

## Re: Al-Haq raises alarm, calls on the UN Security Council to intervene to maintain international peace and security as Israeli Occupying Forces escalate attacks against Palestine Unity Uprising

Date: 14 April 2022

Dear Your Excellency,

Al-Haq expresses its alarm at the rising escalation in attacks against Palestinians by both the Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) and illegally transferred in colonial settlers, currently taking place across the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).<sup>1</sup> Al-Haq has monitored a worrying increase in killings, attacks alongside widespread raids and arrests by the IOF, both within East Jerusalem and the West Bank, to quash the Palestine Unity Uprising.<sup>2</sup> On 4th April, a provocative visit by Israel's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Yair Lapid to Damascus Gate, a flashpoint in occupied East Jerusalem, further aggravated the already deteriorating situation, including inhumane acts of apartheid.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Haq is gravely concerned with inflammatory and inciting statements emanating from senior political representatives in Israel. On 30 March 2022, Israel's Prime Minister, Naftali Bennet released a lengthy recorded address to the nation, calling on civilian volunteers in Israel, to mobilise and arm, stating: "We are also currently evaluating a larger framework to involve civilian volunteers who want to help and be of assistance. What is expected of you, citizens of Israel? Alertness and responsibility. Open your eyes. Whoever has a license to carry a weapon, this is the time to carry it".<sup>4</sup>

On 8 April 2022, in a joint statement, Israel's Prime Minister and Minister of Defence announced: "We are granting full freedom of action to the IDF, the ISA and all security forces in order to defeat the terrorism. There are no restrictions in this war nor will there be."<sup>5</sup> The following day, Israeli Minister of Defence, Gantz warned that the IOF "will continue and intensify" operations in the OPT.<sup>6</sup> While on 10<sup>th</sup> April, at the start of the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Bennet granted unlimited authority to the Israeli forces to act, stating: "The State of Israel has gone on offense... I reiterate: There are no restrictions on the IDF, ISA and other security forces".<sup>7</sup>

There is further evidence of a "shoot to kill" policy authorised by Prime Minister Bennet. In his address to the nation, Prime Minister Bennet explained how "after a long night, our forces got their hands on the terrorist and eliminated him. This is what we expect of our forces".<sup>8</sup> In particular, Al-Haq's concern

<sup>1</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Haq is continuing to collect further information as the escalation continues to develop. Further statements with verified statistics will be given as events unfold.

<sup>3</sup> "Provocative incursion": Palestinians condemn Lapid's visit to Damascus Gate" *Times of Israel* (4 April 2022), available at: <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/provocative-incursion-palestinians-condemn-lapids-visit-to-damascus-gate/>>

<sup>4</sup> Prime Minister's Office, "Recorded Statement by PM Bennett" (30 March 2022), available at: <[https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke\\_statement300322](https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke_statement300322)>

<sup>5</sup> Prime Minister's Office, "PM Bennett's Statement at the Kirya in Tel Aviv with Defense Minister Gantz and Public Security Minister Barlev" (8 April 2022), available at: <[https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke\\_statement080422](https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke_statement080422)>

<sup>6</sup> Aaron Boxerman, Emanuel Fabian, "Israel tightens restrictions on West Bank's Jenin, source of terrorism and clashes" *The Times of Israel* (9 April 2022).

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "PM Bennett's remarks at the start of the weekly Cabinet meeting" (10 April 2022), available at: <<https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/pm-bennett-s-remarks-at-the-start-of-the-weekly-cabinet-meeting-10-apr-2022>>

<sup>8</sup> Prime Minister's Office, "PM Bennett's Statement at the Kirya in Tel Aviv with Defense Minister Gantz and Public Security Minister Barlev" (8 April 2022), available at: <[https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke\\_statement080422](https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke_statement080422)>

is drawn towards IOF attacks and collective punishment measures launched on Jenin refugee camp, which have killed and wounded several Palestinians, restrictions on workers<sup>9</sup> and the authorisation of punitive house demolitions.<sup>10</sup> In addition to the attacks, the IOF has closed two checkpoints (Al Jalma and Barta'a) in Jenin, preventing access across the Green Line during the holy month of Ramadan, denying Palestinian families separated by the illegal annexation wall their freedom of movement.<sup>11</sup>

