



Bereaved Palestinian family gives significant evidence in Paris to investigating judge for unprecedented war crimes and corporate accountability case arising out of 2014 military attacks on Gaza

Nine years after Israeli missile attack on the Shuheibar family home kills three young children, its family members give live testimony for criminal investigation into a French company's alleged complicity in a war crime

Gaza City and London, 03 August 2023 – Last month, five members of the Shuheibar family in Gaza travelled to Paris to provide vital evidence to an investigating judge for an unprecedented war crimes and corporate accountability investigation into the alleged complicity of Exxelia, a French company, in a war crime. The military component manufactured by Exxelia enabled Israeli forces to precisely guide a missile to strike the roof of the Shuheibar family home on 17 July 2014, killing three children and seriously injuring two further children. This is the first war crimes and corporate accountability case being effectively pursued that arises from the 2014 attacks on Gaza.

Documented by Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the missile attack killed three young children: Afnan (8 years old), Wassim (9 years old) and Jihad (10 years old), who were feeding pigeons on the roof of the home at the time.



The missile attack seriously injured a further two children, Oday (16 years old) and Basel (9 years old), who are among five Shuheibar family members – alongside the parents of Afnan and the father of Wassim and Jihad – that provided testimonial evidence to the investigating judge in Paris last month. In an interview with [Agence France-Presse](#), Oday says: *“I still remember in detail what happened that day. This issue affected me a lot, it completely destroyed me psychologically.”*

The Gaza City fieldworker from Al Mezan who attended the scene soon afterwards to document the attack, also travelled to Paris last month to provide witness evidence to the investigating judge.

The fatal attack took place ten days into the devastating seven-week Israeli military offensive on Gaza that was code-named 'Operation Protective Edge'. Al Mezan and Lawyers for Palestinian



Human Rights (LPHR) submitted specific information on the Shuheibar family home attack to the subsequent UN independent Commission of Inquiry, who assessed the case and raised several extremely serious concerns in its report on the 2014 hostilities in Gaza. There has been no legal accountability in Israel for alleged war crimes committed by its military forces in Gaza during the summer of 2014.

It is within this context that, in 2017, the Shuheibar family submitted a civil party complaint through its Paris-based legal representatives for the proceedings in France, Ancile Avocats, to an investigating judge in France, alleging that Exxelia is criminally responsible for complicity in a war crime. This year, in a landmark step, the investigating judge issued summons to five members of the Shuheibar family and Al Mezan's fieldworker to provide her with live testimonial evidence. Last month, they provided vital evidence in closed-door meetings with the investigating judge.

The family is resolutely committed to achieving justice which is otherwise wholly denied by Israel's military investigation and prosecution system. This would be a unique and exceptionally significant outcome for a Palestinian family devastatingly impacted by the 2014 hostilities in Gaza.

The fatal attack on the Shuheibar family home was tragically not exceptional. The missile attack took place within the context of the deliberate military targeting of residential homes on a widespread and systematic scale during the full course of the seven-week-long hostilities in Gaza. This clearly apparent military policy was viewed by local human rights organisations as the emblematic feature of Israel's military offensive. The UN independent Commission of Inquiry illuminated the quote of a witness who said: *"This war was different from previous wars, especially for women. Civilians were attacked particularly in their homes. The home is the domain of the women"*. Over 66 per cent of children killed (370 out of 556) and over 82 per cent of women killed (241 out of 293) during the course of the hostilities were targeted inside their homes. Hundreds more were injured, including life-changing catastrophic injuries.

Hundreds of cases relating to attacks against family homes during the 2014 hostilities in Gaza have been pursued by Palestinian human rights organisations, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and Adalah - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, with the Israeli Military Advocate General. Nine-years-on there have been no charges, prosecutions or convictions – inclusive of the criminal complaint pursued by Al Mezan and Adalah on behalf of the Shuheibar family – emboldening the foreseeable repetition of serious violations.

The empirical record is plain and clear: Israel is unwilling to hold its political and military leadership to account. The output of its fundamentally flawed investigation system unquestionably activates the mandate of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to investigate the grave issue of the documented widespread and systematic military targeting of family homes in Gaza. It is incumbent on the Office of the Prosecutor to meet the hope and imperative of victims, survivors and their families, and bring to an end the catastrophe of systemic impunity.



Al Mezan and LPHR fully support the Shuheibar family in its ongoing courageous pursuit of justice and legal accountability in loving honour and memory of Afnan, Wassim and Jihad.

For further context on the Shuheibar family's war crimes and corporate accountability case against Exxelia:

- [Independent documentary](#): 'Made in France'.
- [UN independent Commission of Inquiry report](#) dated June 2015 – Shuheibar family case featured at paragraphs 193-200.

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 legal charity in the UK that works on projects to protect and promote Palestinian human rights.