



10 October 2023

Statement

Human Rights Watch: Israeli call to impose a complete siege on Gaza is “a call to commit a war crime”

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns in the strongest terms Israel's deliberate, punitive bombardment of residential buildings and homes, medical centres, mosques, and UNRWA schools, and the Israeli government's decision to cut off the basic necessities of innocent Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, preventing their access to water, electricity, food, medicine, and fuel. This is a flagrant violation of international and humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions, and Israel's obligations as an occupying state, which Human Rights Watch has described as “a call to commit a war crime.”

The Ministry further strongly condemns the boastful announcements of this unlawful decision made by a number of Israeli ministers, including the Israeli Minister of Defence, which reflect a state of total imbalance and blatant disregard for basic human rights principles. These heinous crimes are being carried out with the full endorsement of several countries, whose hasty declarations of solidarity with Israel in response to recent escalations are now being exploited to commit brutal massacres against innocent Palestinian civilians, including children, women, hospital patients, journalists, medical personnel, and emergency rescue teams.

The Ministry calls on the United Nations Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and all relevant parties to fulfill their responsibilities according to international humanitarian law by immediately intervening to lift all forms of collective punishment and stop this heinous aggression against innocent Palestinian civilians, while ensuring the access of essential supplies to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

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