

According to international humanitarian law, Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza...

Written by lawyer Lina Zalatimo.

The Israeli occupation forces commit illegal attacks against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, including random raids, causing large numbers of civilian casualties, sometimes eliminating entire families, and other cases of bombing and destroying homes, residential towers, institutions, civilian objects, factories, and water wells. Schools, hospitals, police stations, universities, and other public buildings. The Israeli occupation forces also prevented the entry of fuel, goods, and medicines, and electricity was cut off from the Strip.

Under international humanitarian law, all parties to a conflict must, at all times, distinguish between civilians and civilian objects, combatants and military objectives, and direct their attacks only at combatants and military objectives; Direct attacks on civilians or civilian objects are prohibited and considered war crimes. Random attacks are also prohibited. When an indiscriminate attack results in the death or injury of civilians, it amounts to a war crime. Any disproportionate attack is also prohibited, except one in which the expected harm to civilians and civilian objects would be excessive in excess of the expected direct military advantage. Knowingly launching a disproportionate attack is a war crime.

Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention on Civilians issued in 1949 also stipulates, under the clause "Individual Responsibility, Collective Punishments, Plunder and Retaliation," that "No protected person may be punished for a crime that he has not personally committed. Collective punishments are also prohibited, as are all Measures of intimidation and terrorism. Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited."

Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention also stipulates that "the occupying state is prohibited from destroying any private property, unless military operations absolutely require such destruction."

Under Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, large-scale destruction of property not justified by military necessity is considered a serious violation that requires prosecution. These practices are also considered a war crime under the Statute of the International Criminal Court. International humanitarian law also stipulates that the protection of civilians is obligatory in all cases and under any circumstances. The killing of civilians is considered a war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts, and may amount to a crime against humanity. Article 25 of the Hague Regulations relating to the laws and customs of land warfare prohibits "attacking or bombarding cities, villages, dwellings and unprotected buildings."

Thus, the Israeli attacks violated international humanitarian law and all international agreements and conventions.

For its part, the United Nations Human Rights Office stated that the siege imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip is prohibited under international law, and the order to evacuate residents from northern Gaza City could amount to the forced transfer of civilians and constitute a violation of international law. Office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani said that Israel did not appear to have

made any effort to ensure the provision of adequate housing for civilians who were asked to temporarily flee from Gaza, in addition to failing to provide favorable conditions with regard to hygiene, health, safety and nutrition.

Shamdasani said, "We are concerned that this order, coupled with the imposition of a complete blockade on Gaza, may not be considered a legal emergency evacuation and may therefore amount to forcible transfer of civilians in violation of international law."

International law, on which the United Nations relies in rejecting the Israeli siege, stipulates the right of the civilian population to full protection in light of military operations, and prohibits or restricts combat measures that may cause them suffering.

International law also prohibits targeting civilians directly or randomly or retaliating against them, and it also prohibits starving them as one of the methods of war, which is what Israel did against the Gaza Strip recently.

The law also prohibits attacking, destroying, or disrupting things indispensable to civilians, such as food, crops, and livestock, and specifically drinking water facilities, which is also an order approved by Israel against the Gaza Strip.

Office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani also confirmed that the international organization has not yet opened an investigation into Israel's use of white phosphorus in the Gaza Strip.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, warned that "Palestinians are exposed to the risk of mass ethnic cleansing" and called on the international community to "urgently mediate a ceasefire between Hamas and the Israeli occupation forces." She added: "Israel has in fact carried out mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians under the pretext of war. In the name of self-defense, it seeks to justify what amounts to ethnic cleansing."

Human Rights Watch also criticized Galan's statements regarding the imposition of the siege on Gaza, describing them as "horrific and disgusting" and saying that they represent "an invitation to commit war crimes." The organization also quoted its director of Israel and Palestine affairs, Omar Shaker, in a post on the Taking note of this call to commit a war crime."

Amnesty International said in a statement, "The Israeli authorities must lift the illegal blockade that they have imposed on the Gaza Strip for 16 years. The collective punishment of the civilian population in Gaza amounts to a war crime. It is brutal and inhumane."

Agnes Callamard, Secretary General of Amnesty International, said: "Israeli forces, in their declared intention to use all means to destroy Hamas, have demonstrated a shocking disdain for civilian lives. It has destroyed street after street of residential buildings, killing civilians on a massive scale and destroying basic infrastructure, while its new restrictions are causing Gaza to rapidly run out of water, medicine, fuel and electricity.

For its part, the Department of Human Rights and Civil Society/Palestine Liberation Organization calls on the international community to take concrete measures to protect the civilian population in Gaza from unlawful attacks. And immediate international action to bind Israel to the rules of international humanitarian law, including protecting civilians by stopping its indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks and stopping deliberately targeting civilian infrastructure. The Human Rights Department also calls for the protection of Palestinian civilians in accordance with the rules of international humanitarian law, and to pressure the occupying state to adhere to the

provisions of the Geneva Conventions, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention, relating to the protection of civilians during armed conflicts and under occupation. Including by ensuring that all possible precautions are taken to reduce harm to civilians and civilian objects to a minimum. and allow unimpeded humanitarian access to civilians in Gaza. And the need to immediately lift its illegal blockade of Gaza, which amounts to collective punishment and constitutes a war crime. And putting pressure on Israel to lift the illegal blockade it has imposed on the Gaza Strip for 16 years, which amounts to collective punishment of the residents of Gaza, and is considered a war crime and a fundamental pillar of the Israeli apartheid regime.