



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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8 September–8 October 2025

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

**Joint written statement\* submitted by International  
Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial  
Discrimination (EAFORD), Association Ma'onah for Human  
Rights and Immigration, International-Lawyers.Org, Union  
of Arab Jurists, non-governmental organizations in special  
consultative status, International Educational Development,  
Inc., World Peace Council, non-governmental organizations  
on the roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 August 2025]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

## **The International Responsibility to Stop the Genocide in Gaza**

### Introduction

The human rights situation of Palestinians in Gaza has escalated to an unprecedented level, surpassing any other recent humanitarian crisis. It is with utmost concern and horror that the daily developments in the region are observed, as Israeli war crimes continue with complete impunity. As of August 2025, after nearly 22 months of sustained military assault, at least 60,000 Palestinians have been killed. Among them are more than 20,000 children, amounting to a daily average of 28 children killed – the size of one classroom a day, as UNICEF emphasized. Over 150,000 people have been injured, many with life-altering conditions. At the end of July 2025, the number of acutely malnourished children under the age of five reached 12,000, the highest ever recorded in Gaza.

The situation has further escalated following Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's announcement on 8th August 2025 that Israel will expand its military operation and permanently occupy Gaza City. This statement signals a continued aggression, but more concerning, the final phase of an ethnic cleansing campaign aimed at destroying the Palestinian presence in Gaza.

Despite mounting evidence, including formal warnings and findings by international legal bodies and United Nations mechanisms, the international community has so far failed to fulfill its obligations under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. We are no longer looking at a risk of genocide – we are witnessing its unfolding in real time.

### The Crime of Genocide: A Coordinated Campaign of Annihilation

The genocidal violence perpetrated by Israel in Gaza takes many forms: mass killing, displacement, destruction of vital infrastructure, denial of humanitarian aid, starvation, and sexual and reproductive violence. These acts are not isolated but constitute a coordinated strategy to destroy the Palestinian people in Gaza.

Already in its January 2024 Provisional Measures Order, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found it plausible that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. Although a final verdict might only come in 2027, the court's continued deliberation cannot be interpreted as a license for inaction. The mere fact that the case has not been dismissed already confirms the seriousness of the allegations and the legitimacy of the evidence. Further, in March 2025, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI) reported systemic attacks on Gaza's healthcare system, including reproductive and maternal facilities; acts intended to prevent births within the group, fulfilling one of the conditions listed in the Genocide Convention. The COI also documented the use of sexual and gender-based violence by Israeli forces as a weapon of war, deliberately deployed to oppress and humiliate Palestinians.

Since March 2025, Israel has imposed a near-total blockade on humanitarian aid. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), over 80% of Gaza's population is now classified under Phase 5 famine conditions, the most severe level of food insecurity. Gaza's Health Ministry recently confirmed at least 181 hunger-related deaths, though the actual number is believed to be far higher due to limited reporting capacity amid collapsed health infrastructure.

According to eyewitnesses and humanitarian workers, including staff in Khan Younis, Deir el-Balah, and Nuseirat, there is a sharp rise in gunshot injuries near food distribution points. This is directly tied to the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a U.S.-based organization backed by the Israeli government, which acts as a militarized food distribution scheme. Behind its façade of "delivering aid", it is part of the Israeli policy of using starvation as a

weapon. This highlights the deadly trap Palestinians now face: “a fatal choice between getting fed or getting shot.” The use of starvation as a method of warfare is explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law and constitutes a war crime and a method of genocide. The deliberate targeting of food systems, health facilities, and water infrastructure by Israeli forces, alongside the physical targeting of aid seekers, makes this not only a humanitarian catastrophe but a deliberate policy of extermination.

