



12 October 2023

## **Statement**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns, in the strongest terms, the crimes committed by the Israeli occupation against our people in the Gaza Strip. The brazen acts of mass-killing, wanton destruction, and state terror being committed by Israel, the occupying power, against the civilian Palestinian population are nothing less than genocidal. Israel is exploiting this war and the blanket endorsements of other countries to commit the most heinous crimes against innocent civilians under the pretext of self-defence, furthering its long-running objective of eradicating the Palestinian cause and deepening its denial of the just, legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination.

The Israeli state is implementing a vicious campaign of collective punishment against the civilian population it has held captive in Gaza for 16 years, now using starvation as a method of warfare and cutting off water, medicine, fuel, and other basic necessities, with the aim of inflicting as much human loss, suffering, and destruction as possible.

Until this moment, over 1,200 people in Gaza have been killed, including at least 325 children, and over 5,600 have been injured since Israel began its onslaught on 7 October. Entire families have been wiped out. Israeli airstrikes are deliberately targeting hospitals, refugee camps, schools, mosques, universities, and residential buildings, leaving more than 338,000 residents displaced from their homes. Meanwhile in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli occupation forces and armed settler militias are committing acts of violence and murder against defenceless Palestinian civilians, their lands, homes, properties, vehicles, and holy sites.

The Ministry renews its call for urgent international action to immediately halt this horrific war and to ensure access to basic human necessities for our people in Gaza, and reiterates its call for immediate international protection for the Palestinian people under occupation.

*For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific.*