



9 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 had, as feared, exacerbated the enormous harm to the civilian population of Gaza. LPHR deeply regrets that hostilities resumed yesterday after the expiry of a 72 hour humanitarian truce, albeit at a lower intensity than during the days prior to the lull.

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 1,408, including 452 children and 235 women. Nearly 10,800 houses have been destroyed or severely damaged. As of yesterday afternoon there were 221,600 people taking refuge at 90 UNRWA schools, while another 33,800 were hosted at 25 government and private schools and public facilities.

At least five Palestinians have been killed as a result of Israeli airstrikes and shelling during the 24 hours that followed the resumption of hostilities. These include ten-year old Ibrahim Al-Dawsa, killed yesterday at around 17:00 during an airstrike in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood of Gaza city, while reportedly playing in the street. An additional eight fatalities were also recorded over the reporting period, including a 14 year-old boy who died in an Egyptian hospital.

LPHR reiterates its extremely serious concern that civilians and civilian objects have been indiscriminately and disproportionately targeted by Israeli military attacks in disregard for the protection of civilians. Our [letter](#) recently published 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 Gunness, 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.