

Open Letter to UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon: Stand for Law and Justice or Resign!

For Humanity and the Little Remained Credibility of International Law

UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon,

We, the under signed Palestinian human rights and community-based organizations are extremely disappointed by your performance, notably by your biased statements, your failure to act, and the inappropriate justification of Israel's violations of IHL, which amount to war crimes. Until today, you have taken no explicit and tangible measures to address the recent Israeli attacks in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) since 13 June. Moreover, your statements have been either misleading, because they endorse and further Israeli false versions of facts, or contrary to the provisions established by international law and to the interests of its defenders, or because your words justify Israel's violations and crimes.

You have undeniably assumed a biased position toward the current attack on Gaza and Israeli violations in the West Bank by failing to clearly condemn Israeli unlawful actions in the OPT, while, on the other hand, not hesitating to accuse – sometimes mistakenly – Palestinian combatant in Gaza of violations of international law. This bias can be noted in the following excerpts:

The Secretary-General strongly condemns the killing today of at least 10 Palestinian civilians in shelling outside of an UNRWA school in Rafah providing shelter to thousands of civilians. The attack is yet another gross violation of international humanitarian law, which clearly requires protection by both parties of Palestinian civilians, UN staff and UN premises, among other civilian facilities.

Such [statement](#), by failing to name the perpetrator (Israel), is not only biased, but also offensive to UNRWA, itself a UN agency, as well as to other UN agencies and international organizations the struggle to provide relief and protection to Palestinians in Gaza. UNRWA, which has [lost nine staff in Gaza](#) since the beginning of Israel's Operation Protective Edge, hosts around [270,000 internally displaced \(25% of Gaza's population\)](#) in its shelters. UNRWA's preliminary analysis on a previous attack against one of its schools has indicated that it had been [hit by Israeli artillery, constituting an indiscriminate attack and likely a war crime](#).

Moreover, by [condemning](#) the storage of weapons in UNRWA schools without offering a complete details and a proper account on international law, your statements endorse Israeli excuses to *unlawfully, [indiscriminately](#)* target such civilian objects.

In addition, by [condemning](#)

The reported violation by Hamas of the mutually agreed humanitarian ceasefire which commenced this morning. He is shocked and profoundly disappointed by these developments,

The Secretary-General reveals a reckless endorsement of Israeli version of facts, blaming Hamas for violating the cease-fire, even though admitting that “[t]he Secretary-General notes that the UN has no independent means to verify exactly what happened”, and, still, demanding “the immediate and unconditional release of the [falsely allegedly] captured soldier”.

The following [statement](#) further illustrates the Secretary-General's ignorance of facts on the ground:

The Secretary-General has learned with concern that leaflets are reportedly being dropped by the Israeli Defence Forces in the northern Gaza Strip this evening, warning tens of thousands of residents to leave their homes and evacuate to Gaza City.

If true [our emphasis], this would have a further devastating humanitarian impact on the beleaguered civilians of those areas of the Gaza strip, who have already undergone immense suffering in recent days.

The drop of leaflets had been a [known practice](#) since the beginning of the Israeli operation in Gaza, contributing to a scenario of [more than 480,000 internally displaced](#).

In the same [statement](#),

The Secretary-General strongly urge[d] all sides to avoid any further escalation at this time[, noting] that all sides must meet all obligations under international humanitarian law, both towards civilians ahead of impending attacks, as well as maintaining proportionality in any kind of military response,

Revealing an undue equalization of the two sides of the conflict and failing to address the greater impact of violations committed by Israel, which has [killed at least 1,814 the vast majority of whom are civilians](#), during its operation in Gaza.

Mr. Secretary-General,

When you make no distinction between oppressors and victims, in all your statements,

When you name Palestinian combatants as perpetrators of violations and war crimes while you ignore naming Israel, as you used to do in referring to specific actions,

When you avoid codifying Israeli actions amount to war crimes, while you insist on prescribing Palestinian reactions as grave breaches of IHL,

When you always advocate unlawfully the Israel right to self-defense, while having not pointed out the Palestinians legitimate and legal right to resist occupation, colonization and institutionalized discrimination,

When you adopt and advocate Israeli false stories, while not mentioning Palestinians' narrative,

When you disregard facts on grounds clearly resulting from Israeli attacks, while you seek the immediate and unconditional release of a falsely captured soldier who was in the battle field,

You do not maintain peace and security; nor do you ensure human rights.

