

Gaza, Genocide, and Justice:

Three years on, IADL Demands an End to Israeli Impunity, Colonialism and the Destruction of International Law

12 October 2026

Three years after the beginning of the intensified Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) reaffirms that Israel's genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, supported by the United States and other third states, constitute a fundamental assault on the Palestinian people, and, further, upon international law and the right to self-determination.

The record is unequivocal: Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people. This genocide did not begin on 7 October 2023, but is built upon nearly eight decades of settler colonialism, apartheid, forced displacement, massacres, imprisonment and systematic denial of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights to return and self-determination.

In the face of the greatest crime in international law, the international community's obligation is not simply to express concern, call for restraint or negotiate temporary arrangements. It is to end the genocide, terminate the illegal occupation, dismantle the structures of apartheid and colonial domination, and ensure accountability for all those responsible, including officials of third states who have enabled and facilitated these crimes. These obligations are neither optional nor dependent upon the political preferences of powerful states.

The United States' imposition of sanctions on the International Criminal Court on 9 October 2026 is the latest escalation in its drive to protect war criminals, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, from prosecution or accountability. It exemplifies the role of the U.S. in seeking to undermine any international or multilateral system that it does not control absolutely. Bottom line, the US's sanctioning of the ICC is an assault on the rule of law itself.

Three years of genocide and the so-called ceasefire

The magnitude of Israel's crimes in Gaza is staggering. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, as of 8 October 2026, at least 74,254 Palestinians have been killed and 175,306 injured since 7 October 2023. These figures do not capture the full human toll, including those still buried beneath the rubble, the missing, and the Palestinians whose deaths result from the destruction of healthcare, malnutrition, untreated disease and the deliberate deprivation of the necessities of life.

Over two million Palestinians have endured repeated displacement, bombardment, siege and destruction of homes, schools, hospitals and essential infrastructure. The deliberate destruction of healthcare has deprived Palestinians of life-saving treatment. As of 7 October 2026, approximately 21,000 patients required treatment abroad, including 5,600 children and 2,800 cancer patients, while over 2,000 reportedly died awaiting evacuation.

We condemn continuing threats against Gaza's hospitals, particularly Kamal 'Udwan Hospital. The Palestinian healthcare system has already been devastated, and it is the responsibility of all

mediating parties, third states and international institutions to restrain Israel against further crimes targeting Palestinian health.

Article II of the Genocide Convention encompasses serious bodily or mental harm and the deliberate imposition of conditions calculated to destroy a protected group. Israel's starvation, siege, forced displacement and systematic deprivation must be understood accordingly.

The so-called ceasefire has not ended the genocide. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, at least 1,471 Palestinians have been killed and 5,189 injured since the October 2025 ceasefire, as of 8 October 2026. Israeli forces continue occupying large areas of Gaza, demolishing homes, obstructing reconstruction, bombing, carrying out extrajudicial executions, issuing evacuation orders and threatening renewed mass bombardment.

While the Palestinian resistance has fulfilled its ceasefire obligations, Israel continues and escalates its daily violations. Mediators, including Egypt, Qatar, Türkiye and the United States, must hold Israel accountable.

The Palestinian people are entitled not merely to a pause in their destruction, but to freedom, security, justice, reparations, reconstruction, return and the full exercise of their sovereignty and self-determination over the Gaza Strip and their entire occupied land.

The United Nations must uphold international law

The IADL expresses profound concern over UN Secretary-General António Guterres' message marking 7 October 2023, adopting the Israeli narrative and characterizing the actions of the Palestinian resistance as an "abhorrent terrorist attack" without situating them within over 78 years of colonial domination, occupation, apartheid, forced displacement and the denial of Palestinian self-determination.

Officials of the United Nations have the responsibility to recognize the distinction between an occupying colonial power and a people struggling for liberation, including their right to resist colonial domination by all available means, including armed struggle.

UN officials must not reproduce the political narratives of powerful states at the expense of the UN Charter and the Palestinian people's inalienable rights.

Reject the colonial "Board of Peace"

The so-called "Board of Peace", established under the direction of U.S. President Donald Trump, represents a dangerous attempt to replace international law, multilateral institutions and collective responsibility with a privatized, colonial arrangement dominated by powerful states and private capital.

Gaza's future cannot become a commercial enterprise, foreign trusteeship or real-estate project, with reconstruction conditioned upon Palestinian disarmament, political submission or abandonment of national rights.

The Charter of the United Nations cannot be replaced by the charter of a body dominated by the President of the United States, a state providing military, financial and diplomatic support for Israel's genocide. We particularly condemn attempts to use the Board of Peace, international stabilization arrangements or externally imposed administrative structures to circumvent the Palestinian people's right to govern themselves and determine their political future. Rather than abandoning the United Nations to the dictates of powerful states or submitting to the proliferation of the privatization of international law, the international community must reclaim and defend its Charter, strengthen democratic multilateralism and insist upon the equal application of international law.



The right to resist and the necessity of disarming Israel

The IADL reaffirms the Palestinian people's right to resist colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all legitimate means, including armed struggle.

This right is inseparable from the right to self-determination, recognized in the United Nations Charter, the International Covenants on Human Rights and successive resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly affirming the legitimacy of struggles against colonial and foreign domination.

