



Assessing cases of the 2014 attacks on Gaza leads to definitive conclusion: victims and survivors have been abandoned to non-genuine investigations and gross injustice

On sixth anniversary of the attacks, Al Mezan and LPHR issue respectful call on ICC Prosecutor to include 2014 attacks within the scope of her pending investigation

Gaza City and London, 07 July 2020 – In the summer of 2014, Al Mezan and LPHR worked together to examine egregious acts of horror against civilians in Gaza, trapped in a closed-off territory while under military bombardment run by Israel's political and military leadership; its emblematic feature being that dozens of entire families were killed and maimed by targeted military attacks against family homes for the duration of the military offensive between 7 July and 26 August.

For six years, Al Mezan and LPHR have worked relentlessly on behalf of victims, survivors and their families to pursue accountability for clearly apparent serious violations of international criminal, humanitarian and human rights law; including engagement at the international level with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the UN independent Commission of Inquiry into the 2014 Gaza Conflict.

Reflecting the empirical evidence, Al Mezan and LPHR have voiced grave concerns about the systemic impunity deeply embedded within Israel's military investigation process, despite which Al Mezan engages with in good faith to seek legal redress, accountability and justice for victims, survivors and their families.

However, the appalling and clearly foreseeable pattern of impunity repeats itself year after year. No criminal charges, prosecutions, or convictions for clearly apparent serious violations against civilians in Gaza during the 2014 military bombardment. No genuine investigations, no legal accountability, no justice for victims, survivors and their families. Gross injustice and total systemic impunity prevailing. Six years on it is overwhelmingly clear to our organisations that Israel is unwilling to provide genuine investigations for these grave cases.

For six years, the authoritative words of the UN independent Commission of Inquiry into the 2014 Gaza Conflict have remained gravely extant: *"The commission is **concerned that impunity prevails across the board for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law allegedly committed by Israeli forces, whether it be in the context of active hostilities in Gaza or killings, torture, and ill-treatment in the West Bank.**"* [bolded for emphasis by Al Mezan and LPHR]

The empirical record is plainly and strikingly clear: Israel is unwilling to hold its political and military leadership to account. The output of the fundamentally flawed investigation system unquestionably activates the mandate of the ICC. It is accordingly and necessarily incumbent on the ICC Prosecutor to meet the hope and imperative of victims, survivors and their families, and bring an end to the devastating cycle of systemic impunity.



The recurrent serious violations that have egregiously harmed thousands of civilians in Gaza over the years without distinction—men and women, boys and girls, the elderly and people with disabilities—must be met with an effective accountability deterrent.

Against this devastating context, Al Mezan and LPHR strongly welcome the 20 December 2019 announcement by ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, that she is ready to open a criminal investigation into the situation in Palestine. We view it as a seminal step towards achieving legal accountability and justice for the many victims, survivors and their families of alleged serious international crimes perpetrated by Israeli forces and their military and political leadership.

Our organisations did also note the important caveat that the Prosecutor's significant decision to open an investigation has been made without yet making a crucial determination on the genuineness and scope of Israel's investigative processes vis-a-vis the 2014 hostilities in Gaza.

On this sixth anniversary, and on behalf of the thousands of victims, survivors and their families, Al Mezan and LPHR wish to make a respectful, solemn and grave appeal to the ICC Prosecutor to make the **objectively necessary determination that Israel has been demonstrably unwilling to provide genuine investigations, and accordingly the Office of the Prosecutor will undertake the responsibility, pursuant to the fundamental objectives of the Rome Statute, to investigate the 2014 attacks on Gaza.**

Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (Al Mezan) is a Palestinian non-governmental human rights organization that works for the protection and promotion of Palestinian human rights and the rule of law in Gaza as part of occupied Palestine.

Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR) is a lawyer-based charity in the UK that works on projects to protect and promote Palestinian human rights. LPHR's mission is to use our expertise to meaningfully contribute towards transforming the critical human rights situation impacting Palestinians.

For more on Al Mezan's and LPHR's work in this area, please see the following:

- [LPHR and Al Mezan Complaint Submission](#) made to the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict concerning large-scale destruction and damage to family houses in the Gaza Strip, with associated profound loss of life and injury to Palestinian residents, during Israel's military operation between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014 (*published September 2014*)
- [LPHR, Al Mezan and Medical Aid for Palestinians Complaint Submission](#) to the United Nations 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 between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014 (*published February 2015*)

- [LPHR, Al Mezan and Medical Aid for Palestinians Joint Report: No More Impunity: Gaza's Health Sector Under Attack](#) (*published June 2015*)
- [Al Mezan report: No Reparations in Israel for Palestinians: How Israel's Amendment No. 8 Leaves no Room for Recourse](#) (*published December 2015*)
- [LPHR and Al Mezan joint update](#) - including survey of families on hope for justice - to its September 2014 report to the UN Commission of Inquiry on large-scale destruction and damage to family houses in the Gaza Strip, with associated profound loss of life and injury to Palestinian residents, during Israel's military operation between 7 July 2014 and 26 August 2014 (*published December 2016*)
- [Al Mezan and Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel Joint Report: Gaza 3 Years On: Impunity over Accountability - Israel's unwillingness to investigate violations of international law in the Gaza Strip](#) (*published August 2017*)
- [LPHR and Al Mezan Joint Report: Justice Denied: Gaza human shield survivors and the systemic failure of Israel's military investigation system to provide accountability](#) (*published September 2018*)
- [LPHR Report: Eleven key points relevant to the complementarity assessment being undertaken by the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on the grave issue of targeted airstrikes against family homes in Gaza](#) (*published April 2019*)
- [LPHR Statement: A seminal step towards legal accountability and justice for victims, survivors and their families: ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda's decision that she is ready to open an investigation into the situation in Palestine](#) (*published December 2019*)
- [LPHR, Al Mezan and Medical Aid for Palestinians Joint Report: Chronic Impunity: Gaza's Health Sector Under Repeated Attack](#) (*published March 2020*)