

Overview Report

**Practices and policies affecting human rights
in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,
including East Jerusalem**

(7 October 2023 – 31 May 2025)



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Overview report on practices and policies affecting human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

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Introduction

1. This report provides an overview of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory between 7 October 2023 and 31 May 2025, following the coordinated attacks on southern Israel by Hamas' Al Qassam Brigades and other Palestinian armed groups on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent large-scale assault on Gaza by the Israeli military.¹ The intensified hostilities since precipitated a sharp deterioration of the already-dire human rights situation across the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, encompassing Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, marked by unprecedented levels of killing of Palestinians by Israeli military and security forces, and the tightening and escalation of Israel's long-standing practices of control over Palestinian lives, lands and territory. These developments resulted in the mass displacement of Palestinians from most parts of Gaza and increasingly large areas of the West Bank.
2. The report outlines concerning conduct by the Palestinian authorities and Palestinian armed groups in the same period that impacted the rights of Palestinians, Israelis, and other individuals, including indiscriminate rocket fire, concerns over allegations of co-location of military objectives and civilians potentially to prevent the targeting of those objectives, and the holding and mistreatment of Israeli and other hostages. Many of the acts committed by Palestinian armed groups over this period constituted serious breaches of international humanitarian law, which in some cases may amount to international crimes.
3. The Israeli military's choices of methods and means of conducting hostilities, along with other practices, involved gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law, which in many cases may have amounted to war crimes and other atrocity crimes. The cumulative effects of Israel's conduct in Gaza since 7 October 2023, which compounded the damaging effects of over 58 years of occupation and 18 years of blockade and closure of the strip, created conditions of life incompatible with Palestinians' continued existence as a group in much of Gaza.² Many of these trends and their impacts were present in the Israeli military's large-scale siege and attacks on North Gaza between 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025, which is analyzed as an emblematic case study in this report.
4. In parallel, the West Bank experienced an alarming surge in the unlawful use of force by Israeli security forces against Palestinians, including through the deployment of means and methods of the use of force designed for warfare. Coercive and discriminatory Israeli practices and legislative measures proliferated and intensified, deepening Israel's near-total control over, and violation of, Palestinians' political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights. These developments came amid intensified Israeli settlement activity, associated displacement, and administrative moves and rhetoric by Israeli officials

¹ Developments pertaining to the hostages-prisoners exchanges and returns of bodies have been updated as of writing to include the releases and returns in the context of the October 2025 ceasefire.

² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/turk-calls-world-prevent-total-humanitarian-catastrophe-gaza>; <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/turk-israeli-plans-expand-gaza-offensive-aggravate-concerns-regarding>; A/HRC/61/26.

promoting the application of sovereignty over the occupied West Bank – together consolidating Israel’s annexation of large parts of the territory.³

5. The deleterious human rights situation was further compounded by the Palestinian authorities’ intensified unlawful use of force against Palestinians in the West Bank, practices of arbitrary detention, ill-treatment and torture, and a crack-down on civic space.
6. Considered together, Israeli Government’s measures and steps across Gaza and the West Bank reflected a concerted and accelerating practice of undermining the fabric of Palestinian life while consolidating the annexation of large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and forcibly displacing Palestinians from much of their land and territory. The cumulative effect of the Israeli practices detailed in this report was to entrench Israel’s unlawful presence in the Palestinian territory and, in doing so, to render increasingly tenuous the prospect of the Palestinian people’s exercise of their right to self-determination, including the realization of an independent and sovereign State.⁴ Furthermore, an appraisal of the totality of Israel’s policies and practices raises serious concerns about its compliance with the International Court of Justice’s binding orders and its obligations to prevent the commission of acts within the scope of Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.⁵
7. This report is based on monitoring conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including open-source monitoring, and information collected by other United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In gathering, assessing, and verifying the information contained in this report, OHCHR applied its standard methodology. OHCHR was not granted access to Israel to monitor and document human rights violations and engage with witnesses and victims. This report provides an overview of key trends and developments over the reporting period and complements other OHCHR reports covering overlapping periods of time by including information not previously covered.

I. Israeli policies and conduct impacting the human rights of Palestinians

a. Killings of Palestinians

8. Between 7 October 2023 and 31 May 2025, at least 54,381 Palestinians were killed and 124,054 injured as a result of hostilities in Gaza, according to the Ministry of Health of the

³ For further discussion of these developments, see the Secretary-General’s most recent report on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, [A/80/399](#).

⁴ See for example International Court of Justice, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion*, 19 July 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, para. 237.

⁵ The International Court of Justice found that there is “a real and imminent risk that irreparable prejudice will be caused to the rights [of Palestinians in Gaza under the Genocide Convention to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts] found by the Court to be plausible.” - *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, Order, 26 January 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, para. 74.

State of Palestine.⁶ The actual death toll is likely much higher due to severe constraints in recording and verifying fatalities amid active hostilities and do not reflect the number of those buried under rubble and deaths resulting from the deteriorating humanitarian situation.⁷

9. By the end of the reporting period, OHCHR had verified 18,683 Palestinian fatalities as a result of hostilities, including 7,347 children (40 percent) and 3,994 women (22 percent), with verification of further cases ongoing.⁸ The high death toll and large number of children and women killed reflects a high proportion of civilian fatalities,⁹ which appears to result primarily from the manner in which parties to the conflict in Gaza have conducted hostilities, especially the choices by Israel of methods and means of warfare.¹⁰
10. Israeli authorities continued to launch strikes using explosive weapons with wide-area effects in densely populated areas and attacks on civilians and prima facie civilian objects, in many cases providing little or no information as to how they could be considered military objectives.¹¹ These attacks included the repeated targeting of civilian governance, administrative and law enforcement officials, as well as humanitarian workers, compounding the break-down of public order and civil life in Gaza.¹² The Israeli military's attacks demonstrated a recurring pattern of non-compliance with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, including distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack,¹³ raising in many cases concerns of war crimes.¹⁴ Such attacks may also constitute crimes against humanity, if committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.¹⁵
11. In one of the most egregious incidents, before dawn on 29 October 2024, the Israeli air force struck a five-story residential building in Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza, without warning, killing 133 people and injuring 38 others. All but one of those killed were members of a single extended family, including 37 women (1 of whom was pregnant), 24 girls and 31 boys. The strike destroyed the building and damaged two neighbouring buildings. The Israeli military reportedly claimed the presence of a "spotter" on the

⁶ Fatalities included at least 12,298 women and 17,881 children, according to data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics as of 6 March 2025.

⁷ According to one estimate, there were up to 186,000 total deaths as of June 2024. See [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)01169-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)01169-3/fulltext).

⁸ Verification of fatalities by OHCHR according to its methodology lags behind fatality recording by the Ministry of Health due to factors including access constraints for OHCHR staff, a high level of insecurity in Gaza, and threats and direct attacks also on United Nations personnel, monitors and humanitarian actors.

⁹ For further analysis, see OHCHR, *Six-month update report on the human rights situation in Gaza: 1 November 2023 to 30 April 2024* [hereafter "Gaza six-month update report"], paras. 16-18; see also A/HRC/58/CRP.6, para. 23.

¹⁰ A/HRC/58/28, paras. 4, 12.

¹¹ A/HRC/58/28, para. 12; A/HRC/55/28, para. 28; OHCHR, *Thematic report on Attacks on Hospitals during the escalation of hostilities in Gaza (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2024)*, 31 December 2024 [hereafter "Attacks on Gaza hospitals report"], paras. 15–17; and OHCHR, *Indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks during the conflict in Gaza (October–December 2023)*, 19 June 2024 [hereafter "Indiscriminate attacks report"], p. 10.

¹² This is despite Israel's obligation as an Occupying Power to restore and maintain public order and civil life in the occupied territory – per Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague Regulations), art. 43. See A/HRC/58/28, paras. 20-23, 25.

¹³ A/HRC/58/28, para. 12.

¹⁴ A/HRC/58/28, para. 12; OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", paras. 17, 30, 48 and 60.

¹⁵ Rome Statute, art. 7 (1) (a), (b), (h) and (k).

rooftop of the building and denied knowledge of the presence of civilians sheltering inside.¹⁶ On the basis of the destruction observed, OHCHR assesses that a large air-dropped munition with wide area effect was deployed in this incident. OHCHR has documented the Israeli military's repeated use of such large munitions throughout the reporting period, including on residential buildings occupied by civilians.¹⁷ Such strikes occurred as part of a pattern of attacks using weapons with wide area effects that appear to have repeatedly violated international humanitarian law principles¹⁸ and may amount to war crimes. The continuation of these tactics throughout the reporting period and beyond, in spite of their predictable effects, raised serious concerns that civilian harm was an intended or accepted consequence of the means and methods adopted.

12. Beyond direct attacks, Palestinians also died as a result of Israeli authorities' restrictions on the entry and distribution of humanitarian aid and other essential goods into and within Gaza. They significantly intensified already-severe blockade measures¹⁹ after 7 October 2023, constraining the entry of aid and commercial imports into Gaza while simultaneously attacking or blocking access to local food-production infrastructure, including agricultural land, fishing assets, and water systems.²⁰ From 2 March 2025, Israeli authorities imposed a total ban on the entry of all humanitarian aid and commercial imports to Gaza for almost three months²¹, starving civilians and leaving them without basic medical items and services.²² Lack of fuel resulted in reduced water production and distribution as well as solid waste collection, heightening health risks.²³
13. The blockade imposed by Israel, alongside the destruction of the health system in Gaza, also had a significant impact on the access of Palestinians to healthcare. At least 60 Palestinian children reportedly died from malnutrition in Gaza between the escalation of hostilities on 7 October 2023 and 31 May 2025, according to the Ministry of Health of the State of Palestine, although the true number of deaths is likely to be much higher.²⁴ As of 10 May 2025, 93 percent of Gaza's population was assessed as being at crisis levels of acute food insecurity or above, with a high risk of famine projected in the following months.²⁵ Subsequently, an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis on 15 August 2025 confirmed famine in Gaza Governorate, with projections that it would extend

¹⁶ <https://edition.cnn.com/world/live-news/israel-iran-palestine-gaza-war-10-29-24-intl-hnk/index.html>; <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6247nwz73do>; https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-official-strike-on-gaza-building-targeted-spotter-wasnt-aimed-at-toppling-structure/.

¹⁷ See A/HRC/58/28, para. 16; OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", para. 14; OHCHR "Indiscriminate attacks report", p. 6. See also <https://x.com/UNHumanRights/status/1719783887633527153>

¹⁸ See for example OHCHR, "Indiscriminate attacks report", p. 10. Since this report such attacks have continued, with various intensity, throughout the period, leading to a predictably high number of civilian fatalities and serious injuries.

¹⁹ OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", para. 38.

²⁰ A/HRC/58/28, para. 25; https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/OPT-Protection-Cluster_Building-to-Starvation-Systematic-Attacks-on-Fishing-in-Gaza.pdf

²¹ <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/statement-humanitarian-country-team-occupied-palestinian-territory-gaza>

²² See www.ochaopt.org/content/statement-gaza-tom-fletcher-under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator.

²³ See <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/gaza-humanitarian-response-update-13-26-april-2025>.

²⁴ See [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)01169-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)01169-3/fulltext).

²⁵ https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_Apr_Sept2025_Special_Snapshot.pdf

to Deir Al Balah and Khan Younis Governorates in the following weeks.²⁶ This famine was a direct result of Israeli authorities' measures, including restricting the entry and distribution of basic necessities to Gaza, forcibly displacing nearly the entire population, and destroying much of Gaza's food-producing infrastructure.²⁷

14. While Israeli authorities allowed the entry of limited aid into Gaza from 18 May 2025, humanitarian agencies reported that the volume was insufficient to meet the needs.²⁸ On 27 May 2025, the so-called "Gaza Humanitarian Foundation" (GHF), backed by Israel, began to distribute food in Gaza through three sites (a fourth site was closed within a week of opening) in southern Gaza.²⁹ Private armed contractors recruited by the GHF were present at these sites, while Israeli military forces were also deployed in their immediate vicinity, both of whom opened fire against Palestinians seeking aid. Between 27 May 2025, when the GHF started their operation in Gaza, and 8 October 2025, OHCHR recorded 2,435 Palestinians, mostly young men and boys, killed by the Israeli military while trying to access food. According to available information, there were no indications that those killed or injured were directly participating in hostilities or posed any imminent threat to life or that such use of force was necessary to prevent serious injury from an imminent threat. Such killings would constitute violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law,³⁰ and, where deliberate, amount to war crimes.
15. In practice, people faced extreme dangers and difficulties associated with obtaining food and basic supplies from GHF sites due to near-daily Israeli military attacks. The GHF was unable to provide sufficient food for Gaza's population³¹ and the geographical limitation of the three operational sites to southern Gaza meant that the scheme also contributed to the displacement of the Palestinian population from northern Gaza.
16. As the Occupying Power, Israel is obligated to ensure the provision of food, medical supplies and other essential items for the population in the occupied territory,³² and to facilitate relief schemes by States or impartial humanitarian organizations if the

²⁶ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2025-08/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_July_Sept2025_Special_Snapshot.pdf.

²⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/08/turk-says-gaza-governorate-famine-direct-result-israeli-government-actions>.

²⁸ <https://www.unocha.org/news/un-relief-chief-welcomes-renewed-aid-deliveries-gaza-stresses-its-only-drop-ocean-what-needed>; <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-commissioner-general-gaza-current-mass-starvation-can-be-stopped>.

²⁹ The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its 22 October 2025 *Advisory Opinion on the Obligations of Israel in relation to the presence and activities of the United Nations, and other international organizations, and third states in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory* [hereafter "Obligations of Israel"] held at para. 145 that, "Israel blocked aid into the Gaza Strip, preventing the entry of humanitarian aid into the region from 2 March until 18 May 2025 [... and] Israel's consent to the operations of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation since 27 May 2025 and to other limited humanitarian aid has not significantly alleviated the situation." In the same paragraph the Court, referring to the circumstances in Gaza, recalled Israel's obligation not to use starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare.

³⁰ See <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ohchr-killings-of-palestinians-seeking-food-in-gaza-continue-as-starvation-deepens-press-release/>.

³¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/07/turk-calls-pressure-israeli-government-end-carnage-gaza>.

³² Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 55 and 56. These obligations apply whether or not the population has been adequately supplied. *I.C.J., Obligations of Israel*, para. 132.

population is inadequately supplied.³³ Attacking or destroying objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population is also prohibited.³⁴ While international humanitarian law does not prohibit the imposition of sieges as a method of warfare where the purpose is to achieve a military objective and not to starve a civilian population,³⁵ the besieging party must allow civilians to leave the besieged area and allow and facilitate unimpeded access for humanitarian relief to civilians in need who remain.³⁶ The closure of a territory, preventing flight by civilians, alongside attacks against objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population and a deliberate blockade of essential supplies to, and consequent starvation of, the civilian population is absolutely prohibited.³⁷ Such acts constitute a violation of the right to life under international human rights law,³⁸ as well as other rights, including to food and health.³⁹ Any use of starvation of civilians as a method of war constitutes a war crime.⁴⁰ It may also constitute the crimes against humanity of murder, extermination or other inhumane acts, if committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.⁴¹ If committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, it may also constitute genocide.⁴²

17. The International Court of Justice considered in January 2024 that the “catastrophic humanitarian situation” in Gaza presented a real and imminent risk of deteriorating further before the Court rendered its final judgment. Against this background, the Court considered that there was a real and imminent risk that irreparable prejudice would be caused to the plausible rights of Palestinians in Gaza to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts under the Genocide Convention. The Court indicated provisional measures, ordering Israel, inter alia, to 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 Gaza.⁴³ In light of the further deterioration of humanitarian conditions in Gaza, the Court reaffirmed and expanded its provisional measures in March and May 2024.⁴⁴ In parallel, on 21 November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for the Israeli Prime Minister and the then Defense Minister on the basis that there were reasonable grounds to believe that both were criminally responsible for, inter alia, the war crime of starvation as a method

³³ Ibid., art. 59. The ICJ has found that the population of Gaza have been inadequately supplied, *I.C.J., Obligations of Israel*, para. 109.

³⁴ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rule 54.

³⁵ Ibid., rule 53.

³⁶ Ibid., rule 55; <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/protection-civilian-population-during-sieges-what-law-says>.

³⁷ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rules 53 and 156; and Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 147.

³⁸ See CCPR/C/GC/36, para. 64.

³⁹ ICESCR, arts. 11, 12. See also *I.C.J., Obligations of Israel*, paras 155-157.

⁴⁰ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rule 156; Rome Statute, art.8(2)(b)(xxv).

⁴¹ Rome Statute, art. 7 (1) (a), (b), (h) and (k).

⁴² Ibid., art. 6 (a-c).

⁴³ *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, Order, 26 January 2024, *I.C.J. Reports 2024*, paras. 66, 74 and 86(4).

