



5 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. 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 welcomes the 72 hour ceasefire that came into effect at 8:00am this morning.

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 1,312, including 408 children and 214 women. Over 85 per cent of Palestinian fatalities since the start of the emergency are believed to be civilians (excluding those whose bodies could not be identified or their status determined). 9,536 people have been injured, including 2,877 children. 520,000 Palestinian civilians have been forcibly displaced and are hosted in emergency shelters or with host families. 65,000 displaced people have had their homes destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

LPHR strongly deplores that in the last 41 hour reporting period, at least 72 Palestinians have reportedly been killed or died from wounds they sustained previously, and the bodies of at least 25 other people have been recovered. Among the most serious incidents included an Israeli air force targeting and destroying a house west of Jabalia belonging to the Al Majdalawi family, reportedly killing five of its members, including three children.

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 today in the Guardian highlights this grave concern with a specific focus on the legality of Israel's policy 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. We fully endorse the [statement](#) made by UNRWA spokesperson, Chris Guinness, that 'Gaza is beyond the realm of humanitarian action alone, and has moved into the realm of accountability'.

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