



17 October 2023

Position Paper

Israeli Aggression against Gaza and the Palestinian People

- The Palestinian Government and His Excellency Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, have condemned the killing of civilians on both sides. Furthermore, it has been clarified that non-violence is the official Palestinian strategy for resistance against the Israeli occupation, and for pursuing the realisation of the national and political rights of the Palestinian people. These rights, foremostly the right to self-determination in statehood, will be achieved through political and legal processes.
- The military reprisal being carried out by the Israeli occupation against civilian targets in Gaza cannot be justified under any excuse. Israel has exceeded so-called “self-defence” and is inflicting collective punishment on the Palestinian civilian population of Gaza, in grave breach of international law. A complete siege has been imposed, with all electricity, food, water, fuel, and basic supplies cut off. Heavy Israeli bombardments have continued almost uninterrupted, reducing entire neighbourhoods and residential buildings to rubble. Israel’s military orders to forcefully transfer the civilian population of over 1.1 million out of northern Gaza constitutes a grave breach of the 4th Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute.
- The root causes and historical context of this current crisis cannot be ignored or undermined. For the past 75 years, Israel has only used force and the threat of force, persecution, collective punishment and reprisals, and apartheid to advance its land theft and colonization of Palestinian territory and deny the Palestinian people their fundamental rights. A core objective of these illegal policies and practices has been displacing and replacing the Palestinian people, in violation of their inalienable right to self-determination and other peremptory norms of international law. These policies and practices have continued unabated since the onset of the occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, particularly in the form of escalating illegal settlement expansion, mass imprisonment of Palestinians, Judaization measures in occupied Jerusalem, and the inhumane 16-year blockade on Gaza.
- This current grave situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is the direct result of the failure of the international community to hold Israel accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people, and its failure to implement the two-state solution or ensure the realisation of the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. The blanket declarations of solidarity with Israel offered by many states wilfully ignore the Palestinian lives and international laws being systematically trampled by Israel, including the principles of necessity, proportionality, and justification.





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- In light of the protests organised across Australia in solidarity with the Palestinian people in Gaza, the General Delegation of Palestine would like to clearly state that mutual respect, harmony, and cohesion among all components of Australian society are essential, particularly in these difficult times. Expressions of islamophobia and antisemitism are unacceptable and unjustifiable.
- We urgently call on the international community, including Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, to immediately begin work towards the following, in the short-term:
 1. De-escalate the situation; support calls for immediate ceasefire.
 2. Provide urgent humanitarian assistance to Gaza.
 3. Condemn in the strongest terms Israel's illegal evacuation order and forcible transfer of the civilian population from northern Gaza.
 4. Put pressure on the Israeli government to guarantee safe passage for repatriation of the Australian nationals trapped in the Gaza Strip.
- We further call on the international community, including Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, to begin working, in the long-term, on promoting an environment that is conducive for achieving a just, comprehensive, and durable peace between Israel and Palestine, based on international law and international legitimacy, United Nations resolutions, and the Arab Peace Initiative. This includes the implementation of a two-state solution, including the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic Palestinian state on 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and finding a just solution to the Palestinian refugee issue in accordance with UN Resolution 194, which affirms their right to return or/and to compensation.