Even an initially lawful evacuation that lasts longer than strictly required for the security of the population or imperative military reasons is a violation of the prohibition of forcible transfer, which is a war crime. The Israeli security forces continued their insistence on evacuating northern Gaza up until the end of the reporting period and beyond. Concerns have been raised regarding whether Israel may also have been seeking to impose a longer term security “buffer zone” through the evacuation orders. The continued denial of sufficient water, food, medicine and other basic items and services to the population in the north, the hindering of humanitarian access, the failure to restore water supplies in the north, mass destruction of civilian homes and infrastructure and the continued orders to go south point, in combination, to risks of forcible transfer on a wide scale.

49. Women and children, comprising more than two thirds of the casualties, disproportionately bore the brunt of the conflict; maternal, newborn and child health services were severely restricted and there was thus an increased risk of malnutrition, disease and death.³⁶

50. The aftermath of the atrocities carried out on 7 October 2023 has been marked by extremely dangerous rhetoric by persons of authority on both sides, at times potentially amounting to incitement to human rights violations and even atrocity crimes. At a minimum, they have contributed to a toxic atmosphere within which violence and discrimination have flourished. Senior Israeli politicians and military leaders issued statements that dehumanized

³⁴ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-92. Hamas has in turn abdicated its obligations to the civilian population; see www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-12-09/israel-gaza-hamas-united-nations-humanitarian-relief.

³⁵ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-8.

³⁶ See www.who.int/news/item/03-11-2023-women-and-newborns-bearing-the-brunt-of-the-conflict-in-gaza-un-agencies-warn.

Palestinians,³⁷ implied international humanitarian law was not to be respected,³⁸ indicated that operations constituted a “Gaza Nakba”,³⁹ in which Palestinians in Gaza would be permanently displaced, and made violent and dehumanizing religious references, including a statement from the Prime Minister that: “You must remember what Amalek has done to you, says our Holy Bible, and we do remember, and we are fighting.”⁴⁰

51. Hamas did not express regret for the events of 7 October 2023, with its leaders threatening on several occasions to repeat the attacks. For instance, on 24 October 2023, a senior Hamas official asserted that “the Al-Aqsa Deluge [the name Hamas gave its operation of 7 October 2023] is just the first time, and there will be a second, a third, a fourth”.⁴¹

52. Those statements on both sides, in the context of the concurrent use of Israeli military force in Gaza, the killing of thousands of Palestinians in these operations, the deprivation of access to essential necessities, and the forced displacement of almost the entire population of Gaza, as well as the killings of persons in Israel, the holding of hostages in Gaza and the reported commission of rape, sexual assault and torture by all sides, increased the risks of atrocity crimes during the reporting period.

B. Measures of collective punishment in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

53. Israeli practices in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, that may amount to collective punishment increased in number and diversified in kind.⁴² Numerous actions taken by Israeli security forces after 7 October 2023 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, including mass arrests, ill-treatment and disproportionate restrictions on movement, appear arbitrary and often punitive in nature.

54. Israeli authorities continued punitive demolitions of the family homes of alleged Palestinian attackers in a discriminatory manner,⁴³ destroying 21 residential structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and forcibly evicting 101 Palestinians (56 men and boys and 47 women and girls, including 41 children).⁴⁴ Punitive demolitions disproportionately affect Palestinian women and girls.⁴⁵

55. Israeli security forces appeared to deliberately target and destroy civilian infrastructure. For example, an Israeli security forces operation in Jenin Camp between 3 and 5 July 2023 displaced at least 62 families comprising 283 persons, including 109 children. During the operation, Israeli security forces bulldozers severely damaged roads, major water pipes and the electricity network, resulting in power and water shortages, directly affecting at least 1,880 families.⁴⁶

56. After 7 October 2023, Israel imposed and increased systematic, discriminatory restrictions on the movement of Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which remained in place beyond 31 October 2023, sharply restricting freedom of movement in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.⁴⁷ The movement restrictions and closures

³⁷ See www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/defense-minister-announces-complete-siege-of-gaza-no-power-food-or-fuel; and www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/cogat-chief-addresses-gazans-you-wanted-hell-you-will-get-hell.

