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Press Release

Israel Massacres Starving Palestinian Civilians Waiting for Humanitarian Aid

The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific condemns in the strongest terms the horrific massacre in which Israeli occupation forces deliberately opened heavy fire and shelling towards thousands of starving Palestinian civilians as they waited to collect desperately-needed life-saving humanitarian aid near al-Rashid Street in Gaza. At least 112 Palestinian civilians, including men, women and children, were killed and over 750 were injured in this “Flour Massacre”. The head nurse at al-Shifa Hospital, Jadallah al-Shafei, reported that the majority of victims had suffered “gunshots and shrapnel in the head and upper parts of their bodies. They were hit by direct artillery shelling, drone missiles and gun firing.”

Impunity and inaction have allowed Israel, the occupying Power, to continue its genocidal slaughter, starvation, and forcible displacement of innocent Palestinian civilians in grave breach of every international legal norm, principle, and obligation, and in flagrant violation of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling of 26 January 2024, which included orders to prevent genocidal acts and to ensure the provision of basic services and essential humanitarian aid to the Palestinians in Gaza. Instead, Israel has killed 30,000 Palestinian children, women, and men in less than five months, and has inflicted a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza that is unparalleled in this century. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr Michael Fakhri, “We have never seen a civilian population made to go so hungry and so completely [...] All things indicate that this has been intentional.”

The gruesome and outrageous “Flour Massacre” of innocent, starving Palestinian civilians once again proves that the Israeli government pays no attention to international appeals or empty calls for the protection of civilians and respect for international law. As expressed by His Excellency Riyadh Mansour, Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to the UN, before the ICJ, “Justice can no longer wait for the day Israel has an epiphany and suddenly decides to reverse course, and commit to the law and United Nations resolutions.”

The international community, including Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, must take swift, serious, and concrete actions to halt Israel’s criminal onslaught, to protect Palestinian civilians, to enable and ensure the effective implementation of the provisional measures indicated by the ICJ, and to prevent genocide, per their legal obligations as parties to the Genocide Convention.

For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific.