

MEDIA BRIEFING

EMBARGOED UNTIL 16 SEPTEMBER 2025, 09:00 CET

Legal analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (“Genocide Convention”)

Executive Summary of the report by the [United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel](#)

- ❖ **Link to official report:** (TBC)
- ❖ **Press Conference:** 16 September 2025, at 13:00 CEST (Geneva, Switzerland)
<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k11/k11wwbj7yj>
- ❖ **Press Enquiries:** todd.pitman@un.org

Israel is Committing Genocide in Gaza. All States Must Act Now to Stop It

The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry has concluded, on reasonable grounds, that Israel has committed genocide against Palestinians in Gaza since 7 October 2023. The Commission finds that four genocidal acts were carried out: killings, causing serious bodily and mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about destruction, and imposing measures intended to prevent births. These were committed by the Israeli authorities and security forces with specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza.

The Commission’s findings are based on extensive evidence of systematic and unprecedented killings, destruction of homes and cultural sites, deliberate starvation, denial of healthcare, sexual and gender based violence, and the direct targeting of children. Statements by Israel’s President, Prime Minister and Defence Minister are cited as direct evidence of genocidal intent. The Commission concludes that genocidal intent is the only reasonable inference from the totality of the evidence.

Israeli political and military leaders are agents of the State of Israel. Their acts are attributable to the State of Israel. Therefore, Israel, as a State, is responsible for the commission of genocide, for failing to prevent it, and for failing to punish it.

The report also affirms that all States have an immediate legal duty under the Genocide Convention to employ all means available to prevent and punish the crime of genocide. Failure to act carries both legal and moral consequences.

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Key Findings

The Commission concludes that Israel has committed four **genocidal acts**:

1. **Killing members of the group** – Israeli security forces killed Palestinians through (i) attacks against protected objects; (ii) targeting civilians and other protected persons; and (iii) the deliberate infliction of conditions of life that caused their deaths.
2. **Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group** – Israeli security forces caused serious harm on Palestinians through (i) direct attacks against civilians and protected objects; (ii) severe mistreatment of Palestinian detainees (e.g. torture, rape and sexual assault); (iii) forced displacement; and (iv) environmental destruction.
3. **Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part** – Israeli authorities deliberately imposed deplorable and inhumane conditions on Palestinians in Gaza through: (i) destruction of structures and land essential to Palestinians; (ii) destruction and denial of access to medical services; (iii) forced displacement; (iv) blocking essential aid, food, water, electricity and fuel from reaching Palestinians; (v) reproductive violence; and (vi) specific conditions impacting children. The Commission also found that starvation has been used as a weapon.
4. **Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group** – The attack against Al-Basma IVF clinic, Gaza's largest fertility clinic, reportedly destroying around 4,000 embryos and 1,000 sperm samples and unfertilised eggs, was a measure to prevent births among Palestinians in Gaza. An expert testified that this loss will have repercussions for generations: 'children who were meant to be born from these 5,000 reproductive specimens will never exist'.

Findings on Specific Intent to Destroy

The Commission finds that the four genocidal acts were committed with the **specific intent to destroy** the Palestinian group in Gaza, in whole or in part.

Statements made by Israeli authorities are direct evidence of genocidal intent.

Furthermore, the Commission found that genocidal intent was the only reasonable inference that could be drawn from a totality of the evidence, based on the following pattern of conduct of the Israeli authorities and security forces:

Pattern of Conduct Demonstrating Genocidal Intent

- **First**, the Israeli security forces have intentionally killed and seriously harmed an unprecedented number of Palestinians in Gaza since 7 October 2023 using heavy munitions in a densely populated area. As of 15 July 2025, at least 58,380 verified deaths had occurred. 46 percent were women (9,497) and children (17,921). Only 8,900 were identified as militants, meaning 83 percent of those killed were civilians.

