

## **THE SH/FT:**

### **STATEMENT ON ISRAEL-GAZA WAR**

**The Shift is profoundly disturbed by the war taking place between Israel and Gaza.**

Since 2021, we have been working with the Norwegian Refugee Council in “Area C” of the West Bank in Palestine to envision a planning regime that - with the support of the Palestinian Authority and the international community - would lead to Palestinian development, laying the foundation for statehood.

The Shift is deeply distressed by breaches of international law suffered by both Palestinians and Israelis. At this time, we are particularly concerned with the conditions unfolding in Gaza. With respect to international law, as it pertains to conflict, occupation, and humanitarian aid in that context, this statement relies on and aligns with the legal analysis recently conducted by [UN Special Rapporteurs](#), the thematic reports of the [UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories](#) occupied since 1967, the reports and statements of [Human Rights Watch](#), and other human rights and humanitarian organizations, including those based in Israel and Palestine.

At the time of writing, [approximately 7,000 Palestinians have been killed, approximately 2,300 of whom are children](#). A [further 1,550 people, including at least 800 children, have been reported missing](#) and are presumed to be trapped or dead under the rubble. Hospitals are being bombed; those remaining are over capacity, [without necessary medicines and equipment](#) and are shutting down for lack of fuel. [Oxfam](#) has reported that the starvation of the Palestinian population in Gaza is being used by Israel as a weapon of war. An [estimated](#) 1.4 million people in Gaza are internally displaced, with nearly 590,000 sheltering in 150 UNRWA-designated emergency shelters. Overcrowding is a growing concern. Homes, churches, and UN schools and shelters where Palestinians are seeking safety, are also subject to Israeli air strikes. According to the Ministry of Housing in Gaza, Israel’s air strikes have resulted in more than [40% of all housing units in the Gaza Strip being damaged or demolished](#) since 7 October 2023.

This is evidence of ethnic cleansing, and multiple war crimes, including possibly the crime of genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948).

The Shift notes that multiple human rights violations are being committed, including violations of the right to life and security of the person. We are extremely concerned that Palestinians in Gaza are

also suffering [gross violations of socio-economic rights](#), contrary to international law such as the right to adequate housing, rights to food, water/sanitation, and healthcare.

Given that approximately 50% of the population of Gaza is made up of children, it is hard not to view this as [a war being waged against Palestinian children](#). Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Protocol I (art. 77), "Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault. The parties to the conflict shall provide them with the care and aid they require, whether because of their age or for any other reason." These provisions apply to children anywhere, including in schools and hospitals. This is underscored by the [UN Security Council](#), which has stated that the killing and maiming of children, including through indiscriminate bombing campaigns, as well as the targeting of schools and hospitals, is considered a grave violation against children in times of war.

It is unacceptable, and completely confounding, that the international community would support, at worst, or watch from the sidelines, at best, as ethnic cleansing, potential genocide, and other war crimes continue to be perpetrated. It appears that deepening polarization and the dehumanization of Palestinians, inconsistent with the universality of international law, has led to a complete disregard for the human life of Palestinians.

The Shift notes that both Israel and Hamas have committed many acts that must be addressed at the ICC and ICJ, including the taking of hostages both during and outside of this war, and airstrikes targeting civilian populations, homes, hospitals, schools, and food supplies.

**In solidarity with the civilians affected by this war, we call for the following, inter alia:**

- I. **The international community must take immediate and demonstrative action to ensure an immediate ceasefire and cessation of all airstrikes and actions against civilians, including the children of Gaza, and their homes.**
- II. **The safe release of all hostages.**
- III. **The immediate establishment of humanitarian aid corridors and the provision of adequate humanitarian relief in keeping with need.**
- IV. **The immediate return of electricity, water, fuel, and internet services to Gaza.**

- V. The ICC must actively and demonstratively monitor the situation in Gaza and Israel and provide clear guidance to all parties regarding war crimes.**
- VI. The international community must take an immediate stance on the targeting and killing of journalists by Israel. They must also demand access to Gaza by foreign journalists. All media outlets must use the utmost journalistic integrity in reporting the situation in Gaza and Israel and include the voices and experiences of Palestinians in Gaza in a non-discriminatory fashion. All social media conglomerates must cease from shadow bans and censorship practices that deny access to information, particularly as it pertains to events unfolding in Gaza.**
- VII. An end to the occupation of Palestine including Gaza, and the entire West Bank.**
- VIII. A guarantee of Palestinian self-determination and statehood.**