



21 August 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. LPHR deeply regrets the resumption of hostilities on 19 August 2014 after an eight day ceasefire.

LPHR is gravely concerned by today's report from the [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) (OCHA) stating that as of 08:00 today, the total number of Palestinian civilian fatalities since the start of Operation Protective Edge is at least 1,444, including 475 children and 246 women. An estimated 1,000 of the 3,000 children who have been injured will suffer from a long-term disability. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has risen to 435,000, and is expected to increase further with the resumption of hostilities.

LPHR strongly deplores that in the last 24 hour reporting period, at least 31 fatalities have reportedly been killed, many of whose status still needs to be verified. Among the most serious incidents include at 02:30 today, Israeli aircraft fired missiles at the house of Nasser Kellab, west of the town of Rafah which is adjacent to the houses of the Younis family and the Abu Slaimah family. Eight people were killed in the family home of the Kellab family and two people were killed in the family home of the Younis family. Among the casualties were Mr Hassan Younis; a retired education veteran, aged 75, and his wife Amal Ibrahim Younis-Al Bilbisi, 53. Mr Hassan Younis is the father of the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights director, Issam Younis. LPHR expresses our condolences and support to Issam Younis and his family for his loss.

LPHR reiterates its extremely serious concern that civilians and civilian objects are being indiscriminately and disproportionately targeted by Israeli military attacks in disregard for the protection of civilians. Our [letter](#) published earlier this month in the Guardian highlights this grave concern with a specific focus on the legality of Israel's policy of directly targeting family homes.

LPHR further 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.