



18 July 2014

LPHR public statement on current military offensive on Gaza

As lawyers committed to the protection and advancement of Palestinian human rights, we reiterate our call upon the international community to act decisively to halt the latest resort to sustained military action in the Gaza Strip, following Israel's announcement on 8 July 2014 that they have launched a military operation codenamed Operation Protective Edge. The onset, yesterday, of an Israeli military ground offensive, heightens our existing serious concern that civilians will continue to enormously suffer for as long as a ceasefire agreement is not reached.

LPHR is gravely concerned by today's report from the Palestinian Center for Human Rights stating that as of 07:00am today, the total number of Palestinian civilian fatalities since the start of Operation Protective Edge is 206, including 54 children and 34 women. Another 1,726 people have been injured, of whom 526 are children and 349 are women. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian Territory, as of yesterday, 1,780 housing units have been destroyed or severely damaged, and at least 35,000 Palestinian civilians have been forcibly displaced.

LPHR repeats its acute concern at the apparent systematic and deliberate targeting of family homes and civilian facilities in disregard for the protection of civilians. In light of the apparently systematic and unlawful use of force against civilian objects causing civilian casualties, LPHR reiterates its urgent call upon the parties to military action, Israeli or Palestinian, to fulfil their binding legal obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law and immediately refrain from the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force against civilians or civilian objects.

LPHR further urgently calls upon the international community to ensure that credible investigations and full legal accountability is secured for all deaths and injuries caused by unlawful military actions.

LPHR shall continue to closely monitor the current military offensive on Gaza and will make further public statements as and when necessary.