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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by International Association of Justice Watch, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[5 February 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Save the Children in Gaza

The United Nations was formed by optimists who believed that global institutions could potentially prevent destructive wars like the first and second world war, or at least protect the most vulnerable groups; civilians, women and children, in such deadly conflicts. What we are currently witnessing in Gaza is the violent deterioration of a continuous situation where children are born into a life of humiliation and torture. Many adults in Gaza have been actually born in this world's largest open-air prison, they have experienced nothing but deprivation throughout their whole lives, and are now watching their own children experience death, disability, hunger and starvation, with no serious effort to stop the ongoing crisis. The intentional blockade of the Gaza strip where the basic exigencies of people are not allowed to enter is making life unbearable for children. Making matters worse is the reality that Israel's unapologetic embrace of war crimes in the State of Palestine and unwavering American support for this transgression of human rights is pushing the region to the direction of a wide scale war and instability in the Middle East, a situation that could put the well-being and lives of children throughout the region at risk.

For decades we have witnessed the effects of such destructive policies in the Middle East on children. The occupation of the State of Palestine and the siege on Gaza, the United States of America-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the war in Yemen, and the sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran, have led to malnutrition, limitations in access to basic healthcare and education and overall decrease in the satisfaction with life at the very least, and starvation, loss of limbs, trauma and death. The current war on Gaza, according to experts and numbers, has taken things to a whole new level, with more children killed in this conflict everyday than in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq and other conflict zones.

In many instances, whole families have been wiped out and no one remains to take care of surviving children. Needless to say, that schools are closed and the children of Gaza have been deprived of the simple right and joy of attending school.

Believing that the UN and its various affiliated bodies should actively protect the defenseless children caught up in this deadly conflict and represent the global dissatisfaction with the ongoing crimes against humanity, the International Association of Justice Watch suggests the following recommendations:

- The UN should call for and actively promote a total ceasefire and an end to the siege on Gaza so that the basic needs of children can enter. At this point and with the current number of dead and injured children and the very real possibility of starvation, not just calling for, but working for a ceasefire is essential.
- Suspension of aid to agencies such as UNRWA is practically war by other means. Since the blockade and the indiscriminate bombings have not killed enough children, Israeli allies are decapitating the remaining sources of hope for the Palestinians. The UN should formulate innovative ways of preventing the chaotic void that would be created with the suspension of aid to such agencies, with the help and participation of countries that realistically stand by human values.
- The UN should apply its diplomatic and legal apparatus to make it more difficult for members to disregard the welfare and security of children. Bombing and starving children should not be normalized; a crime that armies can commit without any repercussions.
- The Israeli regime should immediately be held accountable in a meaningful way for the ongoing genocide and destruction that is either killing or permanently scarring the lives of Palestinian children.