Press release

January 10, 2024

**“How long will we remain governed by two international laws: one for all of us and one for Israel?”** Anders Jonny Ferm (20 February 1938 – 1 October 2019). A Swedish diplomat and social democratic politician

Allow me to start by conveying my deepest condolences to you and to all the media society around the world for the loss of your colleague Hamza Al Dahdouh, the son of your colleague Wael Al Dahdouh.

Hamza was killed last Sunday by an Israeli airstrike.

Last October 24th, Wael Al Dahdouh, Hamza's father, lost his wife, son, daughter, and grandson in an Israeli airstrike.

As of January 7th, 109 of your Palestinian colleagues have been killed in the past three months alone.

Media correspondents have a noble mission. They can save humanity in general if they report honestly, open their hearts, and present all sides of the story.

They should engage in more discussions and shed light on difficult subjects.

They should ask difficult questions, accept and publish truthful answers, and search and dig deep for the truth and the facts. We all look to you as the primary source of truth.

97 days of the Israeli frenzy war on the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, they have made Palestinian life miserable.

We all know that death is an inevitable destiny for each one of us, but in Palestine, it is the Israeli state declared policy that has made it so, and it is not a destiny that is unavoidable for thousands of cases.

As of 6 January, at least 22835 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October.

About 70% of those killed are reported to be women and children. Another 58416 Palestinians have been reportedly injure.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Since the beginning of the Israeli war against the Palestinian people up to 3 January, 1.9 million, which is equivalent to 85% of the population, have been forcibly displaced across the Gaza Strip, some of them multiple times in search of safety.

The total number of arrested Palestinians has reached 5755, including 190 women, 355 children.

There are also 20 journalists charged with administrative detention and 35 journalists who remain in detention.

A total of 2796 administrative detention orders have been issued. Seven detainees have been killed in Israeli prisons in the last three months. The Israeli media has reported that others have died in prisons, but there is no further information available about their situation at this time.

The total number of prisoners as of the end of last November was 8800.

According to the Ministry of Education, 296 students have been martyred and 8,059 have been injured since the start of the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank three months ago.

The Gaza Strip was already in the throes of a humanitarian crisis before the war, mainly due to Israel’s 17-year blockade. About 80% of the population relied on humanitarian aid. Some 44% of households were food insecure and another 16% were at risk of [food insecurity](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/gaza_in_2020_a_liveable_place_english.pdf).

Everyone in Gaza is going hungry. Approximately 2.2 million people are surviving day by day on almost nothing, routinely going without meals. The desperate search for food is relentless; and usually unsuccessful, leaving the entire population – including babies, children, pregnant or nursing women and the elderly – hungry.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Before the first session of the ICJ, Israel announced that it had started a new phase of the war, characterized by a less intense invasion of Gaza. We strongly believe that this is merely a distraction tactic. We question the exact meaning of a **"less intense phase"** and what measures can be used to determine if this phase is truly less intense. So far, the estimated average daily death toll among Palestinians is 244 per day. Our question is, **does killing 220 Palestinians per day truly reflect a less intense phase?**

Four out of five households in northern Gaza and half of internally displaced persons (IDP) households in the south, residents went days without any food and many skipped meals to feed their children.[[3]](#footnote-3)

A [UNICEF](https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/intensifying-conflict-malnutrition-and-disease-gaza-strip-creates-deadly-cycle) survey from 26 December 2023 found that an increasing number of children are not receiving their basic nutritional needs. About 90% of children under age two in Gaza consume food from two or fewer food groups.[[4]](#footnote-4)

This reality is not a byproduct of war, but a direct result of Israel’s declared policy. Israel is deliberately denying the entry of enough food into Gaza to meet the population's needs.

Residents now depend entirely on food supplies from outside Gaza, as they can no longer produce almost any food themselves. Most cultivated fields have been destroyed, and accessing open areas during the war is dangerous in any case.[[5]](#footnote-5)

In his fifth official visit to the region during the last three months, Mr. Blinken, the Secretary of State, concluded his long trip to the Middle East by meeting with many Israeli officials and members of the war cabinet in Tel Aviv. Blinken's visit aimed to verify that Israel is indeed transitioning to the third stage of the war, as announced by the (IOF) spokesman and Gallant in foreign media outlets this week. This stage would involve a reduction in the intensity of the fighting and a potential return of Gazans to their homes in the northern part of the Strip.

Blinken said at a press conference following a separate meeting with top Qatari officials in Doha, "Palestinian civilians must be able to return home as soon as conditions allow. They cannot, they must not be pressed to leave Gaza."

In this connection, I would like to comment on his trip on the following points:

First: Mr. Blinken himself passed military assistance to Israel just a few days before the end of last year, and this will surely be another key factor in the killing of innocent Palestinians.

Second: Instead of calling for an immediate ceasefire and an end to Israeli brutal hostility, his main concern is to verify that Israel started the third stage of war. This will surely result in the loss of thousands of innocent lives.

Third: He talks about the possible return of Gazans to their homes in the north, but he intentionally forgets to mention that their homes have already been leveled and the entire landscape has been completely changed. So, if these civilians are not forcibly removed, they will find nothing to support their basic needs for a dignified life as humans, and they might voluntarily leave the destroyed Gaza.

Fourth: He said in his press release with King Abdullah, "Palestinian civilians must be able to return home as soon as conditions allow. They cannot, they must not be pressed to leave Gaza." **The question is, when will he put pressure on Israel to create conditions that allow for this?**

We should judge people based on their actions, not their words. If the US is not fully complicit in the textbook genocide against the Palestinian people, then we really need a practical definition of complicity or to remove the word complicity from the dictionary.

Palestine today sits at the top of the political discourse all around the world. The Palestinian people have paid and continue to pay unbearable prices. Therefore, I would like to stress the political positions articulated by our Prime Minister, Dr. Mohamad Shtieh, as follows:

First, our ultimate priority is to stop the Israeli aggression against our people.

Second, Israeli must allow the flow of humanitarian and relief materials by opening all the crossing points to reach all areas in Gaza, including the north.

Third, we must prevent the reoccupation of the Gaza Strip or the annexation of any areas under the names of buffer zones or any security pretexts.

Fourth, we must prevent the forced or voluntary displacement of Palestinians and push them towards Rafah.

Fifth, it is necessary to work towards creating a political path. Since the Palestinian issue has risen to the top of the global concern pyramid.

**We must focus on the following:**

a. International recognition of the State of Palestine as a member of the United Nations, after being an observer for more than 11 years.

b. Bilateral recognition of the State of Palestine by Europe and the United States.

c. The United Nations should set a timetable to end the occupation, as negotiations have not been successful due to the power imbalance and Israel's cancellation of the Oslo Accords on the ground.

d. Establishing an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Gaza is an integral part of the land of Palestine. There is no state in Gaza, and there can be no state without Gaza.

e. Take all necessary measures to hold Israel accountable for its crimes.

I thank you all

1. - <https://rb.gy/5ikuif> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.globalministries.org/btselem-israel-is-starving-gaza/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. - https://rb.gy/jum8z2 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. - https://rb.gy/x9992e [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://rb.gy/xvbvih [↑](#footnote-ref-5)