



30 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 [United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) (OCHA) stating that as of 15:00 today, the total number of Palestinian civilian fatalities since the start of Operation Protective Edge is at least 852, including 249 children and 135 women. This total does not include the military attack on Ash' Shuja'iyah market at 18:00 which has killed 17 people and injured hundreds. 245,000 Palestinian civilians have been forcibly displaced and are seeking shelter in United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools. UNRWA has exhausted its absorption capacity in Gaza City and northern Gaza, while overcrowding at its shelters raises concerns about the outbreak of epidemics.

LPHR strongly deplores that in the last 24 hour reporting period, an UNRWA school in Jabalia sheltering internally displaced persons (IDPs) was struck by Israeli shells, killing at least 15 people, including four children. We fully endorse the [statement](#) made by UNWRA Commissioner-General Pierre Krahenbuhl in which he 'condemned in the strongest possible terms this serious violation of international law by Israeli forces'. We also fully endorse the [statement](#) made by UNRWA spokesperson, Chris Gunness, that 'Gaza is beyond the realm of humanitarian action alone, and has moved into the realm of accountability'.

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.

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.