



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

**Joint written statement\* submitted by International  
Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial  
Discrimination, Association Ma'onah for Human Rights and  
Immigration, International-Lawyers.Org, Meezaan Center  
for Human Rights, 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.

[25 May 2025]

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



## **Palestinians in Gaza Face Starvation, Forced Displacement, and Genocidal Violence**

### **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 May 2025, UN experts cited over 52,000 deaths and 118,000 injured, of which 70 percent constitute children and women. In addition to the destruction caused by bombings, the complete Israeli blockade of humanitarian aid since March 2025 has forced the Gazan population into starvation, resulting in even more deaths.

A large number of experts and scholars worldwide have rightfully classified these acts as constituting genocidal conduct. Most recently Tom Fletcher, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stated before the Security Council that states must act now to prevent genocide. Similarly, a conglomerate of 38 UN Special Procedures experts issued a statement stressing immediate action to end the unfolding genocide – or else “bearing witness to the annihilation of the Palestinian population in Gaza”.

Against the backdrop of this “awakened global conscience”, the international community must fulfill its legal and moral responsibilities in accordance with the UN Genocide Prevention Convention. Otherwise it risks not only becoming spectators, but accomplices to the slaughter of innocent Palestinians and their complete destruction. Therefore, we urge the international community to undertake all necessary measures to bring an immediate halt to and prevent the further unfolding of genocidal violence. This must include the suspension of all forms of support to Israel, including the transfer of arms and the provision of private military and security services. Furthermore, the international community must take concrete steps to ensure that Israel is held accountable for its flagrant violations of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

We further urgently call upon the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Virginia Gamba, to take immediate and appropriate action in line with her mandate — specifically, to bring international visibility to the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian population and to issue clear recommendations to the UN Security Council aimed at preventing its continuation and bringing it to an end.

### **Humanitarian Crisis and Genocidal Violence**

Decisive action has never been more urgent than it is now. What is unfolding in Gaza is not only a catastrophic humanitarian collapse but a genocide in progress – deliberate, documented, and devastating. Since 7 October 2023, an overwhelming and continually expanding body of evidence has emerged pointing to Israel’s commission of genocidal acts against the Palestinian people. In its provisional measures decision of January 2024, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found it plausible that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. This recognition alone compels urgent preventive and protective action under the Genocide Convention.

In March 2025, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI) on the Occupied Palestinian Territory released a groundbreaking report highlighting the Israeli Defense Forces’ systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other gender-based violence as a weapon of war to destabilize, dominate, oppress and destroy the Palestinian people. The report further unearths systemic patterns of targeted attacks on Gaza’s healthcare system – particularly reproductive and maternal health facilities – creating conditions intended to prevent births and destroy the group’s ability to survive. These are not isolated incidents, but part of a calculated strategy that fall squarely within the acts prohibited by the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute.

Furthermore, since March 2025, Israel has imposed a complete blockade of humanitarian aid, exacerbating Palestinian’s suffering and causing widespread death and starvation. This

intentional denial of food and medical assistance, combined with the destruction of critical infrastructure, exemplifies the use of starvation as a method of genocide, a violation recognized under international law. Together, the actions of mass killings and bombardments, forced displacement, starvation, sexual violence, and the destruction of essential services undoubtedly constitute a comprehensive and coordinated campaign of annihilation. They violate the most fundamental rights of Palestinians, foremost among them, the right to life. Lastly and most recently, seven leading international experts on genocide – including two Israeli scholars – agree on defining the acts committed by Israel in Gaza as a genocide.

In light of such overbearing proof and unequivocal consensus on the horrific scale of violence perpetrated by Israel, we remain at a complete loss of understanding. What more evidence must be accumulated before genocide is recognized not only in rhetoric but in action?

## **Role of the Special Adviser on Genocide**

In light of the amount of UN experts and officials speaking out about the imminent risk of genocidal acts against Palestinians in Gaza, the silence of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide has become deafening. In her sole public statement regarding the violence in Gaza, issued in March 2025, she expressed her deep concern about the worsening humanitarian crisis exacerbated by Israel's blockade of aid. While she did call for a ceasefire and restored humanitarian access, there isn't any mention of imminent genocidal crimes or the danger of a genocide unfolding in Gaza – this stands in crass comparison to other global crises (e.g. Darfur, the Sudan) in which the Special Adviser used clear language to criticize genocidal violence.

Al Haq, a Palestinian NGO, already took notice of this double standard of the Special Adviser in October 2023 when issuing an official statement. We thus reinforce and reiterate the message delivered by Al Haq: that the silence surrounding Gaza raises significant concerns about the Special Adviser's ability to execute her mandate with due effectiveness and impartiality.

The position and mandate of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide were founded from the ashes of two genocides, namely the Balkans and Rwanda. The legal and moral failure of the international community to protect human life made it clear that more decisive action was necessary to prevent genocide. Amidst the current unfolding of the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza we call upon Ms. Gamba to uphold the duties entrusted to her mandate and to take immediate and appropriate measures to prevent any further violence. Otherwise, her failure to act would render the historical responsibility and authority of this position meaningless.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In summary, the information presented on the situation of the Palestinian people in Gaza points to a deeply alarming and horrific conclusion, which echoes the statement issued by UN experts in the beginning of May 2025: if immediate action is not taken to end the violence, we will bear witness to the annihilation of the Palestinian population in Gaza.

The world has failed before. It must not fail the Palestinians now.

We therefore issue the following urgent recommendations:

### **1. Immediate Cessation of Genocidal Violence:**

All attacks on civilians must stop immediately. A sustained ceasefire must be implemented without delay.

### **2. Unhindered Humanitarian Access:**

The full lifting of the blockade on Gaza is imperative to allow for the delivery of food, water, medical supplies, and humanitarian personnel.

### **3. End All Complicity:**

States must halt all arms trade and cease any provision of military, logistical, or financial support to Israel that enables the commission of genocide or other international crimes. Additionally, private military and security companies must be held accountable for their involvement.

4. Accountability for Genocide:

Israel must be held legally accountable by the international community for its violations of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

5. Urgent Action by the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide:

We urge Ms. Virginia Gamba to fulfill the obligations of her mandate by publicly recognizing the situation in Gaza as constituting a risk, if not the ongoing occurrence, of genocide, and to formally advise the UN Security Council on the necessary measures to halt further atrocities.

6. Address Root Causes:

The genocide cannot be ended without addressing its root causes, which includes the decades-long occupation, systematic apartheid, and siege of Gaza and broader Palestine. Justice, freedom, and self-determination for the Palestinian people must be central to any long-term solution.

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Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Arab Lawyers Association-UK, Human Rights Defenders (HRD), 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.