
PHROC Open letter to Foreign Ministers on Need for International Intervention in Palestine

Date: 20th OCT 15

Your Excellency,

It is with grave concern that the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council a Palestinian (PHROC), respectfully submits this letter as an appeal for international intervention into the situation of Palestine.

The past couple of weeks have seen a significant escalation of violence, in both frequency and severity, against Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Since October 2015, the Israeli occupying forces have killed Palestinians 41.¹ There has also been an increase in settler violence with approximately 48 cases since the beginning of October. Many of the killings may amount to the grave breach and war crime of wilful killing with Israeli forces unnecessarily resorting to lethal force. Simultaneously, Israel has stepped up its practices of collective punishment, including punitive house demolitions, and revocation of residency permits for East Jerusalem residents.

The current situation is a stark reminder that Israel's occupation and colonialist enterprise is unsustainable, as it will continue to breathe violence until it is brought to an end. Indeed, the current situation is a direct result of Israel's unlawful colonial practices, including its continued attempts to replace the Palestinian people with Israeli settlers in the OPT and to separate the Gaza Strip from the West Bank. In East Jerusalem, Israel's provocative measures are indicative of its intention to alter the city's demographic composition. Most recently, the Israeli security cabinet agreed to impose closures on Palestinian neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem and placed several additional roadblocks around them, severely infringing on Palestinian right to freedom of movement. Prior to these measures, Israel prohibited Palestinians from entering the Old City whilst allowing Israelis to roam the area freely. Israeli forces also accompanied settlers into the Al-Aqsa compound. Al-PHROC highlights that the Israeli Chief Rabbinate has clarified that entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound is forbidden Jewish law. As such, they further exposed Israel's political ambition to conquer East Jerusalem.

As the situation continues to deteriorate in the OPT, Israel has not demonstrated any intention to shoulder its responsibilities toward the occupied Palestinian population. To the contrary, Israel is using security as a pretext to further infringement of the rights of the occupied population, making international intervention all the more acute.

With the aim to restrain Israel, PHROC requests that the international community, *inter alia*:

¹ Al-Haq Monitoring and Documentation.

- Hold Israel responsible for the current escalation of violence and recall the root-causes of the ongoing situation, including Israel's occupation and illegal annexation of East Jerusalem;
- Publicly condemn Israel's violations of international law, including its unlawful killing of Palestinians;
- Publicly attribute settler violence to Israel's illegal colony (settlement) enterprise and demand that Israel bring its perpetrators to account;
- Publicly demand that Israel, as the Occupying Power, comply with its obligation to protect the Palestinian population and preserve their right to life;
- Publicly demand that Israel complies with its duty to investigate all incidents of killings, in line with international standards;
- Publicly demand that Israel brings its conduct in line with the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials;
- Provide international protection of the occupied Palestinian population;
- Call for sanctions at the UN Security Council;
- End its economic and commercial relations with Israeli settler colonies (settlements) and ensure that its private actors disengage from its activities in colonies.
- Condemn the intensification of the unlawful arrest, imprisonment and torture of Palestinians, especially children.
- Call for the end of collective punishment including the punitive measures (house demolitions) and closures of Palestinian neighborhoods and towns.

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