STATE OF PALESTINE: Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice

OHCHR – State of Palestine

February 2025

REPORT OVERVIEW

- **Describes key developments in the human rights situation in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between 1 November 2023 and 31 October 2024.**
- **Analyses developments related to duty-bearers' obligations to ensure accountability and justice for violations of international law.**
- **Draws primarily on human rights monitoring conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).**

Key conclusions

1. The manner in which parties to the conflict in Gaza have conducted hostilities, especially Israel's choices of methods and means of warfare, has involved an **unprecedented disregard for international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL)** and raised **concerns over the commission of war crimes and other possible atrocity crimes.**
2. Multiple Israeli **military strikes and broader Israeli targeting practices evinced a lack of compliance with the fundamental principles of IHL**. Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Gaza continued to violate international law by holding and **mistreating hostages in Gaza and firing indiscriminate projectiles.**
3. Israel has issued repeated **orders leading to mass forced displacements** of Gaza's population, while serious concerns persist that Israel **deliberately inflicted starvation on Gaza's population**. Starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare constitutes a **war crime and potentially a crime against humanity**.
4. The West Bank saw the **intensification of discriminatory Israeli measures against Palestinians**, exacerbating the occupation's stifling impact on Palestinians.
5. Israeli security forces **operations in the West Bank were marked by the escalated use of unnecessary and disproportionate force** by Israel against Palestinians, including the unlawful use of methods and means developed for war fighting.
6. Basic **obligations to ensure accountability and remedies to victims were routinely flouted** by all duty-bearers.

IN FIGURES: THE ESCALATION OF HOSTILITIES IN GAZA

FATALITIES AND USE OF FORCE

- According to the Ministry of Health of the State of Palestine, during the reporting period:

at least **34,399**

Palestinians were killed in Gaza, the majority of them women and children

over **100,000**

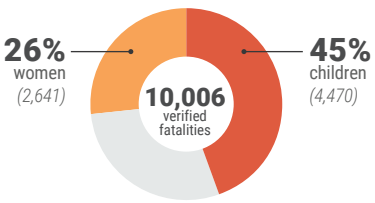
people have been injured since 7 October 2023

- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 31 October 2024:

10,006

fatalities were verified by OHCHR

including:



- Targeting of civilian officials and public buildings in reporting period:

800+	**police officials** had been killed	*source: Gaza's Media Governmental Office*
85	**Civil Defense personnel** killed	
9	**judges** killed	

- Since 7 October 2023, at least :

337 **humanitarian workers** were killed

- Israel fully or partially destroyed at least:

26	**police stations**
10	**Civil Defense stations**

DISPLACEMENT

- By 31 October 2024:

1.9 million

people have been **displaced**

equal to about
90% of Gaza's population

LEGAL ANALYSIS: ATROCITY CRIMES

- Israeli forces as well as Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups have **committed violations of IHL in Gaza, in many cases amounting to war crimes**, and other gross violations and abuses of IHRL.
- If committed **as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population**, further to a State or organizational policy, **such acts may constitute crimes against humanity**.
- If committed **with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group**, as such, they may also **constitute genocide**.

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IN FIGURES: THE SITUATION IN THE WEST BANK, INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM

FATALITIES AND USE OF FORCE

- During the reporting period:

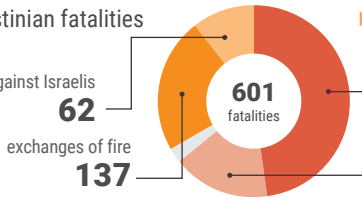
601 **Palestinians were killed** by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

including **124 children**, **11 women**, *and* **3 persons with a disability**

40 **Israelis were killed by Palestinians** in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, or inside Israel

4 **Palestinians (three men, one boy) were killed** by Palestinian Security Forces

- Fewer than **one third** of Palestinian fatalities were killed in the context of:



- The **majority** were allegedly killed:

- OHCHR verified:

172 **killings of Palestinians**

in **59 airstrikes**, *and* **25 other individuals by shelling**

including:



Six Israeli forces personnel were killed during these operations.

OTHER VIOLATIONS

DETENTION

- **Israel has escalated the mass detention of Palestinians**, with many reporting being routinely **subjected to torture or ill-treatment, including acts of sexual and other gender-based violence**.

- As of the end of October 2024, the Israeli Prison Service held **10,091 "security detainees," nearly twice as many as in September 2023.**

RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOMS OF EXPRESSION AND ASSOCIATION

- In Gaza, **174 Palestinian journalists and media workers, including 17 women, were killed in Israeli strikes** between 7 October 2023 and the end of the reporting period. *(source: Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate)*

- Israel reportedly **detained 125 Palestinian journalists in the West Bank and Gaza** between 7 October 2023 and 8 October 2024.

IN FIGURES: ACCOUNTABILITY

- In relation to the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, as of 3 August 2024, **74 criminal investigations had been launched**, and **over a thousand incidents referred to the Israeli military's fact-finding mechanism**, according to Israeli authorities.

- The **IDF announced the issuing of only one indictment** during the reporting period. Media later reported the issuing of **15 indictments against soldiers in the context of hostilities in Gaza**, although their dates are unknown. **None were reportedly related to incidents causing the death of Palestinians.**

- **OHCHR is unaware of any indictments related to killings** in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, during the reporting period.

- Between 1 January 2017 and 31 October 2024, **1,266 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces in the West Bank**. As far as OHCHR is aware, **only 121 of these deaths were under criminal investigation**, of which at least **33 were closed without further action**, with **only 5 resulting in indictments, 3 of which led to convictions**.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES:

- Immediately take steps to ensure full compliance with IHL in the conduct of hostilities.
- Ensure that all Palestinians displaced from and within Gaza are allowed to return to their homes as rapidly as possible.
- Ensure that the rules of engagement of its forces and their application in the West Bank are fully consistent with IHRL.
- Immediately end administrative detention and other forms of detention amounting to arbitrary detention.
- Bring to an end its unlawful presence in the OPT as rapidly as possible.

TO HAMAS AND OTHER PALESTINIAN ARMED GROUPS:

- Immediately and unconditionally release all hostages and ensure their humane treatment.
- Cease firing indiscriminate projectiles, refrain from co-locating military objectives and civilians and civilian infrastructure, and comply with other IHL obligations.

TO ALL STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

- Fulfil their obligations under international law to take steps to prevent and punish violations of international law by conflict parties, and not to enable violations.
- Cooperate with the ICC and exercise universal jurisdiction to try crimes under international law in national courts, consistent with international standards.

TO ALL DUTY-BEARERS IN THE OPT:

- Prevent, repress and punish all violations of IHL and violations and abuses of IHRL, investigate all serious violations and abuses, and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and victims provided with redress.
- Immediately end all practices that may amount to torture or other ill-treatment, including sexual violence.
- Ensure that the rights to freedom of expression and association are respected and protected.

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