

*Hamas says Israel's so-called extermination zones constitute a war crime*

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**This file photo shows the moment when an Israeli missile fired from a drone killed four unarmed**

**young Palestinian men in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza Strip, in early January.**

Gaza City, April 1 (RHC)-- The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has strongly condemned imposition of so-called extermination or kill zones by Israeli army across the besieged Gaza Strip, describing the move as a war crime.

The announcement by Hamas came after some Israeli media outlets reported that the regime has designated certain areas of Gaza as extermination zones where Israeli forces are authorized to shoot and kill any Palestinian, even if they are not armed.

Based to these reports, the boundaries of such extermination areas are not determined in advance, but according to the conditions on the ground and the distance of people from the building where Israeli forces are staying. In general, the limits of the kill zones and the exact procedure regarding the operation in them are subject to the interpretation of commanders of combat units.

“As soon as people, especially adult men, enter the extermination area ... the order is to shoot, even to kill, even if the suspect is not armed,” an Israeli reserve officer was quoted as saying.

“What has been revealed by the Zionist media today that the criminal occupation army has established ‘extermination zones’ along the Gaza Strip, where anyone who moves there is killed without any discrimination, is a brutal war crime,” Hamas said in its statement.

The movement added that the move is also “a violation of all customs and laws of war by targeting unarmed civilians in ongoing incidents, some of which were revealed in video clips previously broadcast...” “We call on the United Nations and international judicial institutions, led by the International Criminal Court, to begin an immediate investigation into these heinous crimes and other scandalous violations that occur in ... front of the entire world,” Hamas noted.

It stressed that the goal of such investigation must be “to prosecute the leaders of the Nazi occupation [regime], ... stop the ongoing massacre [of Palestinians] and the genocidal war that is being waged against defenseless civilians [in Gaza], and protect human values trampled by the occupation [regime] with the support and a green light from the administration of [US] President [Joe] Biden.”

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