³⁸ See www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gallant-israel-moving-to-full-offense-gaza-will-never-return-to-what-it-was.

³⁹ See <https://twitter.com/hahauenstein/status/1723441134221869453>.

⁴⁰ See www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/nov/13/biden-lawsuit-alleged-failure-prevent-genocide-israel-palestine.

⁴¹ See www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-official-says-group-aims-to-repeat-oct-7-onslaught-many-times-to-destroy-israel.

⁴² [A/75/336](#), para. 23.

⁴³ [A/78/502](#), para. 26.

⁴⁴ As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁴⁵ [CEDAW/C/ISR/CO/6](#), paras. 32 and 33; and [A/HRC/46/63](#), para. 10.

⁴⁶ As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁴⁷ See www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2023-11-26/israel-hamas-war-west-bank-living-in-fear-with-killings-displaced.

prevent access to services, including medical treatment, and contribute to food shortages. In the closed area of H2 in Hebron, Israel placed 7,000 Palestinians under strict curfew until 21 October 2023, closing all shops and services. Israel imposed a complete closure on Huwwara, and imposed restrictions on access to Jerusalem's Old City and the Aqsa Mosque compound.

C. Unlawful killings and injuries in the context of law enforcement

57. Israel escalated the use of lethal force against Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, often in situations in which its use constituted arbitrary deprivation of life. During the reporting period, Israeli security forces killed 338 Palestinians (including 251 men, 81 boys, 3 women, and 3 girls). Between 7 and 31 October 2023, Israeli security forces killed at least 116 Palestinians (including 38 children, 1 woman and at least 2 persons with disabilities), more than a third of the total fatalities for the year. Prior to 7 October 2023, unprecedented numbers of Palestinians had already been killed since United Nations records began.

58. Israeli security forces applied military means and tactics to law enforcement operations, such as the use of unmanned aerial systems and armed vehicles, attack helicopters, anti-tank missiles, shoulder-fired explosive projectiles and other weaponry designed for the conduct of hostilities, and the deployment of snipers on roofs, in highly populated and busy urban areas.⁴⁸ Israeli security forces failed to take steps to de-escalate situations of confrontation or to apply graduated use of force. Killings resulting from such unlawful use of force amount to arbitrary deprivation of life and, depending on the circumstances, may constitute wilful killings.⁴⁹

59. In one case, between 3 and 5 July 2023, Israeli security forces killed 13 Palestinians in Jenin Camp, including 4 children, in an operation using air strikes, heavy deployment of personnel on the ground, bulldozers, snipers and special forces, in broad daylight and in highly populated areas. Children showed signs of severe psychological distress after being trapped with their families without electricity and limited or no food and water and witnessing fatalities and injuries of other children.

60. The situation deteriorated severely after 7 October 2023 with the increased use of unmanned aerial vehicles and unmanned aerial systems, and other air strikes (reported on at least five occasions by 31 October 2023) in refugee camps and other densely populated areas during operations in the Northern West Bank, resulting in at least 27 Palestinian fatalities, including 11 children, and extensive infrastructural damage. Such cases raise fresh concerns about unlawful use of force, violations of the obligations to plan law enforcement operations to minimize the use of force and the threat to life, and possible wilful killing.

61. On 19 and 20 October 2023, during an operation in the Nur Shams Camp, Israeli security forces killed 14 Palestinians, including 6 children. The presence of Israeli security forces in the Camp triggered clashes and an Israeli soldier was killed. Reportedly, shortly afterwards, Israeli forces launched an air strike on an area far from any exchange of fire, killing two armed Palestinians and eight unarmed Palestinians not involved in clashes or confrontations, including four children. Reflecting a growing pattern, Israeli security forces prevented Palestinian paramedics from accessing the injured. In addition to those killed in the strike, four male Palestinians were killed by Israeli gunfire, including an 11-year-old boy shot from inside an Israeli military vehicle as he was throwing stones and a 16-year-old boy fatally hit by three bullets while walking with his father.

62. Throughout the period, and escalating after 7 October 2023, Israeli security forces used unnecessary or disproportionate lethal force killing several Palestinians, in possible wilful killings. On 22 October 2023, Israeli security forces shot and killed a 20-year-old Palestinian man at the entrance of Al 'Arrub Camp after he hit the leg of an Israeli security forces officer, seemingly by accident.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ A/78/502.

⁴⁹ Ibid., paras. 13–25.

⁵⁰ Video on file.

63. Some 84 children, 81 boys and 3 girls, were killed by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, including 38 boys since 7 October 2023. At least 28 were hit above the waist, including 14 in the head, raising concerns that lethal force may have been used intentionally. Israeli security forces also used unnecessary lethal force leading to the death of children. For example, on 19 June 2023, while Israeli security forces were withdrawing from Jenin Camp, an Israeli security forces soldier shot and killed a 14-year-old Palestinian girl in front of her house.

64. Israeli security forces put Palestinians, including children,⁵¹ in danger, including by appearing to use them as human shields. In one example, on 3 July 2023, they appeared to use two Palestinian men as shields during an operation in Jenin Camp. Such acts would constitute a violation of the positive obligation of Israel to ensure the right to life⁵² and may amount to the war crime of hostage-taking in the context of occupation.

65. Israeli security forces continued to use firearms unnecessarily or in a disproportionate manner, including in response to Palestinians engaged in throwing stones or Molotov cocktails. On 13 October 2023, Israeli security forces killed a 16-year-old Palestinian boy while he was throwing Molotov cocktails during confrontations with Israeli security forces in Al 'Isawiya, East Jerusalem.⁵³ On 30 October 2023, Israeli security forces shot and killed a 23-year-old Palestinian man with a disability following a students' protest in Yatta, Hebron Governorate, even though he did not pose any imminent threat.⁵⁴

66. In the vast majority of cases monitored by OHCHR, use of force by Israeli security forces did not comply with the requirements of legality, necessity and proportionality.⁵⁵ The intentional killing of protected persons or the use of firearms causing the death of persons not posing an imminent threat to life or a threat to cause serious injury constitute arbitrary deprivation of life⁵⁶ and may also amount to wilful killing, a war crime in the context of occupation.⁵⁷

D. Undue restrictions on freedoms of expression and association

67. Restrictions by Israel on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association intensified, with an escalation in its attempts to silence advocates for Palestinian rights,⁵⁸ particularly after 7 October 2023. Journalists were killed in record numbers during hostilities in Gaza, marking a deterioration in an already lethal environment. Israel had already failed to hold anyone accountable for the killing of 20 Palestinian and foreign journalists since 2001.⁵⁹

68. Palestinian journalists and bloggers risked intimidation and arrest under broadly defined charges of "incitement" or "terrorism", which increased after 7 October 2023, raising concerns of violations of the right to freedom of expression. Israeli security forces arrested Palestinians following publication or consumption of social media content related to 7 October 2023 and the conflict in Gaza, affecting in a disproportionate and discriminatory manner the right of Palestinians to freedom of expression, including access to information.

69. Despite a marked increase in hate speech and incitement to hatred and violence against Palestinians,⁶⁰ including Palestinian citizens of Israel, no arrests were reported. Proposals were advanced in the Knesset to broaden the scope of the Counter-Terrorism Law 2016,

⁵¹ A/78/502, para. 22.

⁵² A/HRC/52/75, para. 17.

⁵³ Video on file.

⁵⁴ See <https://x.com/Nawajaa/status/1719749284386451939?s=20>.

⁵⁵ Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, arts. 5 and 9.

⁵⁶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 6.

⁵⁷ Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, art. 8 (2) (a) (i) and (c) (i).

⁵⁸ A/78/502, paras. 48–55.

⁵⁹ See <https://cpj.org/reports/2023/05/deadly-pattern-20-journalists-died-by-israeli-military-fire-in-22-years-no-one-has-been-held-accountable>.

⁶⁰ See <https://7amleh.org/2023/10/12/7amleh-documents-19-000-violent-tweets-in-hebrew-on-x>; and www.nytimes.com/2023/11/15/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-war-rhetoric.html.

targeting Palestinians' rights to information and freedom of expression, and potentially entailing unlawful and discriminatory surveillance.⁶¹

70. The designation, in 2021, by Israel of seven well-established Palestinian civil society organizations as "terrorist" or "unlawful" remained in place, despite a lack of evidence presented by Israel to support such a categorization. As a result, the organizations lived with a constant threat of closure and the arrest of their staff and their legal representatives. Civil society more broadly has faced the possibility of restrictions from funders since 7 October 2023, at a time when support for the communities suffering, following the escalation, including detainees and prisoners, is ever more critical.⁶²

71. Palestinian duty bearers in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued to repress criticism of authority and to fail to adequately address hate speech and incitement to violence against Israelis. Palestinian security forces used unnecessary and disproportionate force, including live ammunition and beatings, to disperse protests in Ramallah and other West Bank cities on 17 and 18 October 2023, during which one man and one boy died after having been injured by Palestinian security forces. Palestinian organizations reported that several others were arrested, beaten up during arrest and criminally prosecuted, with legal proceedings pending as of 31 October 2023.

E. Gender-based violence

72. There are numerous reports of rape, sexual violence and abuse of women and girls during the attacks of 7 and 8 October 2023 in southern Israel.⁶³ Those reports referred to several testimonies regarding gang rape, mutilation and murder by members of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades at the Nova festival, accounts from first responders according to whom women and at least one girl showed signs of sexual violence and audiovisual material, including video circulated by Hamas, in which an Israeli woman soldier appears stripped naked to her underwear and unconscious or dead is being paraded in Gaza. A non-governmental Israeli civil commission on crimes committed by Hamas against women and children was reportedly created to document gender-based violence committed against women and children. OHCHR has repeatedly asked Israeli authorities for access to monitor and document those allegations, but to date has received no response.

73. Arrests carried out by Israeli security forces after 7 October 2023 were often accompanied by beatings, ill-treatment and humiliation of Palestinian women and men, including acts of sexual assault, such as kicking genitals, and threats of rape. Testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses were corroborated by videos posted by Israeli soldiers on social media showing ill-treatment of Palestinians, including male detainees photographed or recorded on video being stripped naked or half-naked, blindfolded, handcuffed, physically abused and humiliated by Israeli soldiers.⁶⁴

74. LGBTQ+ persons across the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be subjected to discrimination and violence by their families, communities and authorities, with few or no avenues for protection, and limited access to services.⁶⁵ In the West Bank, OHCHR documented several cases of men arrested by Palestinian security forces for being gay and subjected them to beatings and ill-treatment, possibly amounting to torture, during interrogation and detention. Palestinian security forces also disclosed or threatened to disclose their sexual orientation to family members or other detainees, which in at least one case resulted in a man being sexually abused by other prisoners.

⁶¹ See www.adalah.org/en/content/view/10930, legislated after the reporting period.

⁶² See www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/11/european-governments-donors-discriminatory-funding-restrictions-to-palestinian-civil-society-risk-deepening-human-rights-crisis.

⁶³ See www.phr.org.il/en/gender-based-violence-eng.

⁶⁴ See www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-09/ty-article-magazine/.premium/growing-number-of-idf-soldiers-are-documenting-and-posting-their-own-abuse-of-palestinians/0000018b-ae60-dea2-a9bf-fefe96070000.

⁶⁵ [A/HRC/52/75](#), paras. 37–39.

F. Arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment

75. Administrative detention and other forms of arbitrary detention by Israel of Palestinians skyrocketed in 2023.⁶⁶ By 31 October 2023, Israel held 6,704 “security” inmates, consisting of 2,313 sentenced prisoners, 2,321 remand detainees and 2,070 administrative detainees. Israel also held 105 persons as “unlawful combatants”, with no information available about their conditions of detention or the status of legal proceedings against them.⁶⁷ Israel has stopped all visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross to Palestinians in Israeli prisons.⁶⁸

76. After 7 October 2023, Israeli security forces conducted thousands of mass, reportedly pre-emptive, detentions of Palestinians, including political figures, community leaders, activists, such as women’s human rights defenders, journalists, students and family members of wanted persons. Between 8 and 31 October 2023, Israeli security forces arrested 1,760 Palestinians, including 145 women, 55 children and 17 journalists, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and issued 872 administrative detention orders.⁶⁹ Arrests were often brutal, accompanied by beatings, humiliation and inhuman and degrading treatment, in some cases amounting to torture.⁷⁰

77. At least 4,000 Palestinians from Gaza residing in Israel lawfully were detained incommunicado after Israel revoked their medical treatment and work permits by 11 October 2023. Israel failed to provide information on their fate for weeks or to bring them before a court and charge them, causing their families and loved ones to suffer. A group described, to OHCHR, being held in inhuman conditions, including threats of rape, and without clothes or access to toilets and being deprived of food and water.

78. On 1 February 2023, Israel announced measures to worsen detention conditions for Palestinians.⁷¹ After 7 October 2023, the Government further restricted access to food, water, sanitation, electricity, medical treatment, media and information, family visits and the right to consult with legal representatives. Prisoners reported severe food shortages, poor living, hygiene and health conditions, including violence against them and other security prisoners, leading to serious injuries, which remained untreated. Many detainees, including children, the elderly and women, were subjected to violence, which in some cases may have amounted to torture or other ill-treatment.

79. By 31 October 2023, five Palestinian men had died in Israeli detention, including Khader Adnan, who died in May 2023.⁷² Twenty-five-year-old Aarafat Yasser Hamdan, reportedly insulin-dependent, was detained during mass arrests carried out by Israeli security forces on 22 October 2023, in Beit Sira, Ramallah; he was pronounced dead on 24 October 2023. He was held for at least 12 hours with his head covered by a thick wool cap at Ofer and Etzion detention facilities. His death was reportedly being investigated. On 23 October 2023, the Israel Prison Service announced the death in custody of Umar Hamza Daraghme, a 58-year-old Palestinian Hamas leader from Tubas. Similar cases were reported after the reporting period.

80. The Palestinian General Intelligence Service allegedly continued its practice of arbitrary detention, including of political activists, public and religious figures and politically active university students. OHCHR continued to document cases of torture or other ill-treatment perpetrated by the Palestinian General Intelligence Service.

⁶⁶ See [A/HRC/52/75](#).

⁶⁷ See <https://hamoked.org/prisoners-charts.php>; data provided by Israel Prison Service, includes all “security inmates”, including in the West Bank.

⁶⁸ See www.mako.co.il/news-military/6361323ddea5a810/Article-9362f7b9c078b81026.htm (in Hebrew).

⁶⁹ See www.facebook.com/freedom2pal/posts/pfbid02nuF4sorw6ZVv2Vxd3hJVL8o5jNVGXuyHybd8vLzji iqRDvKuN29WTdX4r3AYdrxGl (in Arabic).

⁷⁰ See www.timesofisrael.com/idf-soldiers-film-themselves-abusing-humiliating-west-bank-palestinians.

⁷¹ [A/78/502](#), para. 39.

⁷² [A/78/502](#), para. 38.

III. Update on accountability

81. In the context of hostilities in Gaza, neither party has taken steps to ensure comprehensive accountability for serious violations committed during previous escalations, each characterized by long-standing patterns of violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law by all parties. As of 31 October 2023, OHCHR was unaware of steps taken during the reporting period by any party to ensure accountability for actual or potential violations of international humanitarian law, including alleged war crimes, perpetrated in the context of hostilities.