⁴⁴ Ibid., Order, 28 March 2024, *I.C.J. Reports 2024*, paras. 51 (1), (2)(a); and Order, 24 May 2024, *I.C.J. Reports 2024*, para. 57 (1), 2(b).

of warfare and, in relation to the blocking of supplies including medicines from entering Gaza, for the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution and other inhumane acts.⁴⁵

18. The unprecedented scale of Palestinian casualties in Gaza, both from the means and methods of warfare deployed by Israeli military and its deprivation of essential goods, has been accompanied by persistent dehumanizing rhetoric against Palestinians by certain senior Israeli officials. At the outset of Israeli operations in Gaza, the then-Defense Minister stated that Israel was “fighting against human animals and [was] acting accordingly”,⁴⁶ while the Knesset Deputy Speaker tweeted: “Wipe out Gaza. Nothing else will satisfy us.”⁴⁷ Israeli ministers have issued public statements advocating for the cutting of humanitarian aid and starving the population of Gaza, as well as raising the possibility of an Israeli nuclear attack on Gaza.⁴⁸ On 6 May 2025, the Finance Minister stated that after a few months, Gaza would “be totally destroyed” and its inhabitants displaced.⁴⁹ Numerous similar statements by Israeli political figures have been made since the escalation of hostilities.⁵⁰ These repeated statements contributed to an environment increasingly conducive to the commission of violations of international law and may have influenced the conduct of Israeli forces in Gaza.⁵¹ Such rhetoric may amount to incitement to human rights violations and crimes under international law, including to genocide.
19. In the West Bank, according to OHCHR Israeli security forces killed 919 Palestinians during the reporting period, compared with 352 Palestinians killed in the preceding two years,⁵² reflecting a marked intensification of Israel’s unlawful use of lethal force in the West Bank to levels unseen since the Second Intifada.⁵³ OHCHR assessed that, of those killed, 426 (46 percent) posed no threat to Israeli security forces or other Israelis, 161 (18 per cent) were throwing stones or Molotov cocktails, 240 (26 percent) were killed during exchanges of fire, and 73 (8 percent) were killed in the context of attacks or alleged attacks against Israelis.⁵⁴
20. Across the West Bank, Israeli security forces routinely employed unnecessary or disproportionate use of force irrespective of the level of threat. Under international human rights law, which, in the absence of hostilities implicating the international

⁴⁵ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>

⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbPdR3E4hCk>

⁴⁷ <https://x.com/nissimv/status/1711261388809568458> (in Hebrew).

⁴⁸ A/HRC/58/20, para. 50. See further: <https://x.com/GolanMay/status/1759675501424042329>.

⁴⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/smotrich-says-gaza-to-be-totally-destroyed-population-concentrated-in-small-area/>

⁵⁰ See, for example: https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2024/01/10/official-translation-of-statements-informal-translations-final-list-1704917626.pdf; <https://law4palestine.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2-Database-of-Israeli-Incitement-to-Genocide-15th-January-2024-LEGISLATORS.pdf>.

⁵¹ See, for example, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, “*Torture and Genocide: The shattered futures of former Palestinian detainees in Gaza, October 2023 – October 2024*”, 12 May 2025, pp. 109-111 where testimony is documented of such racist and genocidal rhetoric being cited during the commission of alleged abuse.

⁵² A/78/502, para. 13.

⁵³ According to B’Tselem, Israeli forces killed an annual average of 255 Palestinians in the West Bank between 2000 and 2005, with a peak of 616 fatalities in 2002 – see <https://statistics.btselem.org/en/all-fatalities/by-date-of-incident?section=overall&tab=charts®ionSensor=%5B%225f6a04e%22%5D>.

⁵⁴ For the remaining 19 fatalities, the circumstances of the deaths were unknown.

humanitarian law rules on the conduct of hostilities, governs the use of force in the West Bank, firearms or other potentially lethal force may only be resorted to when strictly necessary to protect life or prevent serious injury from an imminent threat, while deliberately lethal force may only be used if absolutely necessary to protect the right to life. Where less harmful means could be used to achieve these objectives, including de-escalation or arrest, the use of lethal force would constitute an arbitrary deprivation of life and, in the context of an occupation, may amount to wilful killing, a war crime.⁵⁵ Israeli security forces' pattern of operations demonstrated complete disregard for these obligations.

21. Israeli security forces increasingly deployed large-scale militarized operations in the West Bank, notably "Operation Iron Wall", launched in towns and refugee camps across three northern governorates on 21 January 2025, which resulted in at least 68 Palestinians killed as of 31 May 2025 since the operation began. Across the West Bank, Israeli security forces intensified the use of airstrikes, shoulder-fired missiles and shelling during such operations. OHCHR verified 306 Palestinian fatalities, including 47 children and 8 women, in incidents involving airstrikes (258 fatalities), shelling (43 fatalities) or other explosive weapons (5 fatalities) during the reporting period. The expanded use of such weaponry and tactics in the West Bank indicates a concerning conflation of rules on the use of force applicable in the context of law enforcement with the conduct of hostilities, contributing to the unprecedented death toll during the reporting period. Twenty Israeli security forces personnel were killed by Palestinians or in exchanges of fire with armed Palestinians or other incidents in the West Bank during the reporting period.
22. The repeated use of airstrikes by Israeli forces to kill specific individuals in the West Bank raises serious concerns of extrajudicial executions, which violate the right to life and amount to wilful killings.⁵⁶ During the reporting period, Israeli security forces carried out 108 airstrikes in the West Bank.⁵⁷ On 8 January 2025, for example, a drone strike killed three cousins – two boys aged 8 and 10 years and a 23 year-old man, all unarmed – in the yard of a house in Tammun town, Tubas governorate. Eyewitnesses stated that there were no clashes or presence of Israeli security forces in the neighbourhood where the strike occurred. Israeli media reported that an internal Israeli military investigation found the strike came after intelligence was received about "a possible terrorist cell planting explosive devices" and a drone observed the victims "handling something on the ground". However, the probe reportedly acknowledged it would have been "more appropriate" to "take additional steps to clearly verify the identities of the individuals targeted in the strike."⁵⁸ Based on available information, it appears that the use of lethal force in this instance was unwarranted and thus contrary to international human rights law.
23. Israeli security forces continued to shoot and kill Palestinians throwing stones or Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces in the West Bank, with 161 Palestinian fatalities during the reporting period. In most cases, such acts were unlikely to have constituted any threat

⁵⁵ A/HRC/55/28, para. 66; Human Rights Committee, "General Comment No. 36", para. 12-13.

⁵⁶ See A/HRC/55/28, paras. 31-32; OHCHR, *Thematic Report - Israel's discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem*, [hereafter "Israel's discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank"], paras. 17-18.

⁵⁷ UNDSS, information on file.

⁵⁸ <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-01-29/ty-article/.premium/idf-probe-into-death-of-two-palestinian-kids-it-was-hard-to-determine-they-were-minors/00000194-abf2-dbc9-a59f-affb853e0000>

to Israeli security forces. In one emblematic case, on 22 October 2024, Israeli security forces shot from inside an armoured military vehicle and killed an 11-year-old Palestinian boy who was throwing stones at departing Israeli military vehicles in Nablus city. The absence of any imminent threat in this situation would render the killing, and numerous others like it recorded by OHCHR,⁵⁹ unlawful.

24. During the reporting period, the Israeli military reportedly amended its “rules of engagement” in the West Bank to permit soldiers to shoot with live ammunition at individuals “messing with the ground” — that is, those suspected of laying explosives — or at vehicles approaching checkpoints.⁶⁰ These changes contributed to several fatalities, including of women and children. On 9 February 2025, Israeli security forces shot and killed a 23-year-old pregnant woman as she and her husband were attempting to flee Nur Shams refugee camp, Tulkarm governorate during a raid by Israeli security forces. When the couple encountered Israeli security forces, her husband, who was driving the car, attempted to reverse. Israeli security forces opened fire, shooting the man in the head and critically injuring him. When the woman left the car to seek assistance, Israeli security forces shot her at least three times, killing her. Israeli media reported that a preliminary Israeli military investigation into the killing claimed that the woman “looked suspiciously at the ground” prior to being shot.⁶¹ Such incidents raise serious concerns that the use of such lethal force was unnecessary, which would render the killing unlawful.

b. Mass forcible displacement

25. The reporting period saw the acceleration of the mass forced displacement of Palestinians from nearly all parts of Gaza and from parts of the West Bank due to military and security operations, displacement orders and the cumulative, coercive impact of Israeli practices and policies. The coordinated and expansive nature of these practices and policies, which dramatically increased in intensity and frequency after 7 October 2023, combined with repeated public statements by senior Israeli officials (see below), indicate the undertaking of forcible transfer or deportation from parts of the occupied territory, in violation of international humanitarian law.⁶² Unlawful transfer and deportation also amount to crimes under international law.⁶³
26. In Gaza, the impact of ongoing hostilities, particularly the Israeli military’s methods and means of warfare, alongside Israeli-issued displacement orders and the drastic deterioration in living conditions and access to the necessities of life, contributed to the displacement of an estimated 90 percent of the Palestinian population of Gaza during the reporting period; the majority on multiple occasions.⁶⁴ During this period, Israel issued at least 144 displacement orders, in many cases towards the severely overcrowded

⁵⁹ See A/HRC/58/28, para. 30; A/78/502, para. 23; OHCHR, “Israel’s discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank”, paras. 15-16.

⁶⁰ See <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-02-10/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-expands-open-fire-orders-leading-to-surge-in-palestinian-civilian-deaths/00000194-ef85-dd03-add7-ffc72f120000>.

⁶¹ <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-02-10/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-expands-open-fire-orders-leading-to-surge-in-palestinian-civilian-deaths/00000194-ef85-dd03-add7-ffc72f120000>

⁶² ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rule 129; and Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 49.

⁶³ Rome Statute, arts. 7(d), 8(2)(a)(vii), 2(b)(viii).

⁶⁴ See, for example, <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-174-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>

“humanitarian zone” in Al Mawasi, southern Gaza, designated as such by the Israeli military despite being unsafe and lacking basic infrastructure and medical facilities. During the temporary ceasefire in place between 19 January and 17 March 2025, Israel also imposed multiple “no-go zones” across Gaza from which Palestinians were barred.⁶⁵ Between the end of the ceasefire on 18 March and 31 May 2025, Israel issued 40 displacement orders which, together with the declared “no-go zones” covering over 80 per cent of Gaza’s land area⁶⁶, further hemmed civilians into ever diminishing areas, in which basic goods and services were scarce.⁶⁷ Despite the significantly heightened risk of harm to civilians, resulting from their concentration into these areas, the Israeli military continued to regularly conduct attacks in areas Palestinians were displaced to, including using explosive weapons with wide area effects.

27. Another key driver of displacement in Gaza was the Israeli military’s attacks on and demolition of civilian infrastructure necessary to support Palestinian life, including residential buildings,⁶⁸ governmental and judicial facilities,⁶⁹ hospitals,⁷⁰ schools,⁷¹ food distribution sites,⁷² and tents housing displaced persons.⁷³ Satellite analysis showed that, by 4 April 2025, approximately 70 percent of buildings in the Gaza strip had been destroyed or damaged, amounting to an estimated 258,201 damaged housing units,⁷⁴ while, as of 30 April 2025, over 83 percent of Gaza’s cropland had been damaged.⁷⁵ Attacks on civilian objects have undermined the viability of ongoing civil life and constitute violations of international humanitarian law unless particular circumstances render the objects military objectives.⁷⁶ In many incidents, Israel has provided little or no information as to how targeted structures could be considered military objectives.⁷⁷ Under international humanitarian law, any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.⁷⁸ The destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and

⁶⁵ During the ceasefire, the Israeli military continued to fire on Palestinians, especially for entering so-called no-go zones. OHCHR office for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OHCHR OPT) verified 74 Palestinians killed presumably for approaching the Israeli-imposed no-go zone between 20 January and 17 March. The verified deaths include that of one man who was killed at the shore of An Nuseirat (IDF had declared the sea to be no-go zone on 18 January). In addition to 74 verified deaths, OHCHR OPT has received credible information of 10 additional deaths.

⁶⁶ <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-290-gaza-strip>

⁶⁷ See, for example, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-14-may-2025>

⁶⁸ See A/HRC/58/28, para. 14.

⁶⁹ Ibid., paras. 20-21.

⁷⁰ OHCHR, “Attacks on Gaza hospitals report”, paras. 1, 7-8.

⁷¹ OHCHR, “Gaza six-month update report”, para. 58.

⁷² Ibid., para. 29.

⁷³ A/HRC/58/28, para. 16.

⁷⁴ <https://unosat.org/products/4130>

⁷⁵ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6cf6c04b-09cf-468f-b91e-7f3bc6e0c38c/content>.

⁷⁶ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rule 8. To be considered a military objective, objects must fulfil two cumulative criteria: (1) make an effective contribution to military action and; (2) their destruction must offer a definite military advantage.

⁷⁷ A/HRC/58/28, para. 12.

⁷⁸ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 53.

carried out unlawfully and wantonly, amounts to a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a war crime.⁷⁹ Israel's attacks on and demolition of civilian infrastructure necessary to support Palestinian life, including the systematic and wanton destruction of residential buildings, amounted to a driver of forced displacement, including forcible transfer, and raises concerns about permanent displacement.

28. In this regard, senior Israeli officials made statements in favour of the forced, permanent displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, albeit often characterizing such displacement as "voluntary migration". The Israeli Prime Minister affirmed in March 2025 that Israel "will implement ... the voluntary migration plan",⁸⁰ while the Finance Minister stated that Israel would force Palestinians into south Gaza, where "they will be totally despairing, understanding that there is no hope and nothing to look for in Gaza, and will be looking for relocation to begin a new life in other places".⁸¹ Israel's Defense Minister stated in April 2025 that "the plan for the voluntary relocation for Gaza residents is being advanced",⁸² shortly after the Security Cabinet approved the establishment of a new directorate to plan and manage the emigration of Gaza residents.⁸³ Israeli media further reported that the Environmental Protection Minister had stated that the "only solution for the Gaza Strip is to empty it of Gazans",⁸⁴ while the Communications Minister advocated that Israel "occupy, deport, settle, bring total victory" in Gaza.⁸⁵
29. In light of the deepening coercive environment in Gaza, including by the ongoing killings of Palestinians, denial of basic goods and services that caused starvation and famine, and the massive destruction of infrastructure, departures of Palestinians from Gaza cannot be considered as voluntary. Therefore, Israeli measures to induce Palestinians to leave Gaza – tantamount to ethnic cleansing⁸⁶ – raise concerns of forcible transfer and deportation,⁸⁷ prohibited by international law, and a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as other war crimes.⁸⁸ In certain circumstances, it may also amount to a crime against humanity.⁸⁹ In addition, during the reporting period, OHCHR observed acts of violence and threats of violence by Israeli authorities, including the targeting of residential infrastructure and of Palestinians fleeing in response to displacement orders, and

⁷⁹ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 147.

⁸⁰ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/netanyahu-vows-to-escalate-gaza-war-implement-trump-s-displacement-plan-/3524138>;

⁸¹ https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/smotrich-gaza-will-be-totally-destroyed-within-months-population-concentrated-in-narrow-border-area/

⁸² https://x.com/Israel_katz/status/1912407758869057781

⁸³ https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/security-cabinet-approves-new-directorate-to-enable-voluntary-departure-of-palestinians-from-gaza/

⁸⁴ https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-03-11/ty-article/netanyahu-minister-only-solution-for-gaza-is-to-empty-it-of-gazans-god-sent-us-trump/00000195-8492-daf4-a9b7-d4f63d060000?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=Content&utm_campaign=daily-brief&utm_content=5ee7cdf46f

⁸⁵ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/senior-ministers-call-for-resettling-gaza-expelling-palestinians-return-to-war/>

⁸⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/turk-deplores-gaza-escalation-pleads-global-action-stop-more-killings>; <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2025-02-05/secretary-generals-remarks-the-opening-of-the-2025-session-of-the-committee-the-exercise-of-the-inalienable-rights-of-the-palestinian-people-delivered>.

⁸⁷ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 49. See also *I.C.J., Obligations of Israel*, paras 139 – 141.

⁸⁸ Rome Statute, arts. 8(2)(a)(vii), (2)(b)(viii).

⁸⁹ Rome Statute, art. 7(1)(d).

confusing mass displacement orders, spreading severe anxiety and fear among Gaza's civilian population.⁹⁰

30. Simultaneously, in the occupied West Bank, Israel accelerated measures contributing to the intensification of a coercive environment that is driving the mass forcible displacement of Palestinians from increasingly wide areas. On the one hand, modes of displacement observed in previous years persisted, albeit in a significantly intensified manner. These included displacement due to rising settler violence directed against Palestinian communities, notably in Area C⁹¹ and increasingly in Area B,⁹² including an unprecedented level of displacement of herding communities and consequent appropriation of large areas of land by settlers.⁹³ In addition, Israeli authorities' demolitions of Palestinian homes and forced evictions owing to discriminatory housing, property and planning laws, policies and practices continued,⁹⁴ as well as demolitions as a form of collective punishment.⁹⁵ During the reporting period, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported the demolition, sealing or confiscation of 2,329 structures across the West Bank due to a lack of permits, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain, or as punitive measures, displacing 3,015 Palestinians.⁹⁶
31. The reporting period also saw, for the first time, the methodical mass displacement of densely populated Palestinian urban communities in Area A in the northern West Bank, as part of Israel's "Operation Iron Wall", which began on 21 January 2025. Extended use of lethal force by Israeli security forces, including airstrikes and the use of live ammunition, killed 19 Palestinians, 14 of them unarmed, in Jenin, Tulkarm and Nur Shams refugee camps and their outskirts in the first seven days of the operation alone. As a result of this violence, coupled with broadcast calls to camp residents to leave under threat of further violence, over 40,000 Palestinians had been displaced from these three camps, as well as El Far'a camp, and adjacent areas by 10 February 2025.⁹⁷ As of 31 May 2025, 33,000 remained displaced.⁹⁸ In parallel, Israeli security forces detonated, demolished, and burned hundreds of buildings and homes in the four camps and, by 31 May, had already demolished or issued demolition orders affecting 237 buildings (comprising between 700 and 950 homes). In addition, Israeli bulldozers destroyed much of the road, water and electricity infrastructure in the camps.⁹⁹ The cumulative impact of these actions compelled the displacement of tens of thousands of Palestinians for an indefinite duration,

⁹⁰ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ohchr-press-release-23sep25/>

⁹¹ A/HRC/58/73, paras. 48-50.

⁹² A/79/347, para. 32; A/80/399, paras. 10, 18, 54-55.

