



21 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 of an Israeli military ground offensive on 17 July 2014 has, as feared, exacerbated the enormous harm to the civilian population of Gaza.

LPHR is gravely concerned by today's report from the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) stating that as of 10:00am today, the total number of Palestinian civilian fatalities since the start of Operation Protective Edge is 406, including 129 children and 69 women. Another 2,803 people have been injured, of whom 822 are children and 572 are women. 425 houses have been targeted and destroyed, and hundreds of others have been extensively damaged. Over 100,000 Palestinian civilians have been forcibly displaced, with many seeking shelter with UNRWA.

LPHR strongly deplores the large number of civilian deaths and injuries caused by the Israeli military attacks on the al-Shuja'iya neighbourhood in the east of Gaza City on the early morning of Sunday 20 July 2014. PCHR has provided updated casualty figures stating that the number of Palestinian civilian fatalities resulting from this specific military bombardment is 65, including 13 women, 15 children and two paramedics. Additionally, 200 civilians, including 40 children and 65 women, were wounded. PCHR further reports that several families are still missing in al-Shujai'ya neighbourhood following Sunday's military attacks. LPHR reiterates its extremely serious concern following this attack that civilians are being indiscriminately targeted by Israeli military attacks.

LPHR further strongly deplores yesterday evening's military attack on the three storey family home of the Al Jame family in Khan Younis, which housed five families. As a result of this military attack, 23 civilians, including 18 children, are reported to have been killed. This horrific incident reinforces LPHR's acute concern at the apparent systematic and deliberate targeting of family homes and civilian facilities in disregard for the protection of civilians.

Due to the apparently systematic and unlawful use of force against civilians and 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.