By reviewing yours statements, it becomes evident you have not been fulfilling your mandate. In contrary, your statements have not only allowed the continuance of Israel's killing our people, but also, encouraged States to continue providing Israel with impunity. As you cannot say the truth, we advise you to either drastically change your positioning – not only in words, but also in your efforts to, through the UN, effectively end the current conflict – or to resign. For us, if you continue playing this role, you prove what our people feel, that you are a partner in, or at least an enabler of, the ongoing violations of international humanitarian law committed by Israel against our, families, children, women, elders – against our people.

Signatures

Individuals:

- Richard Falk Former United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967
- Luisa Morgantini Former Vice President of the European Parliament
- Ahmad Muhaisen – President of The association for twining French cities and Palestinian refugee camps

- Breyten Breytenbach Poet, writer, painter and activist
- John Pilger is a journalist, film-maker and author

Palestinian and International Human Rights and Civil Society Organizations:

- BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights – Bethlehem
- Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI) – Biet Sahour
- The Alternative Information Centre (AIC) – Biet Sahour
- ADDAMEER Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association – Ramallah
- Palestinian Non-Governmental Network (Umbrella for 133 organizations)
- Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions
- General Union of Palestine Workers
- General Union for Health Services Workers
- General Union for Public Services Workers
- General Union for Petrochemical and Gas Workers
- General Union for Agricultural Workers
- Union of Women’s Work Committees
- Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions National Committee (BNC). The Committee includes the following organizations: Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine, Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), Palestinian National Institute for NGOs, Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition, Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS), Federation of Independent Trade Unions, General Union of Palestinian Workers, Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, General Union of Palestinian Women, Union of Palestinian Farmers, General Union of Palestinian Teachers, General Union of Palestinian Writers, Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUUE), Union of Professional Associations, General Union of Palestinian Peasants, Union of Public Employees in Palestine-Civil Sector, Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (STW), National Committee for Grassroots Resistance, Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), National Committee to Commemorate the Nakba, Civic Coalition for the Defense of Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, Coalition for Jerusalem, Union of Palestinian Charitable Organizations, Palestinian Economic Monitor, Union of Youth Activity Centers-Palestine Refugee Camps, Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Initiative.
- The Joint Advocacy Initiative of the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine (JAI) - Biet Sahour
- Baladna- association for Arab Youth – Haifa
- Hamleh - Arab center for media development – Haifa
- Al Zahra’ Society for Women Empowerment – Sakhnin
- Assiwar- The Feminist Arab Movement in Support of Victims of Sexual Assault - Haifa
- Association for the defense for the Rights of the Internally Displaced in Israel – Nazareth
- Alsebat association for heritage Preservation - Nazareth
- The Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) – Beit Sahour
- Yabous Cultural Center – Jerusalem
- The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music – Jerusalem
- Palestinian Students’ Campaign for the Academic Boycott of Israel
- Gaza BDS Working Group
- University Teachers’ Association in Palestine
- Medical Democratic Assembly
- Pal-Cinema (Palestine Cinema Forum)
- Youth Herak Movement
- Union of Women’s Struggle Committees
- Union of Synergies—Women Unit
- Union of Palestinian Women Committees
- Women’s Studies Society
- Working Woman’s Society
- One Democratic State Group
- Youth Against Israeli Settlements - Hebron
- Health Work Committees – Biet Sahour

