

**Stand for victory for the children of Gaza. Today, Gaza.. who tomorrow?  
Israel continues its killing while the whole world sleeps.  
A press release expressing solidarity with our fellow Palestinians in Gaza.**

Words sometimes fail us in our attempts to describe events in the Gaza Strip. When children were killed in Qana, Shatila, Dir Yasin (and in many others instances), we described the events as “massacres”. Today, in spite of the ratification of the International Convention on Children's Rights, and the International Convention on Human Rights, and all countries' commitments to upholding them, we continue to witness renewed and developed Israeli aggression and savagery. Some describe it as a holocaust, but in reality it is a genocide. It is a genocide of the people of Palestine, the excuses for which, we are told, are protection of Israeli colonies. As the entire world stands by silent, Israel is given the green light to besiege the Gaza Strip, and through its genocide, to murder its inhabitants.

Following Israel's foundation in May 1948, Israeli human rights abuses committed against the Palestinians started, mere months before the ratification of the International Convention on Human Rights in December 1948. Since then, Israel has continued its massacres, and its killing of children, the elderly, the Palestinians, and others in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, & Egypt. And now, in December 2008, in the same month in which the International Convention on Human Rights was signed in 60 years ago, Israel has disregarded the Convention, starting with Article Three, which guarantees all people the right to live, the right to freedom, and to right to personal security.

The term “Israeli human rights abuses” in its latest sense describes the killing of more than 360 people and wounding of a further 1,700 in less than 48 hours in the Gaza Strip. 7.5% of the victims are children, and 8% are women. The majority of the victims are civilians, and government staff. Israel's disregard for international humanitarian law started months before the air strikes that commenced on 27 December 2008, when, in June 2007, Israel began its blockade of the Gaza Strip, which in turn has led to the chronic malnourishment of 46% of children living in the Gaza Strip.

Here we pause briefly to ask whether Article 2 of the International Convention on Children's Rights does not necessitate the protection of children's rights, as it dictates that, “All children's rights must be guaranteed with no exceptions, regardless of color, language, nationality, wealth, or disability.”

And in Article 4 of the International Convention on Children's Rights, it is included that “All countries to sign the Convention are obligated to upholding the rights as detailed in the Convention to the best of their abilities.” To implement these articles, the United States, the majority or Arab states, and the European Union supported Israel to export democracy to the entire Middle East. Today, we witness a culture of genocide that has been created by these civil states. Is the culture of these civil states to commit genocide?

The silence of the international community with regards the crimes committed against the Palestinian people considered as complicity with Israel's actions. Where are those who signed Article 19 of the International Convention on Children's Rights, which sought to protect children of all violence, abuse and maltreatment? The children of Gaza ask whether this the Convention's signatories' idea of protection? Those with a conscience must answer.

Is this the protection for the refugee children, which Article 22 makes provisions for? Is the opening of the Rafah border crossing into Egypt to allow the wounded out of Gaza what we consider to implementation of Article of 24 (Children's Health Rights)?

Where is the commitment to Article 38, which ensures the protection of children from fighting? Where is the Committee of experts on Children's Rights (which the Convention makes provisions for), who are to analyse the reports from the international human rights organizations, and civil society organizations?

To those who say that Israel did not sign the International Convention on Children's Rights, we remind you that Israel signed the Fourth Geneva Agreement to protect civilians during war, on 12 August, 1949.

The article 53 of Geneva convention states: " Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited...etc".

And the article 55" To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate".

Art. 59 of the convention If the whole or part of the population of an occupied territory is inadequately supplied, the Occupying Power shall agree to relief schemes on behalf of the said population, and shall facilitate them by all the means at its disposal.

Such schemes, which may be undertaken either by States or by impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, shall consist, in particular, of the provision of consignments of foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing.

And the article 11 of Annex I. Draft Agreement Relating to Hospital and Safety Zones and Localities In no circumstances may hospital and safety zones be the object of attack. They shall be protected and respected at all times by the Parties to the conflict

The additional articles to the Geneva Agreements, which were implemented in 1977, aim to ensure the best possible protection of civilians during international and civil conflicts. The Agreements also make provision for the respect of those not involved in the conflict, and to deal with them in a humane way, as well obligating the Agreements' signatories to respect children and women and to protect them from all types of violence.

In spite of these crimes and the genocide of innocent civilians and children, women, and men, the Israeli Military Spokesman has stated that "This is just the beginning," thus placing the lives of 1.5 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in danger. The international community's silence with regards to the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip signals its complicity with Israeli actions.

We are as Child Rights Networks in South and North Lebanon, we call on international policy-makers and those with influence on international events, and on those with humanity, and to those

committed to protecting human rights, children's rights, and international agreements, starting with:

- All UN agencies, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon
- All organizations, foundations, international and Arab parliaments committed to protecting human rights and children's rights.
- Arab, European, and international governments.

We call on you to take urgent action to uphold the principle of human rights central to international humanitarian law, and to pressure all governments with influence on Israel and those supportive of Israeli human rights abuses and its continued genocide in the Gaza Strip, to work towards achieving the following points:

- Opening of the Rafah crossing to allow humanitarian aid, food, medicine, and other items into the Gaza Strip, with insurance of the international community that Israel will not attack these humanitarian convoys.
- Ensure the safety of the civilians, especially children, women, and the elderly, and to protect them from military operations.
- Stop the continued Israeli aggression immediately in the Gaza Strip, and to prosecute those responsible for the Israeli policies and actions in the Gaza Strip, which, under international humanitarian law, constitute war crimes.

**Child Protection Network – Saida**  
**Child Protection Network – Tyre**  
**Child Protection Network – North Lebanon**