

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION  
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

**Statement 5 (2023)**

**Israel and the State of Palestine**

*The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,*

*Acting under its Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedures;*

*Alarmed by the scale of violence and the humanitarian catastrophe that is unfolding in the occupied Gaza Strip and by the well-founded fears that the region is being engulfed in a broader conflict;*

*Deeply shocked by the cruel attacks carried out by Hamas and other armed groups on the 7 October, as well as the launching of rockets towards Israel, resulting in the death of at least 1,400 Israelis including women and children, and the injuries of more than 5,400 as well as the taking of hostage;<sup>1</sup>*

*Deeply shocked also about the ongoing Israeli indiscriminate and brutal military attacks in Gaza Strip, particularly the airstrikes, leading to the killing of more than 7,000 Palestinians, including at least 2,900 children, and the injuries of more than 18,400 since 7 October 2023, as well as to over 1,600 people, including 900 children, reportedly being trapped under rubble in Gaza and to the destruction of tens of thousands of homes;<sup>2</sup>*

*Alarmed by the decision of Israel on 9 October to further tighten the ongoing and long-standing blockade of the occupied Gaza Strip and to withhold essential supplies such as food, water, electricity, energy sources and supplies and medicines, which amounts to a form of collective punishment against the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza Strip;*

*Gravely concerned by the Israeli decision of 12 October ordering 1.1 million Palestinians in north Gaza to relocate to southern Gaza within 24 hours, including those sheltered in UN facilities;*

*Deeply concerned about the longstanding Israeli military occupation of Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem and the Israeli policies and practices, including illegal settlements, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories that amount to violations of the Convention and of other international human rights obligations;<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> See [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #20](#), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 26 October 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>3</sup> See the Committee's concluding observations, [CERD/C/ISR/CO/17-19](#), adopted on 12 December 2019, paras 21–23.

*Highly concerned* about the sharp increase in racist hate speech and dehumanization directed at Palestinians since 7 October, particularly on the Internet and in social media, including by senior officials, politicians, members of the Parliament, and public figures, particularly the statement of 9 October made by the Israeli Minister of Defense, Yoav Gallant, in which he referred to Palestinians as ‘human animals’, language which could incite genocidal actions;

*Concerned* about the deteriorating human rights situation in the occupied West Bank since October 7, including the restrictions on freedom of movement and the increase in arbitrary arrests of Palestinians in the West Bank and of Palestinian citizens of Israel as well as the increase in unlawful use of lethal force by the Israeli forces and increase in settler violence, leading to the killing of at least 103 Palestinians, including at least 32 children;

*Recalling* the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which Israel has been a party since 1979 and in particular the obligations contained in articles 2 (1), 3, 4 and 5 (a)–(d, i and ii) as well as the concluding observations of 12 December 2019 on Israel issued by the Committee ([CERD/C/ISR/CO/17-19](#)), especially paragraphs 3, 9, 10, 22, 23, 26, 27, 44 and 45;

*Recalling* also the concluding observations of 23 August 2019 on the State of Palestine issued by the Committee ([CERD/C/PSE/CO/1-2](#)), especially paragraphs 19 and 20;

*Recalling* its general recommendations No. 36 (2020) on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials; No. 35 (2013) on combatting racist hate speech; No. 21 (1996) on the right to self-determination; and No. 20 (1996) on article 5 of the Convention; and No. 19 (1995) on Article 3 of the Convention;

*Recalling* the international obligations that Israel and other State parties have undertaken under the ICERD:

1. **Calls upon** Israel to fully respect its international obligations, in particular those arising from the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
2. **Urges** Israel and other State parties to develop and implement an immediate and complete ceasefire;
3. **Urges** the release of hostages taken by Hamas and other armed groups as well as the release of Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem and Palestinian citizens of Israel who are arbitrarily detained by Israel;
4. **Calls upon** Israel and other State parties to provide all necessary financial and humanitarian aid to Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip and the creation of humanitarian corridors that allow people to leave Gaza and return;
5. **Urges** Israel to ensure that all Palestinians under its effective control, particularly those in Gaza Strip, enjoy full rights under the Convention without discrimination especially, their right to life and security of person, as well as their right to medical care and right to freedom of movement;

6. **Calls upon** Israel to firmly condemn any form of hate speech and distance itself from racist hate speech expressed by politicians and public figures, including members of the government and parliament, and ensure that such acts are investigated and adequately and robustly punished;
7. **Further calls upon** Israel to combat the spread of racist hate speech in the media, on the Internet and in social media, in close cooperation with media outlets, Internet service providers and social media platforms as well as members of groups vulnerable to racist hate speech;
8. **Urges** the State of Palestine to implement the recommendations made by the Committee in its concluding observations of 23 August 2019, in particular to combat hate speech and incitement to violence, including on the Internet and by public figures, politicians and media officials;<sup>4</sup>
9. **Calls upon** Israel to take all the necessary measures to fully implement the recommendations made by the Committee in its concluding observations of 12 December 2019, in particular:
  - a. To ensure that measures taken in the Occupied Palestinian Territories:
    - i. Do not discriminate in purpose or in effect against Palestinian citizens of Israel, Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in territories under the State party's effective control;
    - ii. Are implemented with full respect for human rights and relevant principles of international humanitarian law;
  - b. To rescind its blockade policy and urgently allow and facilitate the rebuilding of homes and civilian infrastructures; ensure access to necessary urgent humanitarian assistance; and also ensure the right to freedom of movement, housing, education, health care, water and sanitation, in compliance with the Convention.

27 October 2023

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<sup>4</sup> See the Committee's concluding observations, [CERD/C/PSE/CO/1-2](#), adopted on 23 August 2019, paras 19–20.