⁹³ A/79/347, paras. 55-71; A/HRC/58/73, para. 49.

⁹⁴ A/79/347, para. 39; A/HRC/58/73, paras. 27-32.

⁹⁵ A/78/502, paras. 27-28.

⁹⁶ [Breakdown of data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank](#), OCHA

⁹⁷ [Large-scale forced displacement in the West Bank impacts 40,000 people](#), UNRWA

⁹⁸ [Humanitarian Situation Update #293 | West Bank](#), OCHA.

⁹⁹ <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-04-08/ty-article-magazine/.premium/satellite-images-reveal-the-destruction-wrought-by-the-idf-in-west-bank-refugee-camps/00000196-10b6-d710-a1bf-b2ff314c0000>; https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/mapping-how-israels-land-grabs-are-reshaping-the-occupied-west-bank?traffic_source=rss&utm_source=General+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=dad40dd122-

potentially amounting to forcible transfer,¹⁰⁰ and raising serious concerns of ethnic cleansing.

32. The International Court of Justice noted that Israel's policies and practices induced the departure of the Palestinian population from parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, notably from East Jerusalem and Area C in the West Bank.¹⁰¹ This, in turn, enabled the further expansion of Israel's settlement policy and the integration of Palestinian territory into Israel.¹⁰² A policy of displacing Palestinians in the West Bank thus heightens concerns that the State of Israel intends to entrench its continuing presence there, in violation of international law's prohibition on the acquisition of territory through the use of force, at the expense of its Palestinian residents and their rights, including the right to self-determination and to property, consolidating and deepening a system of segregation and oppression in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹⁰³

c. Movement restrictions

33. After 7 October 2023, Israeli authorities significantly intensified discriminatory restrictions on Palestinians' freedom of movement across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, albeit with significant differences in nature and intensity in Gaza and the West Bank, respectively. These measures include a dense web of checkpoints and physical barriers and a strict permit regime in the West Bank, and the complete closure of crossing points and the imposition of "no-go zones" across large swathes of Gaza, and in many cases unnecessary or disproportionate force were used in their enforcement. Such restrictions profoundly affected the daily lives of Palestinians, including their enjoyment of human rights such as the rights to life, to family life, to work, to an adequate standard of living, to education, to religion and to health.¹⁰⁴ The establishment of numerous new checkpoints and closures disproportionately restricts women's mobility, where safety considerations and traditional social mores mean that they face greater barriers in accessing healthcare and pursuing education, thereby reinforcing and worsening existing gender inequalities.
34. The International Court of Justice has concluded that Israel's measures imposing restrictions of movement on all Palestinians "solely on account of their Palestinian identity are disproportionate to any legitimate public aim and cannot be justified with reference to security."¹⁰⁵ The Court also noted that the entire regime of movement restrictions of Palestinians throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory had a discriminatory effect on their enjoyment of certain human rights and that Israel's legislation and measures, which impose and serve to maintain near-complete separation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem between the settler and Palestinian communities, constitute a breach of article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All

¹⁰⁰ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 49.

¹⁰¹ International Court of Justice, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion*, 19 July 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, para. 173.

¹⁰² Ibid., para. 169.

¹⁰³ See A/HRC/58/28, para. 5.

¹⁰⁴ A/78/502, para. 56.

¹⁰⁵ *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion*, 19 July 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, para. 205.

Forms of Racial Discrimination, which requires States Parties to prevent, prohibit and eradicate racial segregation and apartheid in territories under their jurisdiction.¹⁰⁶

35. OHCHR has identified numerous instances of such discriminatory restrictions. In the West Bank, Israeli authorities expanded its discriminatory restrictions on the movement of Palestinians between and within communities. Whereas OCHA recorded at the beginning of 2023, in addition to the 712-kilometre-long Wall, the presence of 645 Israeli-imposed movement obstacles across the West Bank¹⁰⁷ – including checkpoints, roadblocks, gates, and other types of barriers –, by 28 February 2025 there were 849 such obstacles, representing a 32 percent increase.¹⁰⁸ Many Palestinian communities were effectively cut off from their surroundings by these enhanced obstacles, as well as by intensified and often violent screening by Israeli security forces at checkpoints, with dire impacts on communities' economic life¹⁰⁹ and Palestinians' access to services and enjoyment of economic and social rights.¹¹⁰ In this way, increasingly stringent movement restrictions undermined the cohesion of Palestinian communities in many parts of the West Bank and contributed to the coercive environment driving displacement.
36. The imposition of increased barriers, checkpoints and restrictive movement policies, compounded by escalating settler violence, severely disrupted the ability of Palestinian women and girls to access essential sexual and reproductive health services. These obstacles prevent individuals from reaching healthcare facilities, including clinics and hospitals that provide maternal care, prenatal services, and emergency obstetric treatment. The delays and unpredictability caused by restrictions on movement not only exacerbated health risks during pregnancy but also heightened the likelihood of preventable complications.¹¹¹ Additionally, the constant threat of violence from settlers created an environment of fear and insecurity, further discouraging women from seeking care or travelling to health facilities, thereby undermining their sexual and reproductive rights.
37. In the "H2" section of Hebron city, for example, Israeli authorities intensified an already highly restrictive system of movement controls over Palestinian residents after 7 October 2023. This included closing the checkpoints connecting H2 to the rest of the city and imposing curfews during which Palestinians were not allowed to leave their homes within H2.¹¹² Restrictions on Palestinians driving vehicles in parts of H2 were also intensified. Such restrictions, imposed for the security of Israeli settlers living in H2 but not applied to them,¹¹³ are disproportionate, highly discriminatory and severely undermine Palestinians' enjoyment of multiple rights. In one emblematic case monitored by OHCHR, a 36-year-old Palestinian woman with a disability and multiple chronic health conditions living with her family in the H2 sector, faced repeated and escalating challenges to receiving the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., paras. 2006 and 229; See also [A/HRC/58/73](#), para. 7; and OHCHR, "Israel's discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank."

¹⁰⁷ https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/Factsheet_Movement_and_Access_Aug2023.pdf

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/west-bank-movement-and-access-update-may-2025>

¹⁰⁹ TD/B/71/3, para. 8.

¹¹⁰ [A/78/502](#), para. 56.

¹¹¹ OHCHR, "Israel's discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank", para. 38.

¹¹² <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ohchr-pr-26aug24/>

¹¹³ [A/71/355](#), para. 26.

healthcare she requires. Israeli security forces' placement of barbed wire across the front door of her house, along with the lengthened process of passing through checkpoints, saw what should have been a 25-minute journey to hospital for regular medical appointment taking around five hours. These logistical impediments led to the cancellation of several of her appointments.

38. Israeli authorities also imposed additional measures that narrowed access to key religious sites in the West Bank for both Muslims and Christians. Israel reduced the number of permits to Jerusalem available to Muslim Palestinian worshippers from the West Bank and tightened other access restrictions to Al Aqsa Mosque compound during the 2025 Ramadan period, meaning that around only 44,000 Palestinians were reportedly able to cross into Jerusalem during Ramadan in 2025, compared to an estimated 388,000 before the 7 October 2023 attacks.¹¹⁴ Similarly, Israeli authorities issued only limited permits to Palestinian Christians with West Bank identity cards to visit Jerusalem during 2024 and 2025 Easter celebrations, with assaults also reported on worshippers attempting to access holy sites in East Jerusalem.¹¹⁵
39. At checkpoints and other locations in which Israeli authorities imposed movement restrictions, Palestinian men and women continued to be subjected to ill-treatment by Israeli security forces, including humiliating and degrading treatment, in some cases comprising sexual and other gender-based violence.¹¹⁶ Israeli security forces also continued to use seemingly unnecessary force to enforce movement restrictions, including against unarmed people attempting to cross between the occupied West Bank and Israel or into occupied East Jerusalem. In one incident, on 29 February 2024, Israeli security forces shot and killed two unarmed Palestinian men and injured two others as they were attempting to return to the West Bank from Israel without permits, west of Hebron. OHCHR monitoring indicates that they had been picking vegetables and working inside Israel. Israeli security forces shot intensively at them as they were climbing a ladder over the Wall. During the reporting period, Israeli security forces killed at least 9 individuals and injured 121 trying to cross the Wall.
40. In Gaza, where the movement of people and goods into and out of the strip was already severely hampered by Israel's 17-year closure and blockade,¹¹⁷ the escalation of hostilities since October 2023 was accompanied by additional stringent restrictions on people's movements both out of and within Gaza. The presence of Israeli forces in several key "corridors" created by the Israeli military, including the "Netzarim corridor" between northern and southern Gaza, the "Morag corridor" between Rafah and Khan Younis, and a "buffer zone" unilaterally imposed by the Israeli military along the entire perimeter of Gaza, has effectively fragmented Gaza into separated zones between which movement by Palestinians became extremely difficult and, during many periods, impossible. Israel has enforced "no-go zones" with the arbitrary use of lethal force, including against women, children and other persons not directly participating in hostilities, and often in situations where there did not appear to be any threat to life. During the temporary

¹¹⁴ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/humanitarian-situation-update-279-west-bank-enhear>

¹¹⁵ See, for example, <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/website-announcements/press-release-issued-by-the-orthodox-patriarchate-of-jerusalem-on-the-assaults-against-worshippers-during-holy-fire-saturday/>.

¹¹⁶ A/HRC/58/28, para. 40.

¹¹⁷ A/78/502, para. 33.

ceasefire between 19 January and 17 March 2025 alone, OHCHR recorded the killings of 94 Palestinians near to or within Israeli-imposed “no-go zones” or otherwise in alleged breach of Israeli-imposed movement restrictions, including 18 boys, 2 girls and 6 women. The Israeli military also reportedly shot and killed 200 fishers breaching Israeli-imposed maritime movement restrictions off Gaza’s coast, as of 11 December 2024.¹¹⁸

41. As the Occupying Power in Gaza, Israel may “take such measures of control and security ... as may be necessary as a result of the war”.¹¹⁹ However, Israel remains bound by obligations under both international human rights law and international humanitarian law,¹²⁰ including, under the latter, the obligation to protect protected persons from all acts of violence¹²¹ and to restore and maintain public order and civil life in the occupied territory.¹²² In addition to putting Palestinian lives at risk, Israel’s barring of Palestinians from entering over 80 percent of Gaza’s land area cannot be reasonably justified by the necessities of war, and amounted to an arbitrary restriction of Palestinians’ freedom of movement, while stymying the restoration and maintenance of Palestinian civil life. Moreover, Israel remains bound to abide by the principle of distinction under international humanitarian law, under which attacks against civilians are unlawful unless and only for such time as that civilian is directly participating in hostilities.¹²³
42. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities maintained and, in some cases, intensified discriminatory administrative measures relating to the maintenance of residency for Palestinians, further curtailing freedom of movement while contributing to the maintenance of a Jewish demographic majority in Jerusalem, including occupied East Jerusalem. Legislation enabling the revocation of the residency status of Palestinian residents in occupied East Jerusalem continued to be applied,¹²⁴ with 60 Palestinians having their residency status revoked in 2024 for allegedly failing to maintain their “centre of life” in East Jerusalem as required by Israeli law, according to the NGO Hamoked.¹²⁵ The International Court of Justice has found that Israel’s requirement that Palestinians in East Jerusalem maintain residency permits amounts to prohibited discrimination under international human rights law.¹²⁶ Since the beginning of 2025 until the end of the reporting period, in an apparent attempt to further expand Israeli control of and restriction to the Palestinian presence in East Jerusalem, Israeli police arrested an increasing number of Palestinians in parts of East Jerusalem located on the West Bank side of the Wall, citing lack of permits to enter East Jerusalem.
43. After 7 October 2023, Israeli authorities also added to and intensified the application of legislation authorizing the stripping of Israeli citizenship and permanent residency from, and the deportation or transfer of, Palestinians from Israel or occupied East Jerusalem convicted of “acts of terrorism” for which they received financial benefits from the

¹¹⁸ See also https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/OPT-Protection-Cluster_Building-to-Starvation-Systematic-Attacks-on-Fishing-in-Gaza.pdf, p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 27.

¹²⁰ Human Rights Committee, “General Comment No. 31 [80]”, para. 11.

¹²¹ Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 27.

¹²² Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague Regulations), art. 43.

¹²³ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rules 1, 6.

¹²⁴ A/78/502, para. 72.

¹²⁵ Hamoked figures shared with OHCHR.

¹²⁶ *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion*, 19 July 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, paras. 195-197.

Palestinian Authority¹²⁷ or on the basis of “breach of allegiance” to Israel.¹²⁸ In May 2025, Israeli authorities announced they were in the final stages of deportation proceedings for four East Jerusalem residents convicted of terror offences, with proceedings initiated against hundreds more.¹²⁹ The four men were reportedly to be transferred to other parts of the occupied West Bank, although Israeli law also permits deportation to third states.¹³⁰ Israel also announced measures to strip the permanent residency of six Palestinians released from prison as part of the Gaza ceasefire deal.¹³¹ At least three of these men were reportedly deported to Egypt, while two were transferred to the occupied West Bank.¹³² On 7 November 2024, the Israeli Knesset passed a law permitting the deportation in certain circumstances of family members of individuals convicted of terrorism offences.¹³³ Under the new policy, which applies to both citizens of Israel and residents of occupied East Jerusalem, at least three Palestinians from East Jerusalem were subject to ongoing deportation proceedings as of the end of the reporting period.¹³⁴ This policy raises serious concerns of collective punishment. Forcible transfers and deportations of protected persons from occupied territory are also prohibited by, and constitute a grave breach of, the Fourth Geneva Convention.¹³⁵

d. Detention and ill-treatment

44. Since 7 October 2023, Israel intensified the mass detention of Palestinians, including children, from the West Bank and Gaza, most of them on unclear legal bases, or for charges under broad and ambiguous “incitement to terrorism” and “terrorism” offences, that are incompatible with the principles of legality and certainty, with violation of due process guarantees and/or other human rights. These mass detentions raised concerns of arbitrary detention and in some cases enforced disappearance.¹³⁶ Arrests and detentions appeared to target former prisoners, political figures, journalists and human rights defenders including women’s human rights defenders, as well as humanitarian and medical personnel in Gaza.¹³⁷ Children also continued to be detained, with 400 children reportedly detained as of 31 May 2025.¹³⁸ On 6 November 2024, the Knesset passed a temporary amendment to the Youth Law in Israel, renewable after five years, which

¹²⁷ [הצעת חוק](#)

¹²⁸ [הצעת חוק](#). See A/78/502, para. 59.

¹²⁹ https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-to-begin-deporting-citizens-convicted-of-terrorism-who-receive-payments-from-palestinian-authority/

¹³⁰ https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/law/2025-05-29/ty-article/.premium/00000197-1d27-d97f-afb7-5daf86770000?utm_source=App_Share&utm_medium=iOS_Native

¹³¹ <https://www.jns.org/arbels-to-revoke-jerusalem-residency-of-six-terrorists-released-in-hamas-deal/>

¹³² OHCHR correspondence with Addameer. These were in addition to the 70 Palestinians, apparently from the West Bank and Gaza, reportedly expelled to Egypt as part of the ceasefire deal in January 2025 – see <https://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2025/01/25/70-palestinian-prisoners-arrive-in-egypt-as-part-of-gaza-exchange-deal/>; <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-70-palestinian-prisoners-stranded-in-egypt-hotel-no-country-wants-them>.

¹³³ [הצעת חוק](#) See also

<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29824>

¹³⁴ Information held by Hamoked.

¹³⁵ Fourth Geneva Convention, arts. 49 and 147.

¹³⁶ OHCHR, “[Detention in the context of the escalation of hostilities in Gaza \(October 2023-June 2024\)](#)” [hereafter “Detention report”], paras. 12–19, 24, 56 and 57; A/HRC/58/28, para. 43.

¹³⁷ A/HRC/58/28, para. 43.

¹³⁸ https://t.me/commission_of_detaineesaffairs/6097

enables courts to sentence children as young as 12-years-old to imprisonment, including life sentences, for a range of crimes, including broadly-defined terrorist offences.

45. Israel significantly expanded its use of administrative detention, with the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) holding 3,562 Palestinians in administrative detention by the end of May 2025,¹³⁹ compared to 1,319 at the end of September 2023. Administrative detention, in which detainees are held without charge, including for “security” reasons, occurs for indefinite periods and is often based on secret information, without an opportunity to meaningfully challenge the detention. By the end of May 2025, the IPS also held 2,214 detainees classified as “unlawful combatants”, including Palestinians from Gaza held under the Unlawful Combatants Law, which similarly allows for lengthy administrative detention without an incarceration order, judicial review or access to a lawyer.¹⁴⁰ Such detention likely amounts to arbitrary detention¹⁴¹ and may amount to collective punishment of Palestinians.¹⁴² In total, as of May 2025, the IPS was holding 10,397 Palestinians as “security prisoners”.¹⁴³
46. During the reporting period, Israeli security forces detained 177 Palestinian journalists across Gaza and the West Bank, of whom at least 130 (73 percent) were held without charge, according to the Palestinian Journalists’ Syndicate. As of 31 May, 48 were still detained, with the majority of those from Gaza held under the Unlawful Combatants Law and those from the West Bank under other administrative detention. The frequency with which Israeli authorities detained Palestinian journalists without charge and the use of incitement charges against others raised concerns about their severe negative impact on the free exercise of Palestinians’ right to freedom of expression.¹⁴⁴
47. Palestinians held in Israeli custody have been consistently treated as pawns in negotiations with Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups¹⁴⁵ – a practice that long predated October 2023.¹⁴⁶ In the context of the hostage-prisoner exchanges in November 2023 and January-March 2025, 2,017 Palestinians, including 142 women and 264 children, were released from Israeli prisons.¹⁴⁷ At least 1,135 of those released by Israel had been

¹³⁹ [המוקד להגנת הפרט](#) Hamoked, accessed on 12 August 2025.

