



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Joint Public Statement**

**Complaint submitted to the United Nations concerning destruction and damage to medical infrastructure and loss of life and injury to civilians and medical personnel in the Gaza Strip during Israel's military operation between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014**

**London and Gaza City 6 February 2015** - Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR), Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan) and Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) have this week submitted a comprehensive joint complaint to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict, concerning destruction and damage to medical infrastructure and loss of life and injury to civilians and medical personnel in Gaza, during Israel's military operation codenamed 'Operation Protective Edge' between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014.

Attacks against medical infrastructure and personnel in Gaza was a recurring feature of Israel's military operation. 17 hospitals and 56 clinics were adversely affected ranging from total destruction to minor damage, and 45 ambulances were damaged. At least 19 healthworkers were killed, nine while on duty, and at least 27 healthworkers were injured.

LPHR, Al Mezan, and MAP's joint complaint illuminates the serious human rights consequences for civilians and medical personnel in Gaza due to Israel's apparent deliberate or reckless military targeting of medical infrastructure or personnel during their fifty day military operation, and the apparent unjustifiable obstruction of emergency medical access to the injured, by highlighting seven grave violation incidents of the right to health and the right to life and physical integrity. At least twelve Palestinian civilians or medical personnel were killed, with further numbers of individuals injured, in these serious incidents.

LPHR, Al Mezan and MAP's joint complaint further includes a detailed legal analysis on the critical issue of targeting medical infrastructure and personnel, and concludes with suggested recommendations for urgent action by the United Nations Special Rapporteurs and the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry.

LPHR, Al Mezan and MAP submit in the complaint that the extensive destruction and damage caused to medical infrastructure during Israel's military operation in Gaza amounts to a gross violation of the right to health for any Palestinian resident in Gaza whose access to health

services was impeded by these military attacks. The apparent deliberate or reckless military targeting of medical infrastructure and personnel further raises the extremely serious concern that international humanitarian law was seriously violated with grave consequences for the right to life and physical integrity of Palestinians in Gaza. These actions may amount to war crimes.

LPHR, Al Mezan and MAP request the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the OPT and the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry use this complaint as the basis for their own urgent investigation into the documented seven serious incidents, and take appropriate action further to our suggested recommendations.

LPHR, Al Mezan and MAP's recommendations include issuing a clear condemnation to Israel of the repeated apparent deliberate or reckless targeting of medical infrastructure and personnel by the Israeli military, and the apparent unjustifiable obstruction of emergency medical access to the injured, as conduct clearly indicating the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law; urging Israel to allow and facilitate access for all necessary construction materials to enter Gaza so that reconstruction can take place for the medical infrastructure that has been destroyed or damaged; publicly asserting the vital need for criminal investigations, accountability and state responsibility and reparations for all alleged serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law; and to consider appropriately referring this complaint and/or the findings of their own investigation into the seven documented serious incidents to other relevant international bodies, including the International Criminal Court.

LPHR, Al Mezan and MAP assert that full and credible investigations and accountability are necessary to enable the victims of Israel's military operation in Gaza between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014 to obtain access to an effective remedy and justice. They are further imperative so to provide a robust deterrent against any appalling recurrence of apparently unlawful military attacks against medical infrastructure and personnel, and apparently unjustifiable obstruction of emergency medical access to injured people, with grave human rights consequences for civilians and medical personnel.

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#### **About Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR)**

[LPHR](#) is a lawyer-based legal charity in the United Kingdom that works on legal projects aimed at protecting and advancing Palestinian human rights.

#### **About Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan)**

[Al Mezan](#) is a Palestinian non-governmental human rights organization that works for the protection and promotion of Palestinian human rights in Gaza as part of occupied Palestine.

#### **About Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)**

[MAP](#) works for the health and dignity of Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees. MAP delivers health and medical care to those worst affected by conflict, occupation and displacement