

President of UN General Assembly

Mr. Dennis Francis

Copy: Member States of the UN General Assembly

United Nations

New York, NY 10017, USA

Subject: Urgent Appeal to Declare Israel's Atrocities in Gaza a Genocide in the Making

11 December 2023

Dear Mr. Francis,

Excellencies, Representatives of Member States of the UN General Assembly,

Greetings,

We, a group of human rights advocates and experts from across the Middle East and North Africa, are writing to you today to request your immediate action to recognize and declare Israel's atrocities during its military assault on Gaza as constituting a genocide in the making.

As you know, the number of Palestinian non-combatant civilians killed in Gaza in two months has surpassed 23,000, including more than 9,000 children and more than 4,600 women. This figure includes about 7,000 stuck under the rubble of their homes. In addition, about 46,000 people were wounded.

This unprecedented number of casualties in Gaza is taking place alongside vast and systematic destruction and targeting of almost all kinds of civilian infrastructure including schools, universities, hospitals, ambulances, mosques, churches, cultural centers, homes, residential high-rise buildings, shelters, media offices, private businesses, industrial facilities, agricultural lands and greenhouses, international organizations, and even United Nations' facilities and premises.

This is all in addition to forcibly displacing hundreds of thousands of Gazans and imposing a full siege on the entire enclave that includes cutting off all electricity and fuel supplies and banning the entry of food, water and medicine except to a fraction of a bare minimum.

What these acts together are rendering Gaza uninhabitable and constitute a clear genocide in the making aimed at destroying a group in part or whole; creating conditions that would bring about the group's collapse; and inflict serious physical or mental damage on the group.

There are clear and unquestionable features of Israel's genocidal action in Gaza:

- Mass killing,
- Forced displacement,
- Deliberate mass starvation,

- Destruction of vital infrastructure,
- Denial of life saving and urgent critical health care,
- Large volume of children killed,
- Exponentially growing genocidal speech of incitement to kill and dehumanize the Palestinian population in Gaza (and elsewhere).

As members of the United Nations General Assembly, you have the duty to uphold the UN Charter and fulfill its mandate through the prevention of actions that aim to destroy the existence of a group of people in whole or in part.

There is no shortage of international legal frameworks that mark Israel's action as a genocide in the making, including the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The events transpiring in Gaza align with the two of criteria outlined in the Convention, indicating a pressing need for the international community to address this crisis urgently. These criteria are "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group" and "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part".

We reject that Israel's lethal attacks on Gaza are "indiscriminate" or that they cause "collateral damage" to a significant extent. These are targeted attacks by precision-guided bombs and rockets. They intend, mean and are designed to kill as many as possible of the Palestinian population in Gaza. Simultaneously, no collateral damage could still be considered as such when it becomes a regime of action; a system and methodology to conduct warfare.

We recall the statement of scores of UN Special Rapporteurs on 16 November 2023, in which they called upon the international community to stop a genocide in the making, one that you are observe taking place in Gaza right now.

Members of the international community must come forward with a clear stance on the issue of Israel's genocidal actions in Gaza. First, they must declare these actions as such, and provide means to put an end to the atrocities committed by Israel, while aiming, also, at affirming Palestinians inalienable rights to exist, survive, live, and prosper as any other nation on earth deserves. We urge you to demand and work proactively to end the Israeli military assault on Gaza immediately, as well as ensuring the provision of international mechanisms to monitor, observe and ensure Israel's compliance.

We thank you for your urgent attention to the matter.

Sincerely,

(List of Signatories to this letter below)

<p>Mr. Nabeel Rajab Bahrain Former Deputy Secretary General for the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Founder and Former President, Bahrain Human Rights Center, Gulf Center for Human Rights & Ion Ratiu Democracy Award, Honorary Citizen of Paris</p>	<p>Mr. Ahmed Abdulwaheed Qarata Bahrain Vice President, Council of Representatives (Parliament)</p>	<p>Mr. Haytham Manna Switzerland (based) President, CIHR/FH</p>	<p>Mr. Ramy Abdu Switzerland (based) Founder and the Chairman of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor</p>
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