



The barbaric conduct of the Israeli state must be stopped
The dignity and freedom of the Palestinian people must be upheld

The genocidal violence unleashed by Israel in Occupied Palestine since October 7 has produced unspeakable tragedy and suffering for the Palestinian people. Such barbaric behaviour places the State of Israel outside the bounds of a civilized world. Israel has become a pariah state, and must be treated as such by the international community

Sadly, the response of many governments, especially in the global West, has been less than exemplary. The active support for Israel's misdeeds extended by the United States and a good many of its allies can only be described as criminal complicity. Those governments and their leaders must also be brought to account.

The time is long past for debates about whether genocide has been committed or the US and other NATO members have been actively involved in the orgy of violence against the people of Gaza and the West Bank.

The evidence clearly indicates that the Israeli use of force satisfies the legal requirements of genocide, and Western governments have to varying degrees supported the commission and persistence of this crime of crimes. Bemoaning this ugly reality is necessary, but woefully short of enough.

We unreservedly condemn all forms of political violence directed at civilians, including the criminal elements of the Hamas attack of 7 October. However, that attack provides no legal or moral justification for the genocidal onslaught against the Palestinian people, which has paved the way for ethnic cleansing and land grabbing. Every Israeli action since 7 October has accentuated the most objectionable features of its long occupation, and earlier policies of forced evacuation.

SHAPE BELIEVES THE TIME HAS COME FOR A BOLD RESPONSE, which is why we issue this call for urgent action on two different but closely related fronts.

The first front has to do with the immediate steps needed to stop the genocidal assault on Gaza. To this end:

- We call on governments everywhere to actively press, not just through words but by all nonviolent means at their disposal, for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and wholesale economic reconstruction in Gaza and the West Bank funded primarily by Israel and its Western backers, with the Palestinian people given full control of the rebuilding process.
- We call on Western publics to demand of their governments that they:
 - Join without delay the international call for an immediate ceasefire;
 - Stop all forms of diplomatic, economic and military support for Israel's use of force in Gaza and the West Bank

- Support South Africa's application instituting proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which argues that Israel's conduct in Gaza violates its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- We commend and support the widespread and passionate public support for the suffering people of Palestine in Arab and other Muslim countries, and we remind the governments of those countries that they will be judged not by their words but by their deeds. Their response thus far leaves much to be desired.

Individual governments and key multilateral bodies, especially the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation but also BRICS, should:

- Spearhead a series of sharply worded resolutions at the United Nations, both in the General Assembly and the Security Council, with the primary aim of driving home the increasing diplomatic isolation of both Israel and its primary backer the United States
- Express their firm support for South Africa's application to the ICJ accusing Israel of genocide and requesting the Court to order an immediate stop to violent actions of a genocidal character
- Support the appeal by Algeria and Chile to the International Criminal Court to indict those Israelis responsible for perpetuating acts of genocide.
- We urge all governments to consider the severing or at least suspension of diplomatic relations with the State of Israel, and launch an international campaign for an international embargo on arms sales and other forms of military assistance to Israel.

The second front has to do with creating the conditions for a just and sustainable peace, respectful of Palestinian rights under international law.

To this end we call on civil society everywhere – NGOs, religious and cultural organisations, labor unions, professional bodies, corporations and banks – to:

- Implement policies within their spheres of concern and influence supportive of Palestinian rights
- Consider the formation of an independent, non-governmental Commission of Peace, Justice, and economic reconstruction that brings together an eminent international panel of thought leaders and practitioners. Its brief would be to consult widely with Palestinian groups and intellectuals and propose a detailed transition to a new Palestine/Israel reality that fully respects the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and remedies the wrongs of the past, notably Israel's illegitimate and brutal occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.
- Establish a separate panel, comprised of eminent jurists, other experts and representatives of civil society organisations to consider ways in which the United Nations system can effectively exercise its authority in the resolution of the Palestinian question. Every avenue within the UN system should be considered: the UN Security Council, but also the General Assembly, including the possibility of using a Uniting for Peace mechanism (modelled on Resolution 377A), UN agencies, and importantly the office of the UN Secretary-General, with greater space given within the UN system for a prominent, concerted and sustained civil society intervention.

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14 January 2024

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