



21 October 2023

Statement

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns in the strongest terms the devastating occupation war and the crimes of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Israel has been escalating for 14 consecutive days, aiming to destroy the Gaza Strip and displace its inhabitants by subjecting everything in Gaza to daily bombardments, including churches, mosques, hospitals, schools, civilian homes, educational, academic, and cultural institutions, and media outlets. At the forefront is the brutal mass murder of defenceless civilians.

Behind the smokescreen of their destruction in Gaza, the Israeli occupation authorities continue to deepen their military occupation, settlement, and apartheid regime in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel is tightening its grip and escalating its violations against the Palestinian people, imposing more collective punishment measures and inhumane constraints on their lives. This is evident in recent events in the Nour Shams refugee camp, which was subjected to a horrific and devastating campaign of destruction against its infrastructure and the basic needs of the Palestinian residents: 13 Palestinians were killed, and dozens of others were wounded. This is addition to the escalation of criminal land-theft, including the carving out of more illegal settlement roads, and intensifying encroachments and terrorism by settler militias against the Palestinian people, whether on the roads, in their vehicles, or inside of their homes. Due to the suffocating military siege imposed on the West Bank that has cut off all of its lifelines, Palestinian refugee camps, cities, and towns have been turned into something more like prisons or detention centres, and residents face extreme difficulty when trying to leave or enter. In search of safety from settler attacks, the indigenous Palestinian people are being forced to take alternative routes and detours that are rough, unpaved, and take much longer to reach their relatives, workplaces, universities, or healthcare centres.

The Ministry asserts that Israel, in targeting defenceless civilians with its relentless airstrikes, is simultaneously targeting international law, international legitimacy, and the basic principles of human rights. Amidst Israel's ongoing campaign to misinform and mislead the global community, attempting to demonise and vilify the Palestinian people and their just cause, Israel is explicitly threatening to commit more murders and escalate its ethnic cleansing and forced displacement of the Palestinian people. Under the guise of "self-defence", the Israeli occupation is furthering the implementation of its colonial expansionist plans and actively, intentionally undermining any prospects for a two-state solution. Israel is attempting to impose a new agenda on global priorities, evading its obligations to pursue peace and a just, durable solution to the conflict.

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