¹⁴⁰ OHCHR, “Detention report”, para. 59.

¹⁴¹ Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 35 (2014), para. 15.

¹⁴² OHCHR, “Detention report”, para. 65.

¹⁴³ [המוקד להגנת הפרט](#) Hamoked, accessed on 12 August 2025.

¹⁴⁴ See A/78/502, para. 55; Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, para. 46.

¹⁴⁵ OHCHR monitoring, corroborated by media reports, see for example, “[Israeli intelligence data: Militants account for only 1 in 4 Gaza detainees](#)”, +972 Magazine, 4 September 2025; “[‘No greater commandment’: How Israelis view hostage-prisoner swaps](#)”, NPR, 17 February 2025 (“In the conflict with Hamas, Israel has many prisoners it could use as bargaining chips. There are nearly [10,000 Palestinians in custody in Israel and the West Bank](#), many held without charge, according to the Israeli human rights group HaMoked.”). See also “[Israel detains 20 Palestinian women in West Bank escalation](#)”, Middle East Eye, 28 October 2023; “[Did Israel round up women and children after 7 October as bargaining chips?](#)”, Middle East Eye, 20 February 2025. See further “[Israel/OPT: Civilian hostages and Palestinian detainees must not be treated as 'political pawns'](#)”, Amnesty International, 28 February 2025.

¹⁴⁶ Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee on Israel, [CCPR/C/79/Add.93](#), para. 21, August 1998. See also “[Detainees used as bargaining chips by both sides in Israel/Gaza conflict](#)”, Amnesty International, 20 March 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Outside of the reporting period, following the ceasefire agreement that came into force on 10 October 2025, another 1,968 Palestinian prisoners and detainees were released on 13 October. The vast majority of

held under some form of administrative detention, including at least 1,046 detained from Gaza as “unlawful combatants”, while some had been convicted of various offences by Israeli courts, including 285 who were serving life sentences.¹⁴⁸ In one case, a Palestinian reported being told that she would only be released to her children once the Israeli hostages had been returned from Gaza.¹⁴⁹

48. Throughout the reporting period, in both Gaza and the West Bank, Israeli forces routinely detained Palestinians to use them to shield Israeli personnel or otherwise to assist Israeli operations, endangering Palestinians’ safety. According to OHCHR monitoring, corroborated by media reports,¹⁵⁰ the Israeli military regularly used detained Palestinians in Gaza to shield themselves from attack, to search houses and tunnels, and to relay demands for the evacuation of buildings and schools. Detainees were forced inside Israeli tanks entering certain areas or sent as messengers to instruct Palestinians sheltering in residential buildings or in schools to evacuate.
49. In the West Bank, similar incidents were recorded. For example, during an extended operation in Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus, on 1 October 2024, Israeli soldiers forced at gunpoint a 22-year-old man and a 33-year-old woman to act as de facto shields for the soldiers, compelling them to go door-to-door inside residential buildings looking for armed Palestinians as soldiers followed behind. According to OHCHR monitoring, Israeli security forces also took into their custody the relatives of wanted Palestinians in the West Bank, holding them until the wanted Palestinians handed themselves over.
50. The use of detainees or other persons under the power of one party to shield it from attack constitutes a violation of the right to life¹⁵¹ and may amount to war crimes.¹⁵² Israeli media reported that prisoners allegedly responsible for crimes related to 7-8 October were not in the group of prisoners intended for hostage exchanges with Hamas, and that a decision had not yet been made whether to indict or include in such exchanges those who allegedly held hostages. OHCHR monitoring confirmed that the majority of those released by Israel had not been accused of criminal conduct, with no apparent claim that they individually posed a threat to Israel’s security.¹⁵³ The holding of detainees

those released – 1,718, including 2 women and 2 boys – had been detained administratively as “unlawful combatants”, all from Gaza after 7 October 2023. The other 250 (241 from the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and 9 from Gaza) included 217 convicted prisoners (of whom 108 sentenced to one or more life sentences) and 33 facing trial. Most of the convicted (at least 153) were set to be deported to third countries. Before these releases, as of 30 September 2025, the IPS was holding 6,239 people administratively, namely 3,577 held in administrative detention and 2,662 as “unlawful combatants”, meaning that thousands of Palestinians remained held in Israeli prisons without charge of trial after this last hostage-prisoner exchange.

¹⁴⁸ Palestinian Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, on file.

¹⁴⁹ Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, “[Torture and Genocide: The Shattered Futures of Former Palestinian Detainees in Gaza](#)”, May 2025, page 78.

¹⁵⁰ <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/10/24/middleeast/palestinians-human-shields-israel-military-gaza-intl/index.html>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-military-human-shields.html>; [Israel's use of human shields in Gaza is widespread, sources say | AP News](#).

¹⁵¹ CCPR/C/GC/36, para 64; A/HRC/52/75, para. 17.

¹⁵² A/HRC/55/28, para. 64 with regard to hostage taking; ICC Statute, Article 8(2)(b)(xxiii). See also ICRC Customary IHL Study Rules 156 and 97.

¹⁵³ “[מבצע חסר תקדים: 22 כתבי אישום גובשו נגד מחבלי נוחבה שהשתתפו בטבח ניר עוז](#)”, Ynet, 20 April 2025; “[Report: Israel asked US not to indict Oct. 7 terrorists before it files its own charges](#)”, The Times of Israel, 20 April 2025

without charge for the purpose of potential use during prisoner exchanges would raise grave concerns of multiple violations of international law, including with regards to the prohibition of hostage-taking.

51. The Israeli authorities also continued to hold the bodies of Palestinians as a bargaining tool,¹⁵⁴ and to punish their families as a form of collective punishment¹⁵⁵ – a practice which increased during the reporting period. This practice was endorsed by the Israeli courts,¹⁵⁶ including regarding the bodies of Palestinians who had died in custody and who had not been convicted or even accused of violence.¹⁵⁷ Before October 2023, Israeli authorities had been keeping 147 bodies (including 1 woman, 16 boys and 130 men).¹⁵⁸
52. Conditions imposed on Palestinian detainees in Israeli detention facilities – already concerning prior to 7 October 2023 – drastically deteriorated during the reporting period.¹⁵⁹ Significantly harsher detention conditions, as well as widespread beating and torture of prisoners by Israeli forces, contributed to a significant rise in the number of deaths in custody, with 70 Palestinians (69 men and 1 boy) dying in Israeli custody during the reporting period, compared to one in the year before 7 October 2023. Among these, for the first time in the context of Israeli occupation, was a child: 17-year-old Walid Khaled Ahmad Al Basha who died in Israel's Megiddo prison on 22 March 2025. In a rare occurrence, Israeli authorities carried out an autopsy that showed that Al Basha, who was reportedly in good health when arrested in September 2024, displayed severe signs of starvation at the time of his death, including cachexia, a condition marked by severe loss of muscle and fat mass, dehydration and untreated infection. A former cellmate stated that Al Basha had been suffering from fainting episodes and exhaustion throughout his imprisonment as well as scabies, which has affected thousands of Palestinian prisoners

¹⁵⁴ Israel resumed the practice of withholding bodies in 2015, see for instance [A/HRC/46/63](#), para. 9: also “[Israeli High Court greenlights holding Palestinian bodies as bargaining chips, a routine founded in violence](#)”, B’Tselem, 22 October 2019. In September 2024 the Israeli Security Cabinet decided, for the first time, to also hold on the body of a Palestinian citizen of Israel, in order to use it as leverage in negotiations with Hamas, see “[High Court rejects petition demanding release of body of Arab-Israeli terror convict](#)”, The Times of Israel, 30 September 2024.

¹⁵⁵ See for example Ministerial Committee for National Security Affairs (Security Cabinet) resolution regarding the “Uniform Policy in the Handling of the Bodies of Terrorists” (B/171) (unclassified version) and Security cabinet decision of 2 September 2020, expanding the practice to include the bodies of all “terrorists” who had killed or injured any person or carried a weapon. OHCHR monitoring confirms that these decisions are never applied when the person committing the offence is a non-Arab Israeli. See also “[Joint Submission to the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions on Israel’s Continued Oppression of Palestinians Beyond Their Killing](#)”, 6 February 2024.

¹⁵⁶ <https://supremedecisions.court.gov.il/Home/Download?path=NetVerdicts/2025/7/30/2024-0-5934-13-2&fileName=2c2c9f24cf444535be23a3d623c51e95&type=2>. See also [FHHJ 10190/17 The Military Commander of the West Bank v. Alian](#), overruling the previous decision in [HCJ 4466/16 Alian v. the Military Commander of the West Bank](#)

¹⁵⁷ [HCJ 5789/23 Musa and PHR-I v. the Minister of Defense et al](#), on 30 March 2025, the HCJ rejected a request for further hearing in this ruling, [FHHJ 50928-12-24](#).

¹⁵⁸ Jerusalem Legal Aid Centre, on file. Outside the reporting period, as of 31 October 2025, Israel withheld the bodies of 476 Palestinians: 401 men, 5 women, 51 boys, 1 girl and 18 males whose age was not known, at least 74 of which were of Palestinians who had died in custody since 7 October 2023.¹⁵⁸ This number does not include the 253 bodies of Palestinians previously killed by Israeli forces and buried in graves marked only by numbers, known as the Cemeteries of Numbers. Outside of the reporting period, and as at 26 November, Israel had released 345 bodies under the ceasefire agreement that came into force on 10 October 2025. Bodies handed over reportedly showed signs of torture and extrajudicial executions.

¹⁵⁹ [A/HRC/58/28](#), para. 44.

since mid-2024.¹⁶⁰ Israel's High Court of Justice subsequently found that Israeli authorities' severe cuts to the food intake of so-called "security prisoners" since 7 October 2023 meant that the amount and nature of the food provided did not meet required nutritional standards and that the State had not demonstrated its compliance with its legal obligations in this regard.¹⁶¹

53. Many Palestinian prisoners released under the first two prisoner exchanges in November 2023 and January-March 2025 were released in uniforms embossed with symbols to humiliate them,¹⁶² and many reported severe ill-treatment in the days prior to and on the day of their release.¹⁶³ Israeli security forces raided the homes of the families of Palestinian detainees in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, just before they were released and reportedly assaulted family members, warning against any celebration of the releases.¹⁶⁴ Many Palestinian detainees appeared severely malnourished, suggesting serious mistreatment during their captivity.¹⁶⁵ Since October 2023, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been allowed to visit Palestinians detained in Israel.¹⁶⁶
54. Interviews conducted by OHCHR with former prisoners,¹⁶⁷ consistent with information received through other multiple sources,¹⁶⁸ indicated that Palestinian detainees had been subjected to widespread and systematic torture and other ill-treatment while in detention. Reported treatment included brutal beatings, prolonged solitary confinement, waterboarding, suspension from the ceiling and other stress positions, and the use of rape and other sexual and gender-based violence against detainees, with a disproportional impact on men, as means of collective punishment, to humiliate prisoners and to deter them from activism against the occupation.¹⁶⁹ International humanitarian law requires parties to a conflict or an Occupying Power¹⁷⁰ to treat humanely all detainees

¹⁶⁰ [Scabies Epidemic in Prisons | Association for Civil Rights in Israel](#)

¹⁶¹ <https://supremedecisions.court.gov.il/Home/Download?path=NetVerdicts/2025/9/8/2024-0-2858-54-2&fileName=3056f32799010000090037f6aece048&type=4>.

¹⁶² "Palestinians burn 'humiliating' shirts after release from Israeli prisons", Al Jazeera, 15 February 2025; "Israel dresses freed prisoners in Star of David shirts, writing: 'We will not forget or forgive'", The Times of Israel, 15 February 2025.

¹⁶³ "Palestinian prisoners endure 'systematic torture' before their release, monitor says", Middle East Eye, 3 February 2025.

¹⁶⁴ "Palestinian prisoners released from jail, but not free to celebrate", France24, 8 February 2025

¹⁶⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/distressing-conditions-israeli-hostages-and-palestinian-detainees>

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/FAQ-misconceptions-false-information-icrc-work-israel-and-occupied-territories>

¹⁶⁷ Since 7 October, OHCHR carried out 74 interviews with Palestinians detained by Israeli security forces in the reporting period, including 23 Palestinians (9 women, 13 men, 1 girl, including 4 Human Rights Defenders and 6 journalists) detained for more than 7 days, and 51 Palestinians (6 boys, 32 men, 11 women and 2 girls) detained for up to 7 days.

¹⁶⁸ See also, among others [Welcome to Hell: The Israeli Prison System as a Network of Torture Camps | B'Tselem](#); [PCHR: Torture and Genocide. The Shattered Futures of Former Palestinian Detainees in Gaza](#); [PHR, Unlawfully detained, Tortured, and Starved](#); [Addameer, Update on the Conditions and Torture Violations committed against Gazan Detainees](#)

¹⁶⁹ For discussion of forms of sexual violence documented by OHCHR, see OHCHR, "Detention", paras. 33-45. See also <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/un-human-rights-occupied-palestinian-territory-least-75-palestinians-have-died-israeli-detention-7-october-2023-enar>. See as well A/HRC/58/CRP.6, para. 81.

¹⁷⁰ Fourth Geneva Convention, Art. 4.

and to protect them against all acts or threats of violence and insults.¹⁷¹ Rape and other forms of sexual violence against protected persons are prohibited under international humanitarian law, constituting a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions, and amount to war crimes.¹⁷²

e. Repression of the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association

55. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities intensified and expanded a comprehensive set of measures unduly restricting Palestinians' rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, further shrinking civic space in the occupied territory. Israeli conduct towards media organizations and personnel served to further undermine the media sector's key role, including reporting on conduct that could be contrary to international law, in a context of impunity for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. The measures systematically targeted media organizations and violated the right of Palestinians to receive information, and also negatively impacted this right for people outside the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This had the effect of limiting local and global understanding of developments there, including the accelerating violations of international law perpetrated by Israeli authorities and security forces. In Gaza, OHCHR verified the killings of 243 journalists and media workers, including 34 women,¹⁷³ between 7 October 2023 and 31 May 2025, with serious concerns that some were deliberately targeted by Israeli strikes.¹⁷⁴
56. The Israeli Government also took steps to restrict media organizations' access to parts or all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In addition to the denial of entry into Gaza for all foreign journalists since 7 October 2023 – except for a handful of visits controlled by Israeli forces – on 1 April 2024 the Israeli Knesset adopted temporary legislation authorizing the Minister of Communications to impose sanctions on foreign broadcasting agencies, including barring them from broadcasting in Israel, for national security reasons. Under this legislation, Israel imposed measures on the Al Jazeera news channel, banning it on 5 May 2024 from reporting from or broadcasting within Israel, including occupied East Jerusalem, for 45 days, with the order repeatedly extended. On 22 September 2024, Israeli security forces raided and closed Al Jazeera's offices in Ramallah and banned it from broadcasting in the occupied West Bank, alleging that the premises were "used for incitement and support of terrorism". This allegation was consistent with Israeli authorities' frequent justification of ongoing arrests of Palestinian journalists on accusations or broadly-defined charges of "incitement" to violence or terrorism.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Fourth Geneva Convention, Art. 27; Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions.

¹⁷² Rome Statute, article 8(2)(b)(xxii) and Article 8(2) (e)(vi), Common Article 3, ICRC Customary IHL Study Rule 93.

¹⁷³ While most were killed in the line of duty, some were killed when they were at their homes, including together with their family members.

¹⁷⁴ OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", para. 48. While OHCHR verifies these fatalities as part of its fatality verification mandate, UNESCO holds a specific mandate to verify the killings of journalists in the line of work worldwide. See <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-director-general-condemns-killing-journalist-noureddine-abdo-palestine?hub=72609>.

¹⁷⁵ A/HRC/58/28, para. 47. Additionally, in November 2024, the Israeli government reportedly approved a measure preventing any government-funded bodies from communicating or advertising with the Israeli

Measures against journalists and media outlets on such grounds in many cases amounted to an impermissible restriction on freedom of expression,¹⁷⁶ and the vague references to national security threats allegedly posed by journalists' and media organizations' public reporting raised concerns that such measures were primarily an attempt to suppress outlets documenting facts on the ground and scrutinizing Israeli policy and practices.¹⁷⁷

57. The Israeli authorities also adopted measures affecting human rights defenders and organizations advocating for Palestinians' human rights or on political issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which by themselves or in their implementation severely undermined the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, raising concerns of their incompatibility with international human rights law. In December 2024, an Israeli interministerial committee was established with authority to deny or block registration and staff visas for international non-governmental organizations focusing on Palestinian welfare on the basis of, *inter alia*, promoting "delegitimization activities" against the State of Israel.¹⁷⁸ This regulation could bar a broad range of international actors from entering Israel or push them into self-censorship, including for conducting legitimate work to hold perpetrators of human rights violations to account.¹⁷⁹ At the end of the reporting period, a bill was advancing through preliminary reading in the Knesset to impose an 80 per cent tax on foreign state donations to NGOs, which was subsequently revised downwards to 23 percent, which is nevertheless excessively high, while also increasing fees for such NGOs to petition Israeli courts.¹⁸⁰ If adopted, the tax could be avoided only if NGOs were to commit to refrain from engaging in "political activities", and could be doubled if such a commitment was made and then deemed to have been violated. The provisions of the proposed law and remarks from public officials indicate that the law aims to target organizations critical of government policy.¹⁸¹
58. These measures came alongside concerted legislative efforts to undermine accountability efforts in relation to certain Israeli state officials for alleged violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with an amendment to the Law of Entry to Israel passed on 19 February 2025, barring the entry to Israel of non-Israeli persons who, *inter alia*, have supported the prosecution of Israeli military and security personnel in foreign or international courts. Another bill introduced in February 2025 would criminalize, with

media outlet Haaretz citing "editorials that have hurt the legitimacy of the state of Israel and its right to self defense" and remarks by the Haaretz newspaper publisher "that support terrorism" – see <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-11-24/ty-article/.premium/israeli-govt-to-cut-ties-with-haaretz-over-publishers-remarks-on-freedom-fighters/00000193-5e5c-d68e-a1db-fe5c54cf0000>.