82. Impunity also remained pervasive for incidents of unlawful use of force by Israeli security forces outside the context of the current hostilities, both in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and along the Gaza fence. Between 1 January 2017 and 31 October 2023, 934 Palestinians (including 218 children) were killed by Israeli security forces in law enforcement operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. OHCHR is aware of only 105 criminal investigations opened in relation to deaths prior to October 2022, of which at least 33 were closed without further action and only 5 resulted in indictments, 3 of which led to convictions. OHCHR is unaware of any indictment being made during the reporting period.

83. International human rights law requires that all deaths and serious injuries caused by the use of force in law enforcement operations be effectively investigated.⁷³ The investigation policy of the Israeli security forces, claimed to apply in the West Bank since 2011, requires an immediate investigation into operations that result in death, except when the incident involves “actual combat”, including any exchange of fire, conflating rules applicable to law enforcement with those applicable to hostilities.⁷⁴ On 6 July 2023, the Jerusalem District Court acquitted⁷⁵ a border police officer who had killed Iyad Al-Hallaq, a 32-year-old autistic Palestinian man from East Jerusalem, on 30 May 2020, even though he was not posing a threat when he was killed. The Court held that the accused had made a split-second decision, which was “an integral part of military activity”, conflating the two regimes on use of force, applying the “combat exemption” to law enforcement⁷⁶ and thus exemplifying the generalized impunity enjoyed by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

84. As far as OHCHR is aware, none of the killings emanating from unlawful use of force documented in the present report is under investigation, resulting in persistent impunity for unlawful use of lethal force by Israeli security forces against Palestinians.⁷⁷ The systematic, discriminatory failure by Israel to effectively and promptly investigate such incidents furthers impunity, leading in turn to further Palestinian casualties.

85. While certain complaint channels exist for Palestinians living under the effective control of the Palestinian Authority and the de facto authorities in Gaza, there is rarely any action in relation to accountability. Despite follow-up by OHCHR, no substantive progress was made in the trial regarding the killing of Nizar Banat, an opponent of the Palestinian Authority. The 14 individuals accused of killing him remained at liberty, while intimidation of prosecution witnesses continued.⁷⁸ Impunity for gender-based violence remains pervasive in both the West Bank and Gaza.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

86. **The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was already dire prior to 7 October 2023, given a 56-year occupation, a 16-year blockade of Gaza, increasing**

⁷³ A/HRC/52/75, para. 53.

⁷⁴ Ibid., paras. 53–55.

⁷⁵ See <https://img.mako.co.il/2023/07/06/policedin.pdf?Partner=interlink> (in Hebrew).

⁷⁶ A/HRC/46/22, paras. 17 and 18.

⁷⁷ CCPR/C/ISR/CO/5, para. 26.

⁷⁸ A/HRC/52/75, para. 61. No reply was received to the note verbale of 10 July 2023 from OHCHR to the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, expressing concerns about the trial.

State and settler-violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, as well as long-standing discriminatory systems of control over Palestinians.

87. **The shocking attacks by Palestinian armed groups on 7 and 8 October 2023 and the ensuing massive military response by Israel causing unprecedented destruction and suffering of civilians in Gaza have led to an appalling humanitarian crisis. The means and methods of warfare chosen by Israel have led to massive suffering of Palestinians, including through the killing of civilians on a wide scale, extensive repeated displacement, destruction of homes and the denial of sufficient food and other essentials. Clear violations of international humanitarian law, including possible war crimes, have been committed by all parties. Further investigations would be needed to establish whether other crimes under international law have been committed. There must be accountability – on all sides. The entrenched impunity that OHCHR has reported on for many years cannot persist. Justice is a prerequisite for ending the cycles of violence for Palestinians and Israelis to be able to take meaningful steps towards peace.**

88. **The High Commissioner calls upon all parties to the conflict to implement a ceasefire on human rights and humanitarian grounds, to ensure full respect for international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and to ensure accountability for violations and abuses.**