- Land Research Center (LCR) – Hebron
- Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies – Ramallah
- Popular Struggling Coordination Committee (PSCC) – Ramallah
- Lajee Center, Aida Refugee Camp - Bethlehem
- The EJ-YMCA Rehabilitation Program and the Beit Sahour YMCA – Beit Sahour
- Ibrahim Al Khalil Society – Hebron
- The Palestinian Prisoners Society – Bethlehem
- The Palestinian Center of Youth Action for Community Development (LAYLAC) – Dhiesheh Refugee Camp - Bethlehem
- Palestinian Grassroots Anti-apartheid Wall Campaign (Stop the Wall) – Ramallah
- Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People – Biet Sahour
- Amaan Center for social health, Counseling and Development – Hebron
- Popular Committee for Refugees, Qalqeliah
- Popular Committee for Refugees, Salfit
- Social Youth Center, Aqbat Jaber Refugee Camp – Jericho
- Social Youth Center, Aida Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- Social Youth Center, Al Arroub Refugee Camp – Hebron
- Al Arroub Popular committee - Al Arroub Refugee Camp - Hebron
- Progressive Youth Union – Al Arroub Refugee Center - Hebron
- The Phoenix Center - Al Arroub Refugee Camp - Hebron
- Al Fawwar Social Center – Al Fawwar Refugee camp - Hebron
- Social Youth Center, Far'a Refugee Camp - Nablus
- Shu'fat Child Center – Shu'fat Refugees Camp – Jerusalem
- Shoruq Association, Dhiesheh Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- Al Awda Center for Youth and children Rehabilitation - Tulkarem
- Ansar Center, Al Walajah – Bethlehem
- Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights "Hurriyat"
- The Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee – Bethlehem
- Bethlehem Farmers Society – Bethlehem
- Ibda'a for the Development of Children Capacity, Dhiesheh Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- The popular committee - Dhiesheh Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- The women Centre - Dhiesheh Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- The popular committee – Al Azza Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- Al Phoenix Center – Dhiesheh Refugee Camp – Bethlehem
- Al Walaja Women Center – Al Walaja -- Bethlehem
- Not to Forget – Jenin Refugees Camp – Jenin
- Environmental Education Center – Beit Jala
- The National Charitable Society – Al Khader
- The Right of Return Committees in Bethlehem – Bethlehem
- Al Walaja Popular Committee - – Bethlehem
- Al Walaja Sports Club – Al Walaja - – Bethlehem
- Al Walaja Agriculture society – Al Walaja - – Bethlehem
- The Palestinian anti-Wall and Settlements committees – Ramallah
- MA'AN Development Center – Ramallah
- The Association of Palestinian prisoners and x-prisoners – Bethlehem
- Susya Popular Committee – Hebron
- Dair Abu Misha'al Popular committee – Ramallah
- Al Tawasul Forum Society – Gaza Strip
- The International Solidarity Movement.
- The Refugees Rights Center – 'Aidoon – Lebanon
- Association Najdeh - Lebanon
- Ajyal Association – Lebanon
- The Refugees Rights Center – 'Aidoon – Syria
- Union of Arab Jurists – Jordan

- The National Institution of Social Care & Vocational Training – Jordan
- Australians for Palestine – Australia
- Women for Palestine – Australia
- Collective urgency Palestine – Switzerland
- Palestina Rossa – Italy
- Fronte Palestina - Italy
- The Association of Humanitarian Lawyers
- International Educational Development, Inc
- International Lawyers – Switzerland
- Tamkeen-Arab group - Switzerland
- The BDS campaign in France – France
- The association for twining French cities and Palestinian refugees camp – France
- The International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD)
- International society for Human Rights
- Czech Friends of Palestine
- Initiative for a just peace in the Middle East – Czech Republic
- Nord-Sud XXI
- International Association Against Torture
- The Palestine Solidarity Allegiance South Africa
- Palestine Legal Action Network
- Russell Tribunal on Palestine
- Campaign BDS France,
- 14 Friends of Palestine (Marin, CA)
- Canada Palestine Association
- Voice of Palestine
- People for Peace, London, CA
- United States Palestinian Community Network
- Labor for Palestine NY
- Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
- US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
- Palestine Human Rights Campaign Auckland
- Al-Awda NY
- Jews for Palestinian Right of Return
- Jews Against genocide
- Palestine Solidarity Alliance, South Africa
- Assopace
- Boycott! Boycott From Within
- Boycott Israeli Apartheid Campaign – Vancouver
- BDS Switzerland
- Palestinian solidarity community (PSC), USA
- Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), USA
- BDS (Boycott Divestment and Sanctions), South Africa
- Football Against Apartheid
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign, South Africa

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