



**ASSOCIATION FOR
DEMOCRACY
IN THE MALDIVES**



Joint Press Release by Maldivian CSO Coalition in Solidarity with the State of Palestine

10th December 2023 - As we mark the International Human Rights day, and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the undersigned Maldivian civil society organisations condemn the continued genocide and occupation in Palestine by the apartheid regime of Israel. The 2023 Human Rights Day theme of "Freedom, Equality and Justice for all" is impossible, without ensuring the freedom and inalienable human rights of the people of Palestine. We call on the international community, especially the United Nations, to commit to collective action in demanding an immediate ceasefire and end the brutal occupation of Palestine, It is imperative for the global community to enforce sanctions against Israel and prosecute perpetrators for committing war crimes and collective punishment against the people of Palestine with absolute disregard to human life and to international laws.

The decades of occupation, and the forced removal of Palestinians from their land in the great tragedy of the Nakba / النكبة, of 1948, and the countless such tragedies that have taken place thereafter, have been met with bureaucratic inaction. Today, yet again, leaders of the world remain spectators as Israeli Occupation Forces operate with impunity, having already killed over 21,000 Palestinian children, women and men, wiping out communities, entire families and destroying over 60% of homes laying waste to Gaza. Using weapons of mass destruction, Israel continues to wage war, entrapping, starving, and depriving 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza of basic necessities. Over the past 50 days they have forcibly displaced 1.7 million people, under constant bombardment. Israel has demonstrated sheer contempt of International Law as it bombed neighbourhoods, schools, universities, hospitals, refugee camps, mosques, churches, and other civilian infrastructure. Israeli impunity and absolute disregard for International Law is further evident from the reports of the unlawful use of white phosphorus in warfare at the border of Southern Lebanon.

On 4 December 2023, nearly two months since the Israeli siege on Gaza began, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) described the state of Gaza as follows: 'The level of human suffering is intolerable. It is unacceptable that civilians have no safe place to go in Gaza, and with a military siege in place there is also no adequate humanitarian response currently possible.' Throughout this disproportionate war of Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people, the UN General Assembly has remained an inactive bystander, having failed to secure a ceasefire to save innocent lives.

Whilst the UN General Assembly has voted for a non-binding resolution to call for a ceasefire, only a few Member States are currently taking appropriate actions under International Law to hold the Israeli government to account. Legal experts and genocide scholars including UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders have pointed to mounting evidence to “genocide in the making” in Gaza and called on governments and the UN System to mobilise to stop it.

We therefore reiterate the following on the Government of the Maldives, World leaders and the U.N to:

- Declare that the State of Israel practises a system of Apartheid, and to impose diplomatic, military and trade embargo on the State of Israel
- Invoke the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (Genocide Convention) against the State of Israel
- Suspend the State of Israel from the United Nations General Assembly: Israel's membership to the UN is conditional on compliance with Resolution 181 (limits to the Israeli state) and Resolution 194 (Right of return of refugees). Israel's violation of these resolutions must result in its suspension until it ends the occupation and system of Apartheid
- Prosecute the State of Israel for repeatedly committing crimes against humanity and violations of international law under the universal jurisdiction within the International Criminal Court
- Implore reparations for historical and ongoing harm caused, through appropriate mechanisms within International Law and as defined by the sovereignty of Palestine, with commitments to restitution and non-repetition - in consultation with the Palestinian people.

-ENDS-

Uthema

Transparency Maldives

Hope for Women

Association for Democracy in the Maldives

Zero Waste Maldives

Rise Up Maldives