¹⁷⁶ See Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, paras. 30, 46.

¹⁷⁷ See Communication No. 574/94, *Kim v. Republic of Korea*, Views adopted by the Human Rights Committee on 14 March 1996, paras. 12.4-12.5.

¹⁷⁸ <https://www.gov.il/he/pages/dec2542-2024>

¹⁷⁹ [https://gisha.org/en/ngos-in-israel-condemn-an-israeli-government-decision-designed-to-deny-registration-and-work-visas-to-international-humanitarian-organizations/;](https://gisha.org/en/ngos-in-israel-condemn-an-israeli-government-decision-designed-to-deny-registration-and-work-visas-to-international-humanitarian-organizations/main.knesset.gov.il/en/news/pressreleases/pages/press20225w.aspx)
main.knesset.gov.il/en/news/pressreleases/pages/press20225w.aspx

¹⁸⁰ The Non-Profit Law (Amendment—Donation from Foreign State Entities), 5785-2024. See [Approved in preliminary reading: 80% tax on donation from foreign state entity to non-profit association not budgeted by the State of Israel](#)

¹⁸¹ In a preliminary reading discussion on 5 May 2024, the member of Knesset who proposed the bill stated that the bill was "focused on targeting specific organizations with surgical precision".

up to five years in prison, cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC).¹⁸² The bill would under its current wording implicate responsibility for any information used by the ICC, even if not directly submitted.¹⁸³

59. Israeli authorities launched a multi-faceted crackdown on the freedom of expression of Palestinian residents of the occupied territory, conducting wide-scale interrogations and arrests on grounds of incitement to terrorism and violence. In many cases, acts or statements for which Palestinians were targeted, including social media posts and statements or acts of a political nature, were protected under the right to freedom of expression.¹⁸⁴ In just one example emblematic of a wider pattern of conduct, on 9 February 2025 Israeli police raided two branches of the Palestinian-owned Educational Bookshop in East Jerusalem, arresting the owner and his nephew and seizing approximately 250-300 books, alleging that the raids related to selling books containing incitement to terrorism. The allegations were later changed to the broader arrest category of “disturbing public order”. The two men were released after two days’ detention and all but eight of the books were returned to them.

60. Arrests by Israeli authorities on grounds of “incitement to terrorism” or “violence” overwhelmingly targeted Palestinians,¹⁸⁵ in most cases for apparently protected speech, while at the same time failing to punish a surge in dangerous and dehumanizing rhetoric, potentially amounting to incitement to human rights violations and even atrocity crimes, in public discourse in Israel including by persons of authority in Israel.¹⁸⁶ The disparity in treatment was indicative of Israel’s discriminatory application of restrictions on freedom of expression, which accelerated after 7 October 2023 and contributed to the deepening coercive environment facing Palestinian residents of the occupied territory.

f. Destruction and damage to Palestinian cultural heritage, places of worship and academic and cultural facilities

61. Hostilities in Gaza, and primarily Israel’s choices of methods and means of warfare, destroyed much of the movable, immovable and intangible cultural heritage of Gaza. Such destruction represented a profound assault on Palestinian identity, history and collective memory and threatens the preservation of Palestinian heritage and transmission to future generations and humanity as a whole. In addition, the extensive destruction and damage inflicted on religious sites, universities, historic landmarks and artefacts as well as the killing of artists, writers and academics in many cases constituted serious violations

¹⁸² Law to Protect the Israeli Public from the Activities of the International Criminal Court in the Hague against the State of Israel, 5785-2024.

¹⁸³ OHCHR analysis, confirmed by multiple sources.

main.knesset.gov.il/en/news/pressreleases/pages/press19225c.aspx

¹⁸⁴ A/HRC/58/28, para. 48; OHCHR, “Detention report”, paras. 27-28.

¹⁸⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/palestine/2023-12-27-Flash-Report.pdf>;

https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Data_Incitement_30_October_2023.pdf.

¹⁸⁶ A/HRC/58/28, para. 50; International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, Order, 26 January 2024, I.C.J. Reports 2024, paras. 51–53.

of international humanitarian law¹⁸⁷ and international human rights law¹⁸⁸ that specifically protect cultural property. In some cases, these attacks and destruction may amount to war crimes. Attacks on cultural heritage may also, when conducted in the context of an attack directed at the civilian population, amount to crimes against humanity.¹⁸⁹

62. As of 27 May 2025, UNESCO had verified damage to 110 cultural sites in Gaza since 7 October 2023,¹⁹⁰ including 13 religious sites, 77 buildings of historical and/or artistic interest, 3 depositories of movable cultural property, 9 monuments, 1 museum and 7 archaeological sites. The sites were in many cases completely destroyed or sustained severe damage due to extensive military operations, including ground battles in their vicinity; the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, including Israeli air strikes; or the use of these sites as bases for military operations.
63. In relation to such destruction, Israeli military and Palestinian armed groups failed to take measures to protect cultural sites from attacks and the effects of hostilities. In some cases, destruction or damage seemed to have been caused deliberately, while in others, the foreseeable damage to or destruction of cultural property had not been taken into account when planning attacks and choosing the means and methods of warfare.¹⁹¹ In its monitoring, OHCHR could not identify imperative military necessity in several Israeli attacks that struck cultural sites, raising concerns about their compliance with the principle of distinction and the prohibition of attacks on property of great importance to peoples' cultural heritage.¹⁹²
64. OHCHR documented extensive damage across Gaza's Old City, where many sites of cultural and historic value were located, caused by Israeli military operations and associated ground battles. In December 2023, extensive Israeli military ground incursions and intense fighting between the Israeli military and Palestinian armed groups were reported in this area, including in the vicinity of nine sites considered to be of historic and cultural value by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Palestine. As of 19 July 2024, satellite imagery suggested that four of these nine sites — the Hammam As Samra bathhouse, the historic Al Qaisariyah market, Al Pasha Palace, and the Subat Al Alami historic house — had been completely destroyed, while two others — the Great Omari Mosque and the Greek Orthodox Saint Porphyrios Church — had sustained severe damage.
65. OHCHR verified damage and destruction to western Gaza City's Museum Hotel (Mat'haf Al Funduq) and its contents, including cultural artefacts and historic documents, following its use as a military site by Israeli forces. In the last week of October and beginning of November 2023, the Israeli military conducted an operation in northwestern Gaza City, involving airstrikes, artillery strikes and naval strikes, during which it took control of the

¹⁸⁷ For example, 1954 Hague Convention, Art 4 (1) and (2), 8; ICRC CIHL Database, Rules 38(b), 39; ICRC CIHL Database, Rule 40(A); Geneva Convention VI, art. 27; Hague Regulations 1907, art. 56.

¹⁸⁸ For example, the rights to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression (ICCPR, arts. 18, 19); the right to take part in cultural life (ICESCR, art. 15).

¹⁸⁹ *Prosecutor v Dario Kordić and Mario Čerdez*, Trial Judgment, No IT-95-14/2-T (26 February 2001) at 207.

¹⁹⁰ Gaza Strip: Damage assessment (as of 28 May 2025), <https://www.unesco.org/en/gaza/assessment>.

¹⁹¹ ICRC Customary IHL Database, rule 17.

¹⁹² ICRC Customary IHL Database, rule 38(B).

area surrounding the hotel. Satellite imagery, video footage and military expert analysis strongly suggested that the Israeli military was responsible for the destruction of the hotel.

66. Historic sites in other areas of the Gaza Strip were also impacted. For example, OHCHR verified the damaging of the Khan Younis Castle (Barquq Castle) which reportedly occurred between 24 January and 29 February 2024 in the context of the Israeli military's ground operation in Khan Younis. Satellite imagery showed the destruction of the upper part of the castle's minaret and the southern part of its external wall.
67. In addition to the destruction of heritage structures, OHCHR also monitored the destruction of numerous cultural and artistic centres, including the Rashad Al Shawa Cultural Center and the Shababeek Center for Contemporary Art, both in Gaza City, which played a crucial role in contemporary cultural life in Gaza. According to OHCHR monitoring, the Rashad Al Shawa Cultural Center was completely destroyed between 17 and 23 November 2023. The level and nature of destruction provided reasonable grounds to believe that it was caused by an Israeli airstrike. Between 18 March and 1 April 2024, during an operation by the Israeli military and intense ground battles with Palestinian armed groups, the Shababeek Center, located near Al Shifa Medical Complex, was completely destroyed, including approximately 7,000 pieces of art. OHCHR verified that the Shababeek Center was deliberately destroyed in the last days of the siege on Al Shifa. The destruction of the Center and the artwork stored inside was caused by extensive Israeli military operations, including indiscriminate attacks through area bombardment, and detonation of explosives, as well as bulldozing, which targeted a large area in the vicinity of Al Shifa Medical Complex.
68. Since 7 October 2023, OHCHR documented a pattern of strikes on religious sites in Gaza, including religious sites sheltering Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). According to the Gaza Ministry of Endowment, between 7 October 2023 and 31 May 2025, 995 mosques and 3 churches were partially or completely destroyed as a result of military operations.
69. On 15 November 2023, for example, an Israeli airstrike hit the Ihyia' El Sunnah Mosque in As Sabra neighbourhood, western Gaza City, killing at least 63 Palestinians, including boys. At the time of the strike, the mosque was packed with Palestinian men and boys gathering for prayers. According to OHCHR monitoring, the strike was highly likely conducted with a precision guided MK83 missile, indicating the attack was perpetrated by the Israeli military. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) did not make any public pronouncement on this attack.
70. The Israeli military intensified its attacks on mosques during times of Muslim celebrations. For example, the Israeli military reportedly struck 17 mosques across Gaza in April 2024, including when Palestinians were marking Eid al Fitr. On 11 and 12 April 2024, on the days of Eid al Fitr, Israeli ground forces reportedly hit at least eight mosques in Middle Gaza and Gaza City. The Israeli military did not present any evidence that would substantiate the loss of protection from attack of these places of worship, which are *prima facie* civilian objects. The increase of strikes on mosques during a period of religious celebration, the choice of weapon and the timing of attack during prayer-time suggest Israel either directed attacks against these places of worship or did not take adequate precautions in attack.
71. Since 7 October 2023, the Israeli military also attacked Palestinian universities across Gaza, destroying educational, scientific and academic life and further degrading Gaza's social

and cultural fabric. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, as of 31 May 2025, 22 out of 38 university campuses and 60 university buildings out of 206 had been completely destroyed.¹⁹³ Laboratories, libraries, university servers and research archives were also destroyed. OHCHR verified the destruction of Al Azhar University in Al Mughraqa and Israa University in Al Zahraa City, both located south of Gaza City. In both cases, Israel alleged that the universities were being used by Palestinian armed groups. However, insufficient information was made available to substantiate these allegations, which remained vague and broad. Since October 2023, no university has been in operation, depriving 88,000 students of their higher education.¹⁹⁴

II. Case study: North Gaza

72. The cumulative effects of Israeli practices and policies in Gaza, both within and outside the conduct of hostilities, were exemplified by Israel's large-scale military operation in North Gaza between the three months spanning 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025. Israel's intensive operation across the governorate, combined with the 11 displacement orders issued during this period and Israel's failure to ensure access to humanitarian assistance for Palestinians, appeared aimed at a permanent demographic shift, and in fact resulted in the forced and near-total displacement of the Palestinian population from North Gaza, tantamount to ethnic cleansing. The operation followed media reports that Israeli government ministers and members of the military¹⁹⁵ were calling for the military to "cleanse" or drive out the population of northern Gaza, as well as for the gradual annexation of the strip.¹⁹⁶
73. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, between 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025, at least 2,300 fatalities were recorded in hospitals, while the Ministry estimated that the actual number of Palestinians killed by the Israeli military in North Gaza in this period was at least 5,000, including many remaining under the rubble. The lethality of Israeli attacks during this period may have been heightened due to the Israeli military repeatedly killing and threatening to strike personnel of the Palestinian Civil Defense, which forced the organization to suspend its services in North Gaza as of 24 October 2024, including the collection of the dead and injured. Hundreds of corpses were reportedly left in the streets or under the rubble.
74. During this operation, OHCHR recorded at least 32 incidents in which Israeli airstrikes on residential blocks and buildings resulted in the killing of 10 or more Palestinians, with a total of at least 852 fatalities, including 21 incidents that resulted in the killing of 20 or more Palestinians. These attacks were mainly conducted in Beit Lahiya and Jabalya, including against residential buildings in which entire Palestinian families and internally displaced persons were sheltering. This pattern of strikes raised concerns of the Israeli

¹⁹³ <https://x.com/PalestineMoE/status/1927253630492545223>

¹⁹⁴ <https://x.com/PalestineMoE/status/1830937967637971360>

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.972mag.com/northern-gaza-liquidation-scenario-eiland-rabi/>;
<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/395677>

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.972mag.com/jabalia-camp-northern-gaza-siege/>;
<https://www.ynet.co.il/yedioth/article/yokra14057315>. See also <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-10-13/ty-article/.premium/israeli-defense-officials-govt-pushing-aside-hostage-deal-eyeing-gaza-annexation/00000192-8585-d988-a3ba-dde59a470000>

military's recurrent violation of international humanitarian law's rules on the conduct of hostilities.

75. For example, on 10 November 2024, an Israeli airstrike completely destroyed a building in Jabalya Al Balad, killing 24 Palestinians (comprising 10 girls, 4 boys, 6 women and 4 men). Based on the extent and the nature of the damage, the strike likely involved a large munition. The Israeli military did not announce the targeting of any military objective. On 12 November 2024, Israeli air forces hit a two-story house in Beit Hanoun, without warning, killing 12 Palestinians, including 2 boys and 2 doctors. The strike, again, most likely involved a large munition. Based on available information, there was no indication of any apparent military objective at the time of the incident.
76. The use of explosive weapons with wide area effects suggested disregard for the direct and indirect civilian harm and damage that would necessarily occur in such a congested urban environment; it indicated a choice not to use other means that could better discriminate between combatants and civilians, minimize harm to civilians or civilian objects and ensure the strike was conducted in a proportional manner. The large number of civilian fatalities and extensive damage to civilian objects in these and multiple other strikes indicated that they were indiscriminate. Furthermore, the predictably excessive direct and indirect civilian harm resulting from the use of such weapons in densely populated areas, in relation to the limited direct and concrete military advantage expected to be obtained from such strikes, raised serious concerns that these strikes did not respect the principle of proportionality.¹⁹⁷ Under certain circumstances, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks, in particular where they occur repeatedly with the same results, amount to attacks directed against civilians and civilian objects,¹⁹⁸ and constitute war crimes.¹⁹⁹
77. Furthermore, every day between 6 October 2024 and 18 January 2025, the Israeli military demolished residential buildings in North Gaza. Satellite imagery confirmed the high level of destruction, with more than 3,000 structures completely destroyed and more than 800 others severely damaged across the governorate between 20 September and 18 December 2024. Jabalya, Jabalya Camp and Beit Lahiya were most impacted. The sheer scale of destruction of civilian homes and essential infrastructure across North Gaza rendered large areas uninhabitable, displacing tens of thousands and effectively preventing the return of the displaced population in the long-term, making the displacement permanent, in violation of international law.²⁰⁰
78. The Israeli military's pattern of repeated attacks on hospitals²⁰¹ further undermined the healthcare system and access to healthcare in North Gaza. During this period, OHCHR recorded 41 Israeli military attacks on seven hospitals and medical facilities in North Gaza,

¹⁹⁷ OHCHR, "Indiscriminate Attacks report", pages 12-14.

¹⁹⁸ ICTY, Prosecutor v. Galic, case No. IT-98-29-T, Judgement, 5 December 2003, paras. 57 and 60.

¹⁹⁹ ICRC Rule 156.

²⁰⁰ Fourth Geneva Convention, Arts. 49, 147.

²⁰¹ Ibid., noting that similar attacks continued throughout the period following the publication of the report, when the impact had been well documented.

including on the governorate's three main hospitals,²⁰² which had already faced serious attacks in previous months.²⁰³

79. On 19 October 2024, the Israeli military launched coordinated attacks against all three major hospitals in North Gaza. OHCHR recorded several airstrikes, shelling and shooting incidents directly targeting the hospitals. The Indonesian Hospital subsequently became unserviceable after the Israeli military besieged it on 24 December 2024, forcing patients and medical staff to leave, and seriously damaging its structure and equipment. On 27 and 28 December 2024, the Israeli military raided Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya, detaining many Palestinians, including medical staff and patients. During the raid, the Israeli military reportedly set fire to the hospital, severely damaging significant parts. On 29 December 2024, the Israeli military announced it had completed a "targeted operation against a Hamas command centre in Kamal Adwan Hospital."²⁰⁴ Meanwhile, Al Awda Hospital remained barely functioning after Israeli ground forces conducted strikes and shelling, damaging its main building. Israeli ground forces remained in the vicinity of the hospital until 11 January 2025.
80. These attacks, in addition to the presence of Israeli ground forces near hospitals, often prevented injured Palestinians from reaching medical facilities, at a time when repeated attacks across the area increased the need for immediate medical intervention and life-saving treatment. The siege and attacks on hospitals resulted in the cutting of electricity and oxygen supplies, as well as severe shortages of medicine, reportedly resulting in the death of at least six Palestinian patients, including three children.
81. Attacks on hospitals had a particularly severe impact on the estimated 1,720 pregnant and lactating women who remained largely cut off from essential aid in North Gaza during this period.²⁰⁵ Besides increasing maternal mortality and morbidity rates, the lack of access to sexual and reproductive healthcare may have irreversible long-term effects on the mental health and the physical reproductive and fertility prospects of the Palestinians in Gaza.²⁰⁶
82. In incidents where Israeli authorities alleged that hospitals were used for military purposes by Palestinian armed groups, they failed to publicly provide information to substantiate these allegations. Under international humanitarian law, even when hospitals are being used outside their humanitarian functions for acts harmful to the enemy, the parties to the conflict must respect strict protection rules, including the issuance of a time-bound warning to stop its hostile use before any attack. OHCHR did not find any information that such warnings were provided. Even in the exceptional circumstances where hospitals and medical personnel may lose their special protection, Israeli forces would still need to respect the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attacks. There is no information available to suggest that these hospitals met the strict criteria of military objectives. Direct attacks against hospitals, medical

²⁰² The Indonesian and Kamal Adwan Hospitals in Beit Lahiya, and Al Awda Hospital in Jabalya.