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- **Second**, systematic destruction of homes, schools, mosques, churches and cultural sites shows intent to erase Palestinian identity and culture.
- **Third**, Israel was aware of the deep suffering it caused the Palestinian people and took no action to alleviate it. Israel has flagrantly disregarded three orders for provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice, and ignored multiple reliable and credible warnings by other actors, egregiously claiming that such reports were wrong and based on lies. Israeli authorities were aware that Palestinians are trapped and cannot flee outside Gaza, and continued to ensure they cannot escape the violence and eventual destruction.
- **Fourth**, Israel has implemented a concerted policy to destroy the healthcare system of Gaza. Israeli security forces have attacked healthcare facilities and units in Gaza and deliberately killed, wounded, arrested, detained, mistreated and tortured medical personnel since October 2023. Palestinians are forced to live without access to crucial medical care while Israeli authorities continued their chokehold on the Palestinians in Gaza by blocking medical equipment, supplies and medicine from entering Gaza and, at the same time, prevented Palestinians in need of medical assistance from leaving Gaza.
- **Fifth**, Israeli security forces have perpetrated sexual and gender-based violence against Palestinians in Gaza since 7 October 2023, including rape, sexualised torture and other forms of sexual violence not only as a punishment against the individuals, but as part of a pattern of collective punishment to fracture, humiliate and subjugate the Palestinian population in its entirety.
- **Sixth**, children were deliberately and directly targeted in various ways by the Israeli security forces since 7 October 2023, including during evacuations, and at shelters and food distribution sites. The Commission confirmed that children were shot by snipers and quadcopters, and some were killed while holding white flags.

Israeli political and military leaders are agents of the State of Israel. Their actions are attributable to the State. Therefore, **Israel is responsible for the failure to prevent genocide, the commission of genocide, and the failure to punish genocide.**

The Commission also found that the Israeli President, Prime Minister and former Defence Minister have incited genocide. No accountability has followed.

Global legal duty: All States have an obligation under international law to prevent and punish the crime of genocide, employing all measures at their disposal.

Why This Matters

- This is the strongest and most authoritative UN finding to date. Genocide is not only plausible, it is happening now.
- Member States could face legal consequences if they fail to act. The duty to prevent genocide is universal and immediate.
- The credibility of the international community depends on urgent action.

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Key Quotes

1. "Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces have had and continue to have the genocidal intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip."
2. "Genocidal intent was the only reasonable inference that could be drawn from the totality of the evidence."
3. "Israeli political and military leaders are agents of the State of Israel; therefore, their acts are attributable to the State of Israel."
4. "The State of Israel bears responsibility for the failure to prevent genocide, the commission of genocide and the failure to punish genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip."
5. "Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and then Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, have incited the commission of genocide."

Key Recommendations (include, but are not limited to the following):

To Israel:

- Immediately end the commission of genocide and implement a complete permanent ceasefire in Gaza.
- Ensure unhindered access of all United Nations staff, including UNRWA.
- End starvation policies, terminate the GHF distribution system – described by UNRWA as a 'death-trap' – and restore UN-led humanitarian aid channels.
- Ensure full, unimpeded access of humanitarian aid at scale.

To all States:

- Employ all means reasonably available to them to prevent the commission of genocide in Gaza.
- Cease the transfer of arms and other equipment or items, including jet fuel, to the State of Israel or third States where there is reason to suspect their use in military operations that have involved or could involve the commission of genocide;
- Ensure individuals and corporations in their territories and within their jurisdiction are not involved in the commission of genocide, aiding and assisting the commission of genocide or incitement to commit genocide and investigate and prosecute those who may be implicated in these crimes under international law;
- Facilitate the investigations and domestic proceedings and take action (including imposing sanctions) against the State of Israel and against individuals or corporations that are involved in or facilitating the commission of genocide or incitement to commit genocide.

The genocide in Gaza is unfolding in real time. The legal, moral and political duty of States is clear. The world must act now to stop the killing, to protect the Palestinian people, and to uphold its obligations to prevent and punish the crime of genocide.