We reject all attempts to impose disarmament on the Palestinian people, the victims of colonialism and genocide, while Israel maintains overwhelming military superiority, extensive Western military support, nuclear weapons and illegal occupation. It is Israel, the occupying power and perpetrator of genocide, that must be disarmed. The first steps to achieve this include a comprehensive two-way arms embargo on Israel, termination of military and intelligence cooperation, and international measures toward Israeli disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

Further, we reject politically motivated terrorist designations criminalizing Palestinian liberation movements and resistance organizations and call for such designations to be rescinded. Palestinian sovereignty and self-determination cannot be conditioned upon recognition of the colonial regime, exclusion of Palestinian political movements, foreign supervision of Palestinian institutions or the surrender of the right of return.

Genocide throughout Palestine and regional aggression

Israel's crimes in Gaza are inseparable from its settlement expansion, land seizures, settler violence, forced displacement, military invasions and mass imprisonment throughout the West Bank, including Jerusalem.

We condemn torture, administrative detention, enforced disappearance and sexual violence against Palestinian prisoners. At least 92 Palestinians have died in Israeli prisons since 7 October 2023, while Israel withholds over 700 Palestinian bodies, including 99 prisoners' bodies.

We further condemn Israeli bombardment, occupation and assassinations in Lebanon, military aggression against Iran and Yemen, and violations of other states' sovereignty. The use of assassination, bombardment, military intimidation and economic coercion to impose political outcomes across the region represents a direct threat to the prohibition on the use of force enshrined in Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter.

Third-state complicity and repression of solidarity

The United States bears grave responsibility for enabling genocide through arms transfers, military assistance, intelligence cooperation and diplomatic protection. Britain, Germany, Canada and other states must likewise be held accountable for facilitating Israeli crimes.

Under the Genocide Convention, states have an obligation to prevent and punish genocide. They may not evade that obligation by invoking strategic alliances, commercial interests, domestic political considerations or purported commitments to Israel's security. No government can plausibly claim ignorance after three years of mass killing, destruction, starvation and repeated warnings.

We condemn criminal prosecutions, organizational bans, immigration persecution, surveillance, financial sanctions and administrative designations targeting Palestinian organizations and international solidarity movements by Western countries, particularly the United States, Britain and multiple European states.

When governments criminalize those working to stop genocide while arming its perpetrators, they are aiding and abetting the genocide.



We stand in solidarity with all those facing persecution for their support of Palestinian rights, including students, workers, trade unionists, journalists, lawyers, academics, human rights defenders and political organizers, and call for the withdrawal of politically motivated charges and designations, the release of those arbitrarily detained, the restoration of fundamental democratic freedoms, and the termination of sanctions targeting political activity and solidarity with Palestine.

Accountability and urgent international action

The ICJ's provisional measures in *South Africa v. Israel* and its July 2024 Advisory Opinion establish urgent obligations for states. The ICC arrest warrants against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant must be enforced. Universal jurisdiction must be pursued against perpetrators and accomplices, including military commanders, corporate actors and third-state officials.

The IADL calls upon states, international institutions, bar associations, lawyers and legal workers to:

End genocide and occupation: Halt Israeli attacks, siege, starvation and forced displacement; secure Palestinian self-determination, sovereignty and return.

Disarm Israel: Impose a comprehensive two-way arms embargo, terminate military and intelligence co-operation, and pursue nuclear disarmament.

End support for apartheid: Impose comprehensive sanctions, sever diplomatic relations, close Israeli embassies, and seek Israel's expulsion from the UN or suspension from the General Assembly.

Reject colonial control of Gaza: Dismantle the Board of Peace, reject imposed stabilization forces and trusteeships, and ensure Palestinian-directed reconstruction and reparations.

Defend the Palestinian right to resist: Reject unilateral disarmament and politically motivated terrorist designations; uphold the right to resist occupation in accordance with international law.

Prosecute perpetrators and accomplices: Implement ICJ decisions, enforce ICC warrants, pursue universal jurisdiction and investigate corporate and third-state complicity. Reject the US sanctions on the ICC.

End repression of solidarity: Revoke political sanctions and designations, release arbitrarily detained activists and defend freedom of expression, association and assembly.

End regional aggression: Stop Israeli and U.S. attacks on Lebanon, Iran, Yemen and other states, and prosecute illegal assassinations and extrajudicial executions.

Defend international institutions: Reject privately dominated substitutes for the UN, invoke Uniting for Peace procedures and establish renewed international mechanisms against Israeli apartheid.

Mobilize the legal profession: Coordinate investigations, litigation and universal jurisdiction cases; challenge arms transfers; defend persecuted activists and Palestinian prisoners; and pursue accountability without political exception.

The IADL particularly calls upon its member associations, affiliated lawyers and legal workers worldwide to redouble efforts to prosecute Israeli political and military leaders and third-state officials enabling their crimes.

Every jurisdiction must become a forum for challenging impunity, and every legal mechanism capable of interrupting assistance to genocide must be utilized. Every effort to criminalize Palestinian solidarity must be confronted through organized legal defense.

Three years of genocide have demonstrated the consequences of the systematic destruction of international law. Today, the Palestinian people's steadfast resistance to extermination, displacement and colonial domination remains central to defending the rights of all peoples against colonialism, racism, imperialism and arbitrary power.

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers is committed to defending international justice and accountability against the U.S.-led assault on the rule of law. We reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle for return, liberation and self-determination, from the river to the sea.

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