²⁰³ See OHCHR "Attacks on Gaza hospitals report", 2024.

²⁰⁴ <https://t.me/idfofficial/13317>

²⁰⁵ [UNFPA Palestine Situation Report #12](https://www.un.org/unispal/document/crisis-in-palestine-unfpa-palestine-situation-report-issue-15-covering-period-feb-1-2025-to-feb-28-2025/), November 2024. See more broadly, for example, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/crisis-in-palestine-unfpa-palestine-situation-report-issue-15-covering-period-feb-1-2025-to-feb-28-2025/>

²⁰⁶ [UNFPA warns of catastrophic birth outcomes in Gaza amid starvation, psychological trauma and collapsing healthcare](https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unfpa-sitrep-01nov2024/), and <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unfpa-sitrep-01nov2024/>.

personnel and the sick and wounded amount to a war crime. The repeated attacks against facilities that had not lost their protection according to the clear criteria found in international humanitarian law demonstrate a disregard for the special protection afforded to hospitals, the wounded and sick, and medical personnel. They contributed to the horrific suffering of those wounded because of hostilities or otherwise in need of medical care, as well as the death of many who were not able to receive effective medical attention. Alongside Israeli forces' failure to ensure and facilitate access to essential and emergency health care, these attacks indicate that the denial of access to health services may have been used as a form of collective punishment, in violation of international law.²⁰⁷

83. Across North Gaza, OHCHR documented an extensive level of destruction of objects and goods indispensable to the survival of the civilian population as well as other critical civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings and medical facilities. This deprived people of the ability to obtain food, medicines and health services, and disrupted access to shelter and clean water. Attacks on civilian infrastructure were accompanied by the imposition of a siege that blocked, and at times completely prohibited, the entry of humanitarian assistance and other necessities of life, increasingly impacting access to food and water. The United Nations attempted to reach the besieged area 186 times during the approximate reporting period, of which 168 movements were denied and 18 faced impediments.²⁰⁸ Such practices, the effects of which were foreseeable,²⁰⁹ precipitating a human-made famine,²¹⁰ raised serious concerns as to the use of starvation as method of warfare.
84. Between 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025, the Israeli military issued 11 displacement orders for North Gaza, ordering Palestinians to move southwards. In most cases, the Israeli military stated that " Hamas" and other Palestinian armed groups were still active in northern Gaza, including that they were launching rockets. In addition to displacement orders, OHCHR monitoring found that the Israeli military used quadcopters and soldiers going door-to-door to force Palestinians to leave areas in North Gaza.
85. The Israeli military's displacement orders — which did not meet the stringent requirements for a lawful evacuation under international humanitarian law — in any case proved extremely difficult to comply with for Palestinian civilians.²¹¹ In most cases, simply accessing the Israeli orders required an internet connection, limiting awareness among

²⁰⁷ See also OHCHR, "Attacks on Gaza hospitals report", para. 35; Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 14, para. 34.

²⁰⁸ OCHA, Humanitarian Situation Update #253 Gaza Strip, 8 January 2025 and OCHA, Humanitarian Situation Update #257 Gaza Strip, 22 January 2025.

²⁰⁹ See

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Jun_Sept2024_Special_Brief.pdf;

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_Sep2024_Apr2025_Special_Snapshot.pdf;

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_FRC_Alert_Gaza_Nov2024.pdf.

²¹⁰ Outside of the reporting period, in August 2025, famine was confirmed in Gaza Governorate. The severity of conditions in North Gaza were found to be similar or worse than in Gaza Governorate. However, limited data prevented its classification. See:

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Review_Committee_Report_Gaza_Aug2025.pdf ; <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165702>.

²¹¹ See also OHCHR "Gaza six-month update report"

Palestinian civilians in a context where telecommunications systems were severely limited.²¹² Complying with the orders further required a good understanding of geolocation and of the borders of the specific blocks covered by each order. For others, financial and family circumstances rendered displacement unfeasible.

86. As Israeli soldiers enforced the displacement of the population from North Gaza, they separated men and teenage boys from women and other children. Other Palestinians were detained at checkpoints through which displaced persons were forced to pass. In both cases, men and boys were placed in queues in front of cameras for screening, and either detained or ordered to go south.²¹³ On 24 October 2024 alone, the Israeli military claimed to have detained over 200 Palestinians in North Gaza.²¹⁴ While most detainees were older boys and men, women and girls were also detained. Among those detained, men and boys reported being subjected to torture and ill-treatment during their detention, while OHCHR also holds serious concerns regarding cases of enforced disappearance in the context of Israeli detention.
87. Between 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025, the Israeli military attacked displaced Palestinians moving south as well as shelters for IDPs, creating a pervasive environment of insecurity and terror that likely contributed to further displacement. OHCHR monitoring confirmed that the Israeli military shot at IDPs, seemingly randomly, and that many corpses were present along the route leading south from North Gaza. During this period, OHCHR recorded 32 Israeli military attacks on schools serving as IDP shelters in North Gaza, reportedly resulting in the killing of 107 Palestinians, including at least 6 children and 5 women. The Israeli military claimed that some of the schools were used as “command and control centres” by Palestinian armed groups, but did not provide information to substantiate these allegations. In some cases, the Israeli military reportedly ordered the evacuation of the schools before attacking them. In one case, on 20 October 2024, in Jabalya Camp, the Israeli military shelled a school after IDPs refused to evacuate. OHCHR has verified the killing of five of the individuals inside (one boy, one woman and three men) and gathered information of two additional deaths in the shelling. OHCHR also collected reports of the Israeli military burning schools after forcing IDPs to evacuate.
88. Taken together, the conduct of the Israeli military in North Gaza between 6 October 2024 and 19 January 2025 was a key factor in the displacement of at least 80 percent of the governorate’s population,²¹⁵ in a manner that raises serious concerns as to whether it would render displacement permanent, in violation of international law. Indeed, a combination of an intense siege of Palestinian localities, the obstruction of the humanitarian aid, the widespread and routine destruction of housing and infrastructure, and attacks on civilians and civilian objects, rendered nearly all of North Gaza effectively

²¹² During the reporting period, telecommunication services were suspended multiple times in North Gaza. On 19 October 2024, the national telecommunication company announced a complete halt of internet services in North Gaza due to Israeli military attacks. Similar incidents were reported on 5 November and 22 December 2024.

²¹³ Repeating violations previously reported in OHCHR “Detention Report.”

²¹⁴ <https://t.me/idfofficial/11687>

²¹⁵ As of 18 November 2024, more than 80 percent of North Gaza’s population was estimated to have been displaced since the Israeli military’s intensification of military operations and siege – see <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-148-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>.

unliveable. Events described above raises concerns of a series of war crimes, and may also constitute crimes against humanity, if committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.²¹⁶

III. Conduct by Palestinian armed groups

89. During the 7 and 8 October 2023 attacks on southern Israel, Palestinian armed groups, including Al Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, and Al Quds Brigades, the military wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, committed serious violations of international law on a wide scale, including attacks directed against civilian objects and civilians, killing and mistreatment of civilians, destruction of civilian objects, and taking of hostages, which amount to war crimes. If committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, further to an organizational policy, they may also constitute crimes against humanity.²¹⁷ More than 1,124 Israelis and foreign nationals were reportedly killed in the attacks, including 295 military personnel,²¹⁸ and 4,834 others injured,²¹⁹ and an estimated thousands of Palestinians were either killed or injured, including fighters and others who had broken through the perimeter fence. There are also accounts of members of Palestinian armed groups and other armed and unarmed Palestinians committing other serious violations including rape, sexual assault, and torture.²²⁰

a. Conduct of hostilities

90. Throughout the reporting period, Palestinian armed groups continued to fire indiscriminate projectiles into Israel from Gaza, causing harm to civilians and damage to civilian infrastructure, although their capacity to do so appeared to have eroded by late 2024. The Israeli military reported that, between 7 October 2023 and 7 October 2024, Palestinian groups in Gaza fired over 13,200 projectiles at Israel,²²¹ many of which were unguided or equipped with rudimentary guidance systems.²²² Using such projectiles violates the prohibition under international humanitarian law of indiscriminate attacks and the use of weapons that are by nature indiscriminate. Indiscriminate attacks are prohibited by international humanitarian law and, as serious violations thereof, constitute war crimes.²²³

²¹⁶ Rome Statute, art. 7 (1).

²¹⁷ See for example, [A/HRC/56/26](#), paras. 8-33.

²¹⁸ <https://www.idf.il/59780?page=1>

²¹⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/the-israel-we-knew-died-on-october-7-the-new-nation-will-be-scarred-for-generations/>

²²⁰ See for example [A/HRC/56/26](#), paras 24-30.

²²¹ See <https://www.timesofisrael.com/a-year-of-war-idf-data-shows-726-troops-killed-over-26000-rockets-fired-at-israel/>.

²²² See also the conference room paper containing the detailed findings of the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1, para. 97, available at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g15/132/95/pdf/g1513295.pdf>.

²²³ ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rules 11, 12, 71 and 156; and Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), art. 85 (3) (b). See [A/HRC/58/28](#), para. 27; OHCHR, "Indiscriminate Attacks report", pp. 11-12.

91. Throughout the reporting period, there were ongoing allegations that Palestinian armed groups intentionally co-located military objectives and civilians with the specific intent of trying to prevent the targeting of those military objectives, exposing civilians to high risks of harm and damage from the hostilities.²²⁴ Such intentional co-location, as well as failure to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians against the effects of attacks, would represent serious breaches of international humanitarian law.²²⁵

b. Taking and holding of hostages

92. In the context of the attacks on 7 October 2023, Palestinian armed groups took, captured and abducted 251 Israeli and foreign nationals. While Palestinian armed groups had in the past taken hostages, and were still holding two Israelis and the bodies of two others before the 7 October attacks,²²⁶ the capture and abduction of such a large number of persons was unprecedented.

93. According to information collected by OHCHR, among the 251 people taken were 219 civilians — 63 women, 120 men, 22 girls and 14 boys; and 26 Israeli soldiers — 7 women and 19 men; while the precise status of a further 6 persons as a matter of international humanitarian law, at the time when they were taken, remained unclear.²²⁷ The largest number of civilians, including many women, children, and older people, were abducted during attacks by Palestinian armed groups on Israeli kibbutzim²²⁸ near Gaza, including Kfar Aza, Be'eri,²²⁹ and Nir Oz, and from an open-air music festival (known as Nova music festival) near Kibbutz Re'im in southern Israel.²³⁰ Most of the soldiers, including women soldiers, were captured from military bases, including Erez and Nahal Oz military bases at the Gaza fence.²³¹

94. While most of the hostages were Israeli nationals, including several members of the same families, 35 were foreign nationals, including 31 Thai (including 1 woman), 1 Filipino, 1 Nepalese, 1 Tanzanian and 1 Franco-Mexican national. Of the foreign nationals abducted,

²²⁴ OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", para. 3.

²²⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, rules 22, 23 and 97.

²²⁶ Three men held since 2014, including two of them dead, and one man since 2015. See for example A/HRC/52/75 para 16 and [" Hamas finally acknowledges holding 4 Israelis, including bodies of 2 soldiers "](#), The Times of Israel, 1 April 2026. See also [" Gilad Shalit met hostages' families, shared how he endured Hamas captivity - report "](#), The Times of Israel, 16 January 2024.

²²⁷ The status of the six is unclear because they were described as performing security functions at either the Nova Music Festival, or in a kibbutz, or as police. One of them has been described as a soldier off duty, and one as a kibbutz security guard, who was posthumously ranked as fallen soldier. Some Israeli civilians reportedly directly participated in fighting against Palestinian armed groups and were captured during that fighting. For example, in July 2024, IDF announced that after the enemy gained control of the Kibbutz Be'eri from 09:00 to 13:30 on 7 October, "civilian rapid response team members" and residents of Kibbutz Be'eri continued to fight, stabilizing a defensive line to halt the onslaught on the kibbutz. See [idfanc.activetrail.biz/ANC1107202410293855546](#); and [" The next 24: These are the remaining hostages presumed alive in Gaza "](#), The Times of Israel, 7 March 2025.

²²⁸ An Israeli agricultural community.

²²⁹ For example, at least 32 civilians were abducted from Be'eri. See [idfanc.activetrail.biz/ANC1107202410293855546](#).

²³⁰ <https://www.ajc.org/news/freed-israeli-hostages-what-they-endured-in-captivity-and-how-they-survived>.

²³¹ Ibid.

some were employed in Israel, primarily as agricultural workers,²³² while one was a tourist and abducted from the Nova music festival.²³³ A significant number of the Israeli citizens had other citizenships in addition to Israeli, including, among others, American, Argentinian, British, German, French, Mexican and Russian.²³⁴

95. Between 7 and 8 October 2023, Al Qassam Brigades released six statements, claiming the attack on southern Israel, the killing of Israeli soldiers, and the advance of its fighters.²³⁵ On 9 October 2023, Al Qassam Brigades officially announced the capture of “a very large number of enemy soldiers” during the attack on southern Israel, and their transfer to the “Brigades’ detention centres”.²³⁶ Al Qassam Brigades warned that the hostages were exposed to the same danger as the people of Gaza as a result of the “enemy attacks on Gaza”, and that some of them were killed in these attacks.²³⁷ Al Qassam Brigades vowed not to negotiate a “prisoners-exchange deal” under fire, stressing that there was “a price” to be paid for the release of these soldiers, and that the “Zionist pressure and threat” [military action] would not succeed in securing their release.²³⁸ Hours later on 9 October, they admitted to holding civilians, threatening to execute them and broadcast executions in “audio and photo”, if the “occupation’s crimes against civilians, and targeting of our innocent people in their homes without prior warning” continued.²³⁹ Hamas did not follow through on this threat of mass murder, although there are serious allegations, as outlined below, that some hostages were killed by their guards.
96. The political wing of Hamas appeared to align with the demands from the military wing, with Ismail Haniyah, then head of Hamas’ Political Bureau, pledging on 10 October 2023 not to discuss the file of “prisoners” before the end of the “battle”.²⁴⁰ Over the following months, Hamas maintained this position, conditioning the release of hostages on the full withdrawal of the Israeli military from Gaza, and an end of the “Israeli military’s aggression on Gaza”, among other demands.²⁴¹
97. Throughout the reporting period, the Al Qassam Brigades of Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups continued holding hostages and the bodies of deceased hostages as ‘bargaining chips’, which is a serious violation of international humanitarian law. The ICRC was not allowed to visit the hostages held in Gaza.²⁴²

²³² “Why were so many Thai farmers among the hostages held by Hamas?”, AP News, 9 February 2025

²³³ “Foreigners from across the globe killed, missing or abducted in Hamas massacre”, The Times of Israel, 10 October 2023

²³⁴ <https://www.ajc.org/news/what-is-known-about-israeli-hostages-taken-by-hamas>; <https://www.ajc.org/news/freed-israeli-hostages-what-they-endured-in-captivity-and-how-they-survived>.

²³⁵ Military Report No. (1), Military Report No: (2), Military Report No: (3), Military Report No (4), Military Report No 5, Military Report No 6.

²³⁶ <https://x.com/i/status/1711467365966168400>

²³⁷ <https://x.com/i/status/1711467365966168400>

²³⁸ <https://x.com/i/status/1711467365966168400>

²³⁹ <https://shorturl.at/GlcOW>

²⁴⁰ <https://shorturl.at/RBypH>.

²⁴¹ For example, “صريح صحفي حول المرونة التي أبدتها حماس بهدف الوصول إلى اتفاق وقف العدوان”, on 6 March 2024, available at <https://almoqawma.com/2024/03/06/308/>, See also “تصريح صحفي حول مواقف الحركة تجاه مقترحات وقف العدوان”, on 12 June 2024, available at <https://almoqawma.com/2024/06/13/2338/>. See also “تصريح صحفي رداً على تصريحات نتنياهو التي أكد فيها استمراره في حرب الإبادة”, on 24 June 2024, available at <https://almoqawma.com/2024/06/24/2471/>.