#### Legal and Political Inaction: International Complicity

Despite overwhelming evidence and ongoing atrocities, the international community remains paralyzed. No new binding resolutions have passed in the UN Security Council since June 2024’s S/RES/2735. Subsequent efforts have either failed to gain consensus, like the June 2025 vetoed draft, or fallen short due to the US veto. Instead, states with influence have offered symbolic gestures, flawed humanitarian aid deals, and ineffective airdrops; none of which meaningfully address the scale of the crime or prevent further atrocities.

While many trace the current wave of violence to the events of October 7, 2023, it is imperative to understand that the genocidal conditions in Gaza were long in the making. Israel’s 17-year blockade, routine aerial bombardments, economic strangulation, and decades of occupation and apartheid have laid the groundwork for this current phase of mass atrocity. As such, any meaningful response must not only halt the current genocide, but address its root causes: the occupation, the illegal blockade, the ongoing settler-colonial project, and the entrenched system of apartheid that governs Israeli policy toward Palestinians.

Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has condemned Israel’s declared plans to fully occupy Gaza, stating that it runs contrary to the ICJ’s directive that Israel must end its occupation. Furthermore, 38 UN Special Procedures experts have jointly issued a statement warning that we are “witnessing the annihilation of the Palestinian population in Gaza” and that states must act now. And yet, no binding actions have been taken. Aid convoys are blocked or bombed. Arms continue to flow. The siege deepens. What more evidence is needed? As noted by a coalition of seven leading genocide scholars in June 2025 – including two Israeli experts – the acts committed by Israel in Gaza meet the legal definition of genocide under international law. The international community’s continued inaction risks complicity, not just in rhetoric but in law.

#### The UN Genocide Convention: A Binding Obligation

Under the 1948 Genocide Convention, all state parties have an obligation to prevent and punish genocide, irrespective of whether the ICJ has issued a final ruling. The responsibility to act is triggered not by definitive proof, but by the risk of genocide: a threshold already met, if not exceeded, by numerous authoritative sources.

Despite this, several states continue to supply arms, intelligence, and diplomatic cover to Israel, undermining the Convention’s very purpose. These forms of assistance must be immediately suspended to prevent further crimes and to preserve the credibility of international law. Additionally, private military and security contractors operating in support of Israeli military activities must be subject to investigation and legal accountability under international and domestic law frameworks.

#### Conclusion

In summary, the information presented on the situation of the Palestinian people in Gaza leads us to a deeply alarming conclusion, horrifically pointing towards complete annihilation of the Palestinian people in Gaza. What is at stake is not only Palestinian life and sovereignty, but the integrity of the international legal system, the UN Charter, and the very meaning of “Never Again.” If the international community does not urgently intervene, we will bear witness to one of the worst crimes committed in modern history.

We are already in the final phase of this genocide. The world has failed before. It must not fail the Palestinians now.

We therefore urge the Human Rights Council and all relevant UN bodies to take the following actions:

1. Immediate and Permanent Ceasefire

All attacks on civilians must stop immediately. A permanent ceasefire must be declared and enforced.

2. Unhindered Humanitarian Access

Israel must lift its blockade on Gaza. All land crossings must be opened immediately, and unrestricted humanitarian aid must be delivered in line with international standards.

3. End All Complicity

States must halt all arms trade, logistical, financial, and intelligence support to Israel that enables the commission of international crimes. Private military and security companies must be investigated for aiding war crimes or genocide.

4. Accountability for Genocide

Israel must be held legally accountable for its violations of the 1948 Genocide Convention. Member states should support ongoing proceedings at the ICJ and ICC.

6. Address Root Causes

Any long-term solution must confront the root causes of violence, including the occupation, apartheid, and settler-colonialism. Justice, freedom, and self-determination for the Palestinian people must be central.

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Arab Lawyers Association-UK, Human Rights Defenders (HRD), Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Brussels Tribunal, Iraqi Committee for Human Rights (ICHR), Association of Humanitarian Lawyers (AHL), Association of Human Rights Defenders in Iraq (AHRD), Organization for Justice & Democracy in Iraq (OJDI), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.