89. **The High Commissioner in particular calls upon the Palestinian armed groups in Gaza:**

(a) **To repress and punish all violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, committed by their members on and since 7 October 2023;**

(b) **To ensure the humane treatment and immediate release of all hostages, and to cease firing indiscriminate projectiles and co-location of military objectives and civilians with intent to prevent targeting of military objectives.**

90. **The High Commissioner in particular calls upon Israel:**

(a) **To immediately end all practices of collective punishment, including lifting its blockade and closures – and the “complete siege” – of Gaza, and urgently ensure immediate access to humanitarian and commercial goods throughout Gaza, commensurate with the immense humanitarian needs;**

(b) **To ensure that Israeli security forces immediately take steps to comply with international humanitarian law in the conduct of hostilities, including through the application of targeting rules and policies that fully comply with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack, cessation of the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas, and protection for hospitals and other civilian infrastructure essential for the survival of the civilian population;**

(c) **To repress and punish all violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, ensure prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and effective investigations into all incidents carried out by Israeli forces that have led to serious violations of international law, including after 7 October 2023, and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and that victims are provided with redress;**

(d) **To ensure that all Palestinians forcibly displaced from Gaza are allowed to return to their homes by creating safe conditions and fulfil its responsibilities as an occupying Power in this regard;**

(e) **To ensure that the rules of engagement of its security forces and their application are fully consistent with international human rights law, including use of firearms in law enforcement activities only in cases of imminent threat of death or serious injury as a measure of last resort, and plan and implement law enforcement operations to minimize the threat to life and serious injury of the protected population;**

(f) **To conduct prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and effective investigations into all incidents of use of force by Israeli security forces in the West**

Bank, including East Jerusalem, that have led to the death or injury of Palestinians and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and victims provided with redress;

(g) To immediately end administrative detention and other forms of detention that amount to arbitrary detention and ensure that all detainees are released unless promptly charged and fairly tried applying non-discriminatory laws; and ensure that detention conditions strictly conform with international norms and standards and end all practices that may amount to torture or other ill-treatment;

(h) To urgently revoke the designations of Palestinian human rights and humanitarian organizations as “terrorist” or “unlawful” organizations;

(i) To end the 56-year occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as part of a broader process towards achieving equality, justice, democracy, non-discrimination and the fulfilment of all human rights for all Palestinians.

91. The High Commissioner also calls upon Palestinian authorities to protect the rights of all Palestinians without discrimination, including discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, and address effectively all cases of gender-based violence.

92. The High Commissioner calls upon all duty bearers:

(a) To immediately end all practices that may amount to torture or ill-treatment, including sexual violence;

(b) To take immediate steps to prevent, or otherwise repress and punish, hate speech and all incitement to hatred and violence;

(c) To put an end to impunity and conduct prompt, independent, impartial, thorough, effective and transparent investigations into all alleged violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed on 7 October 2023 and subsequently, including into allegations of crimes under international law; ensure cooperation with international and transnational mechanisms for accountability, including the International Criminal Court; and ensure that all victims and their families have access to effective remedies, gender-responsive reparation and truth, as well as psychological support to victims of sexual violence;

(d) To take measures to prevent and redress all forms of gender-based violence, including in the domestic sphere, and ensure that the perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence are prosecuted and appropriately sentenced;

(e) To ensure that the rights to freedom of expression and association are respected and protected and that civil society actors, including women human rights defenders, can conduct their legitimate activities safely, freely and without harassment.

93. The High Commissioner calls upon all States and international organizations:

(a) To exert their influence to stop violations of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict and prevent their further commission, and not to enable such violations;

(b) To support and ensure sufficient funding for civil society to enable it to respond to the grave humanitarian and human rights situation;

(c) To encourage Israel to cooperate with OHCHR and to issue visas to its international staff, ensuring OHCHR has access throughout Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory to monitor and document all violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law.