²⁴² <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/FAQ-icrc-work-hostages-gaza>

98. Between 20 October 2023 and 18 March 2025,²⁴³ a total of 147 hostages were freed or released, including 135 released in the context of ceasefire arrangements (105 during the 2023 ceasefire, and 30 during the January-March 2025 ceasefire — including 106 Israelis, of whom 53 were women and 33 children); 4 were released on humanitarian grounds; and 8 were freed in rescue operations. An Israeli-American citizen was released on 12 May 2025, following direct negotiations between Hamas and the United States.²⁴⁴
99. During the reporting period, the bodies of 41 hostages (including one foreign national) were retrieved from Gaza by the Israeli military, including one Israeli soldier who was killed in 2014 and whose body had been held in Gaza since then; and another eight were returned by Palestinian armed groups in the context of the ceasefire in January-March 2025.²⁴⁵ In total, and aside from the bodies of the two Israeli soldiers killed in 2014, Palestinian armed groups had held 85 bodies subsequent to the 7 October attacks — 79 Israelis (including at least 9 dual nationals) and 6 foreign nationals. They had been killed either on 7 October or while in captivity,²⁴⁶ including six who appeared to have been shot shortly before Israeli forces had reached them, raising concerns of wilful killing, a war crime.
100. On 12 August 2024, Al Qassam Brigades acknowledged that their fighters, guarding hostages, had killed one hostage and seriously injured two others in two different incidents, without providing further details.²⁴⁷ On 1 September 2024, the Israeli military announced the recovery of the bodies of six Israeli hostages (four men, and two women) from a tunnel in Rafah, southern Gaza.²⁴⁸ The Israeli military stated that the six were “brutally murdered” by Hamas,²⁴⁹ with a subsequent military investigation noting that the bodies bore signs of gunshot wounds and concluding that “IDF’s ground activities in the area, although gradual and cautious, had a circumstantial influence” on their captors’ decision to kill them.²⁵⁰ While Hamas denied responsibility, and blamed the Israeli military for their deaths, on 2 September the Al Qassam Brigades announced that new instructions had been issued to guards in charge of the hostages about “how to deal with

²⁴³ On 18 March 2025, the Israeli military resumed its attacks on Gaza and the January 2025 ceasefire collapsed.

²⁴⁴ See for example, “[Edan Alexander, last living Israeli-American hostage, freed by Hamas](#)”, AP News, 13 May 2025.

²⁴⁵ Outside of the reporting period, another ten bodies were retrieved by the Israeli army, between June and August 2025. Further to October 2025 ceasefire agreement, all but one of the 28 bodies then remaining (including the body of the other Israeli soldier killed in Gaza in 2014 and kept since then) were returned by the Palestinians armed groups as of 18 December 2025, with the last remaining body subsequently recovered by Israeli forces on 26 January 2026.

²⁴⁶ Three hostages were mistakenly killed by Israeli forces in Gaza after escaping from their captors.

²⁴⁷ Hamas reportedly launched investigations into the incident. “[Hamas blames Israel's 'massacres' after guards kill Israeli captive and wound two](#)”, Middle East Eye, 12 August 2024.

²⁴⁸ OHCHR has written to the government of Israel requesting further information regarding this case but has not received a response.

²⁴⁹ See “[Bodies of 6 hostages, murdered by Hamas just days ago, found in Rafah-IDF](#)”, *The Times of Israel*, 1 September 2024.

²⁵⁰ <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/december24-pr/summary-of-the-idf-investigation-of-6-hostages-murdered-by-hamas-in-a-tunnel-in-rafah/>

them” if the Israeli military approached their place of captivity,²⁵¹ raising further concerns about instructions to kill or otherwise harm.

101. Other hostages were reportedly killed during Israeli military operations in Gaza. For example, on 13 October 2023, Al Qassam Brigades announced the deaths of 13 hostages, including foreign nationals, as due to intense Israeli military bombardment on North Gaza “over the past 24 hours”.²⁵² According to media reports, at least 20 died as a result of Israeli military operations,²⁵³ while Hamas claimed on 2 December 2024 that the Israeli military had killed 33 hostages in the context of various attacks on Gaza between 9 October 2023 and 21 November 2024.²⁵⁴ In some cases, the IDF recognized that hostages may have died as a result of the strikes.²⁵⁵ On 15 December 2023, the Israeli military killed three escaped hostages waving a white flag in the Ash Shuja’iyeh area, eastern Gaza City.²⁵⁶
102. According to the testimonies shared with media or in public addresses, former hostages described varying treatment and conditions while in captivity. These generally deteriorated over time, while varying depending on the locations in which they were held or the behaviour of their captors. Hostages released in 2023 appeared overall to be in better physical condition than those released later.
103. Generally, former hostages indicated having experienced violence and extremely harsh conditions during their captivity,²⁵⁷ although some noted that, once in Gaza, they had not been beaten or otherwise mistreated.²⁵⁸ Released hostages recounted the specific circumstances of their captivity, either in private Palestinian homes — often shared with Palestinian families and exposed to the repeated threat of Israeli airstrikes²⁵⁹ — or in subterranean tunnels where air quality and ventilation was poor and natural light was scarce or altogether non-existent.²⁶⁰ A former hostage reported being held 40 metres below ground level, where she experienced difficulty breathing.²⁶¹ Several hostages

²⁵¹ “[Hamas says hostage guards in Gaza have been operating under new instructions](#)”, Reuters, 3 September 2024.

²⁵² <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28504>

²⁵³ “[Actions by Israel's Army Endangered the Lives of at Least 54 Gaza Hostages](#)”, Haaretz, 30 May 2025

²⁵⁴ <https://t.me/hamza20300/315114>

²⁵⁵ <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/september-24-pr/summary-of-the-investigation-into-the-circumstances-of-the-deaths-of-the-hostages/>

²⁵⁶ <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/december-23-pr/the-idf-mistakenly-identified-3-israeli-hostages-as-a-threat-and-fired-toward-them-killing-them-as-a-result/>;

<https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-israel-at-war/december-23-pr/the-findings-of-the-investigation-into-the-circumstances-of-the-deaths-of-3-hostages-from-idf-fire/>. See also OHCHR, “Six-month update report on the human rights situation in Gaza: 1 November 2023 to 30 April 2024”, para. 27.

²⁵⁷ OHCHR, “Detention report”, paras. 51-53.

²⁵⁸ “[I went through hell, says elderly hostage released by Hamas](#)”, BBC, 24 October 2023; “[One Israeli Hostage’s Unusual Experience in Gaza](#)”, The Atlantic, 1 August 2024; “[Freed Israeli captive Noa Argamani says she was wounded by Israel, not Hamas](#)”, Middle East Eye, 23 August 2024.

²⁵⁹ OHCHR “Indiscriminate Attacks report”; “[Rescued Israeli Hostage Recounts Eight Months in Hamas Captivity](#)”, Amanpour and Company, 12 July 2024; “[Freed Israeli captive Noa Argamani says she was wounded by Israel, not Hamas](#)”, Middle East Eye, 23 August 2024; “[‘The hostages weren’t our top priority’: How Israel’s bombing frenzy endangered captives in Gaza.](#)”, 972+ Magazine, 17 December 2023.

²⁶⁰ “[I Am a Former Hamas Hostage. Here’s My Message to Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu](#)”, Time Magazine, 9 May 2025.

²⁶¹ See “[‘Civilians took me. They sold me to Hamas - Nili Margalit, freed hostage \(Part 2\)’](#)”, StandWithUs, 9 January 2024.

spoke of being completely cut off from the outside world for the full duration of captivity. Several hostages indicated that there was no privacy, and guards watched over captives at all times.²⁶²

104. The provision of food and water appeared to vary depending on the specific circumstances of captivity. According to the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, its Health Team documented “malnutrition, up to 50% loss in body weight, loss of muscle mass, impaired nervous system function, weakened immune system, and absence of critical physiological reserves, especially during the winter season” as a result of starvation.²⁶³
105. Some released hostages reported that the provision of food and water declined over time, with one noting her group “understood that [their captors] didn’t have anything. It wasn’t that they were trying to deprive us, there just wasn’t anything and that was the situation.”²⁶⁴ Others noted that the provision of food had improved after some initial months of constant displacement,²⁶⁵ while others reported being deprived early on. Several hostages reported receiving no more than a single pita bread per day, while others estimated an intake of 300 calories per day.²⁶⁶ One hostage said there were days where they were not allowed to drink water, while another reported that he and others with him resorted to drinking contaminated water from toilets due to extreme thirst.²⁶⁷
106. Some hostages considered the deprivation of food as a form of collective punishment, suggesting it was a retaliatory measure, linked to the treatment of Palestinians in Israeli detention.²⁶⁸ Another hostage noted the impact of the blockade of Gaza, stating that, “when humanitarian aid didn’t come in, you could feel it”.²⁶⁹
107. Several hostages shared with media detailed accounts of torture and other ill-treatment, both at the time of their capture and during subsequent detention. This included several, including women, who were reportedly shot at and others who were

²⁶² [“In a Tel Aviv hospital, returned hostages readjust to life out of captivity”](#), Le Monde, 27 June 2024

²⁶³ “Immediate risk of death for the hostages: 668 days of deliberate starvation in captivity”, Medical report 4 August 2025, Health Team, Hostages and Missing Families Forum.

²⁶⁴ [“‘Our bodies are okay, our souls aren’t,’ released hostage tells ‘Post’”](#), The Jerusalem Post, 28 March 2024. See also similar accounts in [“Little food, a beating and lice: What freed Israeli hostages are saying about being held by Hamas”](#), CNN, 20 December 2023.

²⁶⁵ [“In a Tel Aviv hospital, returned hostages readjust to life out of captivity”](#), Le Monde, 27 June 2024

²⁶⁶ [“A couple of dates and half a pita: Hostages are being starved, their health may be irreversibly harmed”](#), Ynet, 26 May 2024.

²⁶⁷ [“Noa Argamani s’exprime devant de hauts diplomates du G7 au Japon”](#), The Times of Israel, 21 August 2024; [“Freed Hostage Tal Shoham Urges UN Community in Vienna to Help Release Hostages”](#), Haaretz, April 4, 2025.

²⁶⁸ [“U.K.’s PM Meets Released Hostage Eli Sharabi, Calls His Experience in Gaza ‘Inhuman’”](#), Haaretz, March 7, 2025,.

²⁶⁹ [“‘Netanyahu Doesn’t Want You’: Freed Israeli Hostage Recounts Torments of Gaza Captivity”](#), Haaretz, 8 March 2025. Testimonies from former hostages and videos of two hostages then still in captivity published by Al Quds Brigades and Al Qassam Brigades in July and August 2025 also pointed to possible starvation as a means of torture and involving immediate threats to the lives of the two hostages appearing in the videos, see: [“Freed Hostage Eliya Cohen Recounts Humiliation, Starvation and Abuse in Hamas Captivity”](#), Haaretz, 2 April 2025; [“Family releases second Hamas propaganda clip of hostage Evyatar David, forced to dig own grave”](#), Ynet, 2 August 2025 and “Medical report: Immediate Risk of Death for the Hostages, 668 days of deliberate starvation in captivity”, Health Team of the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, 4 August 2025.

beaten, sometimes daily, or otherwise subjected to threats and intimidation.²⁷⁰ One hostage reported that his captors threatened to cut off his hands, feet and head.²⁷¹ Another reported witnessing an Israeli soldier also captured on 7 October 2023 and subsequently held hostage, being burned, electrocuted, and beaten during interrogation.²⁷² Yet another reported being struck with a metal rod and having chemicals sprayed into his eyes.²⁷³

108. Some hostages were kept for prolonged periods in cramped, overcrowded spaces. One captive recounted being held in a cage inside a tunnel.²⁷⁴ Hostages were routinely restrained with their hands tied behind their backs, ankles shackled, and heads covered with plastic bags.²⁷⁵ Some reported remaining in such conditions for the full duration of their captivity.²⁷⁶
109. Several hostages reported enduring prolonged periods of solitary confinement, with one held in full isolation for six-and-a-half months.²⁷⁷ Captors reportedly used tactics designed to erode hostages' mental resilience, such as disrupting their sense of time by keeping them confined in darkness.²⁷⁸ One hostage, held for 482 days, reportedly considered suicide under the strain of captivity.²⁷⁹ Captors reportedly told hostages they had boobytrapped houses with explosives to keep them in fear and deter rescue efforts by the Israeli military.²⁸⁰ The Hostages and Missing Families Forum informed OHCHR that child hostages had been forced to watch footage of the 7 October attacks, including scenes of mutilation.
110. Some released hostages reported experiencing or witnessing sexual violence — a form of gender-based violence. Several released hostages spoke about fearing sexual violence during captivity, or witnessing acts of sexual violence, including one released hostage who

²⁷⁰ [“Filipino hostage of Hamas bares details of capture, captivity”](#), ANC, 19 December 2023; also [“‘I tried to accept death’: Freed hostage recounts abduction, captivity and release”](#), The Times of Israel, April 24, 2025.

²⁷¹ [“Filipino hostage of Hamas bares details of capture, captivity”](#), ANC, 19 December 2023.

²⁷² [“Freed Hostage: ‘I Was Held in a Tunnel With Captive Soldier Matan Angrest, They’re Torturing Him,’”](#) Haaretz, 26 April 2025.

²⁷³ [“Freed Hostage Omer Wenkert Says Captors Starved Him When IDF Invaded Rafah,”](#) Haaretz, 21 February 2025.

²⁷⁴ [“Freed Hostage: ‘I Was Held in a Tunnel With Captive Soldier Matan Angrest, They’re Torturing Him,’”](#) Haaretz, 26 April 2025; [“Freed Hostage Eliya Cohen Recounts Humiliation, Starvation and Abuse in Hamas Captivity”](#), Haaretz, 2 April 2025.

²⁷⁵ [“‘They Tortured Us for Fun’: Released Israeli Hostage Tells TIME About the Threats and Abuse in Gaza Captivity”](#) Haaretz, 10 May 2025; [“Freed Hostage Tal Shoham Urges UN Community in Vienna to Help Release Hostages”](#), Haaretz, 4 April 2025.

²⁷⁶ [“Bound, gagged and starved: Released hostages report severe mistreatment by captors”](#), The Times of Israel, 10 February 2025; also [“Choking, Hanging, Starvation: Hostages Reportedly Faced Severe Torture in Hamas Captivity”](#), Haaretz, 9 February 2025.

²⁷⁷ [“Freed Hostage Omer Wenkert Says Captors Starved Him When IDF Invaded Rafah,”](#) Haaretz, 21 February 2025.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ [“‘Being a Woman Alone Is Different’: Arbel Yehoud Recounts Gaza Captivity, Fear as Fighting Raged Nearby”](#), Haaretz, 29 April 2025.

²⁸⁰ [“Freed Hostage: Hamas Rigged Houses With Explosives to Block Rescue Attempts”](#), Haaretz, 1 June 2025.

reported that younger women hostages were made to shower together as male guards observed.²⁸¹

111. At least three women hostages have spoken publicly about directly experiencing sexual violence during captivity in Gaza.²⁸² One reported being sexually molested by two armed men during transit to Gaza. She lost consciousness and awoke with her shirt pulled up, pants down, and seven armed men standing over her.²⁸³ Another spoke about being routinely touched by a guard on intimate parts of her body.²⁸⁴ Another spoke publicly about experiencing sexual violence during captivity in Gaza. She reported being held in captivity alone, chained to a bed where her captor would sit and touch her under her shirt, and forced in one instance to commit a sexual act for her captor, at gunpoint.²⁸⁵ In March 2024, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict reported finding "clear and convincing information" that sexual violence, including rape, had been committed against some hostages in Gaza.²⁸⁶
112. Access to medical care and essential medications was reportedly restricted, affecting in particular hostages with prior medical conditions (including Parkinson's disease; Alzheimer's syndrome; Addison's disease; kidney disease; epilepsy; diabetes; cancer; autism; depression).²⁸⁷ One captive reported having her breathing apparatus taken away from her upon capture.²⁸⁸ Cramped and unsanitary detention conditions, coupled with limited access to clean water and adequate food, significantly increased the risk of disease,²⁸⁹ including communicable diseases.²⁹⁰ One hostage developed a leg infection that left him unable to walk for several weeks.²⁹¹ Another recounted having a bullet removed without any anaesthesia.²⁹² In contrast, one hostage underwent professional

²⁸¹ ["New testimony reveals grim details of Hamas sexual violence against hostages"](#), The Jewish Chronicle, 13 February 2024; ["Freed hostage Aviva Siegel recounts Hamas's sexual abuse, violence toward captives"](#), The Times of Israel, 17 February 2024.

²⁸² ["Every day like 'Russian roulette': Freed hostages share accounts of Hamas captivity"](#), The Times of Israel, 11 December 2023.

²⁸³ ["An Israeli Hostage Released From Gaza Campaigns for the Release of Others"](#), The New York Times, 25 March 2025; ["Released Israeli Hostage Recounts Captivity: 'I Woke Up in Gaza, Half-naked, Surrounded by Seven Terrorists'"](#), Haaretz, 25 March 2025.

²⁸⁴ ["Sexually assaulted, nearly killed in an airstrike: Rescued hostage Ori Megidish speaks"](#) The Times of Israel, 29 May 2025.

²⁸⁵ ["Israeli Hostage Says She Was Sexually Assaulted and Tortured in Gaza"](#), The New York Times, 26 March 2024, [Released hostage Amit Soussana recounts sexual assault at hands of Hamas captor](#), The Times of Israel, 26 March 2024.

²⁸⁶ https://news.un.org/en/sites/news.un.org/en/files/atoms/files/Mission_report_of_SRSG_SVC_to_Israel-oWB_29Jan_14_feb_2024.pdf, para. 71.

²⁸⁷ Medical reports, Health Team of the Hostages and Missing Families Forum.

²⁸⁸ ["Every Day Is Hell, It Reminded Me of the Holocaust': Freed Hostages Recount Time in Hamas Captivity"](#), Haaretz, 9 December 2023.

²⁸⁹ ["Released Israeli Hostage Recounts Captivity: 'I Woke Up in Gaza, Half-naked, Surrounded by Seven Terrorists'"](#) Haaretz, 15 March 2025.

["Reports: Newly freed hostages were abused, now suffer malnutrition, heart disorders"](#) The Times of Israel, 9 February 2025.

²⁹⁰ [The story of Meirav Tal in Hamas captivity \(Part 2\)](#), StandWithUs, 31 December 2023.

²⁹¹ ["Reports: Newly freed hostages were abused, now suffer malnutrition, heart disorders"](#) The Times of Israel, 9 February 2025.

²⁹² ["Freed Hostage Eliya Cohen Recounts Humiliation, Starvation and Abuse in Hamas Captivity"](#), Haaretz, 2 April 2025; ["Bound, gagged and starved: Released hostages report severe mistreatment by captors"](#), The Times of Israel, 10 February 2025.

surgery in Gaza for an arm fractured during her abduction on 7 October, although she also reported being denied post-operative medical care.²⁹³

113. Many of these acts may constitute torture or other forms of ill-treatment, which in the context of an armed conflict are a war crime. In addition, as previously reported, the holding of hostages for long durations in dire conditions in Gaza, including their confinement underground, may of itself amount to torture or other ill-treatment.²⁹⁴
114. Violations of the human rights of hostages also occurred during the releases and exchanges negotiated at different points during the reporting period. Some hostages were paraded before cameras in a degrading spectacle,²⁹⁵ some forced to speak publicly under duress surrounded by armed militants and banners with political slogans. Several Israeli hostages appeared severely malnourished, suggesting serious mistreatment and deprivation during their captivity.²⁹⁶
115. According to the ICRC Commentary on common Article 3, “hostage-taking can be defined as the seizure, detention or otherwise holding of a person (the hostage) accompanied by the threat to kill, injure or continue to detain that person in order to compel a third party to do or to abstain from doing any act as an explicit or implicit condition for the release, safety or well-being of the hostage.”²⁹⁷ Thus, hostage-taking requires both the seizing and detaining of a person, and the specific intention to use the continued detention and/or possible threat to the hostage’s safety as leverage to compel another party to behave in a certain way, which may include the release of other prisoners or hostages. The fact that Israelis, both civilian and military,²⁹⁸ and foreign civilian nationals were captured or abducted and held in Gaza, and that Hamas made demands related to their wellbeing and freedom contingent on the cessation of hostilities or the release of Palestinian detainees, indicates that their detention amounted to the holding of hostages in violation of international law.
116. Hostage-taking is expressly prohibited by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions as well as Geneva Convention IV, of which it constitutes a grave breach,²⁹⁹ and amounts to a war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts.³⁰⁰ Rape and other forms of sexual violence against protected persons constituting a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions are prohibited, and amount to war

²⁹³ “An Israeli hostage describes her time in captivity in searing detail”, The New York Times, 30 December 2023; “Israeli-French Captive Mia Schem’s Arm Was Operated on by a Surgeon, Not a Veterinarian”, Misbar, 24 July 2024.

²⁹⁴ OHCHR, “Detention report”, para. 68.

²⁹⁵ See for example, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/distressing-conditions-israeli-hostages-and-palestinian-detainees> and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-humane-treatment-and-immediate-release-israeli-hostages-and-palestinian-detainees>

²⁹⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/distressing-conditions-israeli-hostages-and-palestinian-detainees>

²⁹⁷ ICRC “Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. Commentary of 2020” para 686.

²⁹⁸ International law does not limit the practice of hostage-taking to the seizure of civilians. See ICRC Customary IHL Study, rule 96 and International Criminal Court, Elements of Crimes for articles 8(2)(a)(viii) and (c)(iii).

²⁹⁹ Geneva Convention IV, arts. 34 and 147.

³⁰⁰ Rome Statute, arts. 8(2)(a)(viii) and (c)(iii).

crimes.³⁰¹ Under international human rights law, which applies both inside and outside situations of armed conflict, hostage-taking constitutes an arbitrary deprivation of liberty and is thus unlawful.³⁰² The treatment of hostages during their captivity may also involve the violation of other human rights, including the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.³⁰³ According to the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, hostage-taking inevitably entails forms of physical and mental torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment affecting both those being held hostage as well as their families, as does enforced disappearance.³⁰⁴ All such allegations must be independently, effectively and transparently investigated.

IV. State of Palestine's practices affecting human rights

117. The reporting period witnessed the intensification of unlawful use of force by Palestinian security forces in the West Bank, including as part of multiple large-scale operations in Palestinian communities largely targeting Palestinians wanted by Israeli security forces. These operations increasingly involved the use of means and methods developed for warfare, such as airstrikes and shoulder-fired missiles. The most prominent operation was the so-called "Operation Protect the Homeland" carried out by Palestinian security forces in Jenin against armed Palestinians for six weeks from 5 December 2024, during which nine Palestinian residents, including three children and two women, and six Palestinian security forces personnel were killed, with dozens more injured. Despite the Palestinian authorities informing that investigations would be conducted into all killings during the operation, OHCHR was not aware of any of the findings or the status of investigations as of 31 May 2025. Both during this operation and other law enforcement activities, including arrest operations and policing of demonstrations, Palestinian security forces on multiple occasions utilized force that appeared unnecessary or disproportionate, which would render the killings unlawful and a violation of international human rights law.
118. OHCHR documented a pattern of arbitrary detention and torture and ill-treatment of detainees, including perceived opponents in the West Bank, by the Palestinian authorities. OHCHR gathered information on several male prisoners, including children, who continued to be detained by Palestinian security forces despite courts having ordered their release, constituting arbitrary detention. Furthermore, detention facilities were overcrowded and poorly ventilated, with detainees experiencing limited access to legal counsel, and children being detained alongside adults. Men and boys reported severe beatings and being subjected to prolonged placement in stress positions, threats and solitary confinement.
119. OHCHR also recorded routine intimidation, detention and ill-treatment by the Palestinian authorities of journalists, human rights defenders and other individuals

³⁰¹ Rome Statute, article 8(2)(b)(xxii) and Article 8(2) (e)(vi), Common Article 3, ICRC Customary IHL Study Rule 93.

³⁰² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 9.

³⁰³ Ibid., art. 7.

³⁰⁴ Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, [A/HRC/58/55](#) paras. 52, 63. See also OHCHR, "Detention report", para 68 with regard to hostages held in Gaza.

deemed critical of its rule, exacerbating the constriction of Palestinian civic space. Measures carried out by the Palestinian authorities included the interrogation and arrest of individuals posting on social media or engaged in peaceful demonstrations. On 1 January 2025, the authorities suspended Al Jazeera's broadcasting and operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory for "inciting content, misinformation, sedition and interference in Palestinian internal affairs", apparently in relation to its coverage of "Operation Protect the Homeland" in Jenin.³⁰⁵ These practices were incompatible with international standards protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which require that any restriction be lawful, necessary and proportionate. In practice, these actions contributed to a chilling effect on public discourse, deter legitimate scrutiny of governmental conduct, and exacerbated the constriction of Palestinian civic space already impacted by Israeli practices and restrictions.

Conclusion and recommendations

120. Palestinian armed groups committed serious violations on 7 October 2023, some of which amounted to war crimes and potentially other crimes under international law. Palestinian armed groups also continued to fire inherently indiscriminate weapons into Israel, causing harm to civilians and civilian objects. Throughout the reporting period such armed groups continued the holding of hostages, who reported torture and other ill-treatment, including through being held in inhumane conditions and experiences of sexual and other gender-based violence. Most hostages who died in Gaza died while held in secret detention, either killed by their captors or impacts of the conflict occurring around them, leaving their families distraught for news and confirmation of their fate.³⁰⁶ Some practices by Israeli authorities, as described in this report, also constituted or may amount to hostage-taking. Every person held as a hostage has gone through immense suffering and pain, both mental and physical, including prolonged fear and anxiety, as have their families. The High Commissioner condemns hostage-taking in all its forms and reiterates that the use of hostages or detainees as 'bargaining chips' cannot be tolerated, much less, normalized in any situation.
121. Throughout the reporting period, Israeli authorities intensified a pattern of severe violations of the rights of Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This included the Israeli military's repeated violation, on a broad scale, of the basic principles of international humanitarian law in Gaza, leading to tens of thousands of killings of Palestinian civilians, a large proportion of which appear unlawful. It has also directed attacks on civilian or protected objects, including healthcare and medical facilities, and attacks on civilians including journalists, civil defenders, health workers, humanitarian actors and police in a routine and repeated fashion,³⁰⁷ raising recurrent concerns of war crimes. Meanwhile, the use of unnecessary and disproportionate force in the West Bank led to hundreds of unlawful killings, in many cases also amounting to war crimes. In both Gaza and the West Bank, Israeli military and other security forces have forced

³⁰⁵ See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1158936>.

³⁰⁶ "Input for the Report on Hostage-Taking - Joint Submission of the IJL and the Hostages and Missing Families Forum to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment", December 2024.

³⁰⁷ A/HRC/58/28 paras. 21, 43, 46; OHCHR, "Gaza six-month update report", paras. 29-31.

displacement on a mass scale, in circumstances that violate international humanitarian law and, in many cases, amount to forcible transfer as well other war crimes. Meanwhile, the deliberate and unlawful destruction of wide swathes of Gaza, the emptying and destruction of large parts of refugee camps in northern West Bank, and an escalation in the imposition of systematic discriminatory movement restrictions on Palestinians, alongside the longstanding coercive environment, forced Palestinians from their homes with strong indications that Israel intends their displacement to be permanent, raising concerns over ethnic cleansing in Gaza and the West Bank.

122. These violations occurred within the broader context of Israel's consolidation of its continued unlawful presence in the Palestinian territory, the expansion of unlawful Israeli settlements across the West Bank, and more than 18-years of unlawful closure and blockade of Gaza, which was intensified during the reporting period. These led to starvation, deaths from malnutrition, and a confirmation of famine in parts of Gaza by the competent expert body.³⁰⁸ Food scarcity has gender-specific impacts, particularly on women and children, disproportionately impacting girl children, and pregnant and breastfeeding women. Additionally, limited food resources and restricted mobility increase the exposure of women and girls to gender-based violence, both in public spaces and within the private sphere, in strained households.
123. While the Israeli military sought the return of Israelis and others held hostage in Gaza, and while many attacks may have targeted military objectives, its conduct also involved egregious violations of international law, including total sieges and constant unlawful impediments to the entry and distribution of humanitarian assistance and other essentials of life to Gaza, mass forcible displacement amounting to forcible transfer in both Gaza and the West Bank, and extensive unlawful killings.³⁰⁹
124. Taken together, the repeated violations across the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the overwhelming failure to take steps to mitigate or end civilian harm and damage in Gaza, despite indisputable evidence of such harm since the early stages of the escalation, indicate a pattern of conduct directed towards a dual goal: first, collective punishment of Palestinians, including for violations committed by Palestinian armed groups; and second, the forced displacement, emptying and ethnic cleansing of large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which would allow further settlement and annexation. Incitement and derogatory and dehumanizing language targeted at Palestinians as a group from Israeli officials was also observed with no accountability. Many of the violations of international law by the Israeli military and other security forces against the civilian population, addressed in this report, were committed in a routine fashion. Many of these violations amounted to war crimes. They may also constitute crimes against humanity, if committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.³¹⁰ Israeli practices across Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, indicated a

³⁰⁸ <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/countries-in-focus-archive/issue-134/en/>

³⁰⁹ This pattern of conduct reflects the multiple commission of acts referred to in paragraph (1) article 7 of the Rome Statute, including murder, extermination, torture, forcible transfer, and other inhumane acts, and thus indicates the existence of an attack directed at the civilian population, see Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganga, Case No. ICC-01/04-02/06, Decision Pursuant to Article 61(7)(a) and (b) of the Rome Statute on the Charges of the Prosecutor Against Bosco Ntaganga (PTC), 9 June 2014, para 23.

³¹⁰ Rome Statute, art. 7 (1).

concerted and accelerating effort to consolidate annexation of large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.³¹¹

125. The cumulative effect of Israeli policies and practices described in this report has also been to consolidate the system of discrimination, oppression, domination and segregation³¹² facing Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, deepening the denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. The concerted nature of the Government of Israel's implementation of violent and discriminatory measures against Palestinians, together with steps to advance Israeli annexation of large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory,³¹³ raise concern that they would result in the permanent displacement of Palestinians from their lands and territory in Gaza and parts of the West Bank.
126. The Israeli military's choices of means and methods in its conduct of hostilities in Gaza and other measures continued to impose on Palestinians conditions of life increasingly incompatible with their continued existence in Gaza as a group.
127. It is essential that there is due reckoning for all these violations, through credible and impartial judicial bodies, and that, in the meantime, all relevant evidence is collected, preserved and investigated.
128. The High Commissioner for Human Rights calls upon Israel to:
 - a) Ensure compliance with and implement fully the provisional measures indicated by the International Court of Justice in its orders relating to the proceedings brought under the Genocide Convention, including taking all measures to prevent the commission of acts of genocide, ensuring with immediate effect that its military does not engage in acts of genocide, taking all measures to prevent and punish incitement to commit genocide, and taking all necessary and effective measures to ensure, without delay and in full cooperation with the United Nations, the unhindered provision at scale of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Gaza, noting also its obligations as an Occupying Power in this regard;
 - b) End its unlawful presence in the Palestinian territory as rapidly as possible and in a manner consistent with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 19 July 2024 and General Assembly resolution ES-10/24 of 18 September 2024;
 - c) Respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in the conduct of hostilities and in the context of occupation, and repress and ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including by investigating alleged violations and duly prosecuting alleged perpetrators where applicable;

³¹¹ <https://www.972mag.com/jabalia-camp-northern-gaza-siege/https://www.timesofisrael.com/22-ministers-and-lawmakers-demand-settlement-group-be-allowed-to-tour-northern-gaza/> <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-10-13/ty-article/.premium/israeli-defense-officials-govt-pushing-aside-hostage-deal-eyeing-gaza-annexation/00000192-8585-d988-a3ba-dde59a470000?fromLogin=success>; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/22-ministers-and-lawmakers-demand-settlement-group-be-allowed-to-tour-northern-gaza/>; <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/r1ztek3teg>

³¹² CERD/C/113/3, paras. 44 and 48; CERD/C/ISR/CO/17-19, paras. 21–23.

³¹³ [A/80/399](#).

- d) Ensure that any use of force outside of hostilities complies with international human rights law and standards, including by regulating the use of live ammunition, ensuring all its forces are trained on the standards for the use of potentially lethal force, ensuring that forces are adequately equipped and trained in the use of less-lethal weapons and that all law enforcement operations are planned and implemented to minimize the threat to life and refraining from using tactics and weaponry developed for warfare, and by adopting and enforcing appropriate disciplinary and penal sanctions for members of its forces who do not respect such regulations;
 - e) Promptly subject all incidents of use of force in law enforcement operations that result in death or injury to independent, impartial, transparent, thorough and effective criminal investigation; hold the individuals responsible for violations accountable; and provide appropriate redress to victims;
 - f) Ensure that all Palestinians displaced from and within Gaza and the West Bank are allowed to return to their homes as rapidly as possible by creating safe conditions for return, ensuring the provision of necessary infrastructure in places of return, and providing adequate alternatives to those whose homes have been rendered uninhabitable; ensure adequate standards of living, including the provision of adequate accommodation as long as people remain displaced; and refrain from any further unlawful displacement of Palestinians;
 - g) Take urgent measures to end all discriminatory and unlawful practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including ending all practices that amount to collective punishment, and to repeal all discriminatory legislation;
 - h) Ensure that the right of freedom of movement is guaranteed to all Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with any restrictions on freedom of movement strictly in accordance with international law;
 - i) Respect the rights of Palestinian children, including the right to life, and ensure that they are treated with due consideration for their age. They should be detained only as a measure of last resort, for the shortest appropriate period of time and fully in accordance with international human rights law;
 - j) Ensure that journalists, human rights defenders and civil society actors, including women's human rights defenders, are able to conduct their activities without harassment or being subjected to legal proceedings that are in violation of international human rights law, and that their rights are respected and protected;
 - k) Ensure that cases of killings, intimidation or attacks against journalists and civil society actors are thoroughly investigated, with a view to ensuring accountability;
 - l) Grant visas and full access to OHCHR international staff in order that they can carry out critical mandated work on human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
129. The High Commissioner also calls upon all duty bearers, including Israel, the State of Palestine and, as applicable, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups to:
- a) Prevent, repress and punish all violations and abuses of international human rights law, including unlawful killings; conduct prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and effective investigations into alleged violations and abuses by duty bearers and

private actors; and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable, including duly prosecuting alleged perpetrators where applicable, and ensuring victims are provided with redress;

- b) Immediately end all practices that may amount to arbitrary detention, hostage-taking and enforced disappearance as well as torture or other ill-treatment, and to immediately release all those arbitrarily detained;
 - c) Ensure that the rights to freedom of expression and association are respected and protected and that civil society actors can conduct their legitimate activities safely and freely;
130. The High Commissioner further calls upon Palestinian armed groups, as applicable, to:
- a) Cease firing indiscriminate projectiles; and
 - b) Refrain to the extent feasible from co-locating military objectives and civilians and civilian infrastructure, and comply fully with all other applicable obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law.
131. The High Commissioner further calls upon all parties to the conflict in Gaza to:
- a) Fully implement the ceasefire and take meaningful steps durably to end the conflict;
 - b) Refrain from directing attacks against Palestinian cultural property or using cultural and historic sites for military purposes and to take special care during hostilities to avoid damage or destruction to historic monuments and buildings dedicated to religion, art, science and education.
132. The High Commissioner also calls upon all States to:
- a) Exert their influence to prevent international law violations and crimes by all parties to the conflict in Gaza and uphold their obligation under international law to take action to prevent and punish atrocity crimes, including genocide;
 - b) Cease the sale, transfer and diversion of arms, munitions and other military equipment to Israel facilitating violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
 - c) Exercise extraterritorial and universal jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute crimes under international law in national courts, consistent with international standards, and cooperate with the International Criminal Court further to the Rome Statute, and encourage Israel to cooperate in good faith with the United Nations, including OHCHR, in line with the International Court of Justice's ruling of 22 October 2025;
 - d) Comply with obligations under international law to neither recognize as legal nor aid or assist the maintenance of the situation arising from the unlawful presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.