



Letter Regarding the Israeli Parliament's Amendment of the Death Penalty Targeting Palestinians

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye, which functions as national human rights institution, national preventive mechanism, and equality institution.

Israel continues to violate human rights, international law, and humanitarian law in Palestine at an unprecedented level and with unprecedented methods. With these violations, Israel clearly demonstrates that it poses a threat to peace and security not only in our region but also at a global level. The actions of Israel, which target and kill civilians, especially women and children, journalists, health and aid workers, and religious leaders in Gaza; which declare UN-affiliated institutions illegal; which target the facilities of these institutions, schools, places of worship, hospitals, and ambulances; which prevent humanitarian aid from reaching the region; which use banned weapons; which destroy civilian infrastructure; and which use starvation as a weapon, have been repeatedly shown in the reports of international lawyers, academics, United Nations (UN) rapporteurs, and international human rights organizations to constitute the “crime of genocide.” Our Institution, in its “Human Rights Violations in Palestine and Gaza Genocide Report,” published on November 26, 2024, has clearly demonstrated this legal reality.

Encouraged by a climate of impunity, Israel is further escalating its violence and brutality, a situation that is dramatically narrowing the scope of the rule of law and attempting to extinguish the light of justice. The fact that its Permanent Representative, under the auspices of the United Nations, shredded the United Nations Charter with a paper shredder, ironically and clearly illustrates Israel’s approach to international law, which is brazenly declared by its top officials as something they do not view as binding. This constitutes a blatant and reckless attack on international law, which is a part of the international public order, and deeply wounds the conscience of humanity.

Israel, which defies the international community through its systematic human rights violations against the Palestinian people, is paving the way for new violations through changes it has made to its

domestic legal system. Legal instruments, which should be responsible for legally guaranteeing, protecting, and promoting human rights, have virtually become the source of lawlessness and injustice.

We are currently in a period when reports and documents regarding the torture and inhumane treatment endured by Palestinians during their detention—who are being tried without the right to a fair trial—are frequently coming to light. While the international community is still reeling from the shock of these reports and documents concerning torture and inhumane treatment, it has been shaken once again by a legal regulation allowing the execution of Palestinian victims of torture.

Adding another decision to its list of human rights violations, the Israeli Knesset has passed a law imposing the death penalty, applicable only to Palestinians. From Israel's perspective, "so-called law"—which has become a tool for implementing its policy of genocide—serves as a lever for the apartheid regime. This decision, which represents a new and unique manifestation of the systematic racial discrimination against Palestinians, constitutes a blatant attack on human dignity.

Despite the fact that all these serious violations, along with their extremely severe consequences, are plain to see, it is evident that effective and necessary sanctions have not yet been imposed on Israel.

In accordance with the fundamental norms established by international human rights law and standards, our Institution—whose primary mission is to protect and promote human rights and monitor international developments in this field—calls upon the entire international community to take concrete and effective steps to ensure that an effective and resolute international stance is taken against Israel's racist and unlawful practices.

As national human rights institutions and civil society organizations working to protect human rights, we are compelled to take a clear and immediate stance against the negative consequences resulting from these violations. This imperative is a heavy responsibility history has placed upon us. We must act now, while we still have the opportunity, to leave future generations a world where they can live in peace and inherit a just order.

As international organizations, human rights mechanisms, national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations, each of us has significant responsibilities to end these grave human rights violations and ensure the safety of all humanity. Beyond our official titles, all individuals, as "human beings," bear responsibility during this period, and the grave human rights violations should be seen as a reason for us to act. I would like to conclude my letter by expressing my hope that the authorities at the key human rights institutions that make up the international community will not

remain silent in the face of the cries for help from the Palestinian people, who have maintained their dignified and resolute stance despite the unspeakable atrocities they have endured.

Sincerely,

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