

More than 250 human rights organizations demand end to Israeli arms transfers

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A view shows the damaged al-Shifa Hospital after Israeli forces withdrew from the hospital and

the area around it following a two-week operation, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas resistance group, in Gaza City, on April 2, 2024. (Photo by Reuters)

Geneva, April 12 (RHC)-- More than 250 humanitarian and human rights organizations worldwide have called for ending arms transfers to Israel amid the bloody ground and air strikes against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip and demanded an immediate ceasefire in the territory.

A statement demanding these actions, which was initially issued in January with a signee list that included sixteen major humanitarian and human rights organizations, has in recent months grown substantially as the Israeli military has intensified its attacks in Gaza.

The joint statement described itself as “an open call to all UN member states to stop fueling the crisis in Gaza and avert further humanitarian catastrophe and loss of civilian life.” “We, the undersigned organizations, call on all states to immediately halt the transfer of weapons, parts, and ammunition to Israel,” it said, pointing to the “risk they are used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law.”

“Israel’s bombardment and siege are depriving the civilian population of the basics to survive and rendering Gaza uninhabitable. Today, the civilian population in Gaza faces a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented severity and scale.”

The statement highlighted the fact that more than 153 UN member states have called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, warning that “Israel continues to use explosive weapons and munitions in densely populated areas with massive humanitarian consequences for the people of Gaza.

The UN Security Council has expressed “grave concern” over an Israeli airstrike that killed seven members of the US-based charity, World Central Kitchen earlier this month in the Gaza Strip. “Member states have a legal responsibility to use all possible tools to leverage better protection of civilians and adherence to international humanitarian law.”

Among the statement’s signatories are Save the Children, Oxfam, the Jewish Network for Palestine, Medico International and Christian Aid.

“Gaza today is the most dangerous place to be a child, a journalist and an aid worker. Hospitals and schools should never become battlegrounds,” the statement read. It also warned against recent calls by top Israeli officials for the deportation of Palestinian civilians from Gaza.

“The forcible transfer within Gaza and deportation of a portion of the population across borders, lacking any guarantees of return, would constitute a serious violation of international law, amounting to an atrocity crime,” the statement noted.

Israel unleashed the bloody war on Gaza on October 7 after Hamas launched Operation al-Aqsa Storm in the occupied territories in retaliation for the Tel Aviv regime’s incessant crimes against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

Since the start of the aggression, the Tel Aviv regime has killed at least 33,634 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the health ministry in the territory. The campaign has devastated large swathes of Gaza, destroyed hospitals and displaced most of its population of 2.4 million.

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