



Press Release

May 19th, 2021
Canberra, Australia

Israeli Assaults on Gaza Strip and Violations of Palestinian Human Rights

Israel continues to commit crimes against the Palestinian people, their land and holy sites. Israeli assaults on the Gaza Strip have already killed more than 60 children. Countless Palestinians have been injured, many buried in the rubble of their destroyed homes, and over 50,000 have fled in terror to shelter in UNRWA buildings.

Israel's attacks have also targeted vital infrastructure facilities, destroying at least 18 buildings, including a high-rise tower which hosted international media outlets, Gaza's only COVID-19 testing facility, as well as other health care centers and six hospitals. Residential buildings have also been targeted. So far, Israel's military aggression on Gaza has killed over 210 Palestinians, including 61 children, 36 women, and 16 elderly persons. Over half of the children killed were under 10 years old.

Hundreds of Palestinians in East Jerusalem are facing forcible evictions from their homes as part of Israel's ongoing illegal settlement policy. Meanwhile, occupation forces not only failed to prevent attacks and incitement against Palestinians by Israeli settlers, but protected the attackers. Not one extremist settler has been indicted for assaulting Palestinians, but at least 800 Palestinians have been arrested and 116 indicted in a clear example of blatant discrimination.

Violations by Israeli settlers and occupation forces continued in Al-Haram Al-Shareef and Al Aqsa Mosque. Worshippers have been harassed and violently attacked, and Israel has flagrantly disrespected Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, blocking Palestinians worshippers from accessing Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Church of Holy Sepulcher for worship, and violently storming Al-Aqsa Mosque during the Holy Month of Ramadan. During the forced displacement campaign in East Jerusalem and the raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque, Israeli occupation forces in the West Bank and East Jerusalem have killed 25 Palestinians and injured at least 5,000 more (including children) so far.

In response to Israel's escalating violations against the Palestinian people, Hamas began to launch rockets towards Israel. In retaliation, Israel launched a massive and deadly attack on Gaza. The Israeli response was disproportionate used excessive power in its attack on Gaza strip.

Dr Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN, wrote in a letter addressed to HE Mr Zhang Jun, President of the UN Security Council, "The priority right now must be to stop the killing and destruction. But, calls for a ceasefire that ignore the fact of Israel's impunity and that attempt to return to an unjust and untenable "status quo", whereby Israel is permitted to carry on with its illegal occupation and its persecution and oppression of Palestinians, wherever they may be, are unacceptable and will only consign our people to further oppression, misery and loss."

The international community must take urgent and effective steps against Israel's ongoing assaults and provide immediate international protection for the Palestinian people. The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific urges Australia to send a message of hope to the Palestinian people by recognizing the State of Palestine without further delay, in accordance with international law and relevant UN resolutions, and to increase its funding to UNRWA in order for the organization to continue providing its vital services to the Palestinian people in Gaza.