In two separate incidents, Israeli soldiers shot and killed two Palestinian women. Ghada Ibrahim Sabatien, 45, a widow and mother of six children was shot and killed by IOF on the 10 April 2022, in Husan, near Bethlehem.<sup>12</sup> Ghada was unarmed and posed no threat to the Israeli soldiers.<sup>13</sup> Maha Kazem, 25 was shot and killed by IOF in Hebron after an alleged attack on an Israeli soldier.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the shoot to kill policy, the repeated denial and delays of medical treatment by Palestinian and Palestinian Red Crescent ambulances to those shot has endangered the lives of victims of indiscriminate and disproportionate uses of IOF force.<sup>15</sup> In both incidents mentioned above, medical assistance was initially denied by the IOF.<sup>16</sup>

The deteriorating situation in the OPT has been noted abroad by a number of international observers, such as Sven Koopmans, the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process,<sup>17</sup> and Tor Wennesland, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.<sup>18</sup> Al-Haq calls on the international community to act in the face of Israel's escalating attacks and persecution, to maintain international peace and security. It is incumbent on States to not be selective in their application of universal norms of international law. Al-Haq calls on Member States and the UN Security Council to:

1. Denounce and bring to an end, the excessive, indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force by the Israeli Occupying Forces in the OPT in suppression of the Palestinian Unity Uprising;
2. Demand that Israeli authorities rescind the "shoot to kill" policy;
3. Call for the immediate and unimpeded medical assistance to those injured in acts of violence across the OPT;
4. Condemn colonist settler violence against the Palestinian people, and call for an end to settler impunity, and the financing of illegally transferred in settlers;

<sup>9</sup> "Israel imposing 'collective punishment' on Jenin" MEMO (11 April 2022), available at:

<<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20220411-israel-imposing-collective-punishment-on-jenin/>>

<sup>10</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq; See generally, "Israel army raids W.Bank town that Tel Aviv gunmen hailed from" *France 24* (10 April 2022), available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220410-israel-army-raids-w-bank-town-that-tel-aviv-gunmen-hailed-from>; "Israeli forces kill three Palestinians in the occupied West Bank" *Al-Jazeera* (31 March 2022), available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/31/israeli-forces-kill-three-palestinians-in-occupied-west-bank>>

<sup>11</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>12</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>13</sup> [Israeli troops kill Palestinian woman after 'suspicious' approach near Bethlehem - Israel News - Haaretz.com](https://www.haaretz.com/israeli-troops-kill-palestinian-woman-after-suspicious-approach-near-bethlehem-1.1000000)

<sup>14</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>15</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>16</sup> Field documentation on file with Al-Haq.

<sup>17</sup> [Sven Koopmans on Twitter: "Very sad, upon my return to the Holy Land, to see a tense and dangerous situation, just at the time of religious festivities of reflection and celebration. I mourn the victims on all sides. Restraint and political progress, not more violence, must be the answer." / Twitter](https://twitter.com/SvenKoopmans/status/1514111111111111111)

<sup>18</sup> [Tor Wennesland on Twitter: "Shocked & disturbed by the killing of an apparently unarmed #Palestine|ian woman by #Israel|i security forces in Husan/#Bethlehem, in circumstances that seem to indicate she posed no imminent threat. My deepest condolences to her family. Such acts must be thoroughly investigated." / Twitter](https://twitter.com/TorWennesland/status/1514111111111111111)

5. Call for the dismantling of illegal colonial settlements across the OPT, and the ending of economic exploitation by transnational and Israeli businesses of the natural resources of the Palestinian people;
6. Calls on third States to implement laws banning the import of goods and services produced in illegal settlements located in any occupied territory, having particular reference to UNSC resolution 2334 (2016) and the UN's 2020 database report on business enterprises involved in certain activities relating to settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
7. Urge Israel to release Palestinians arbitrarily arrested and detained as part of Israel's collective punishment campaign and in Occupied East Jerusalem during Ramadan;
8. Address Israel's settler-colonial apartheid regime, and take effective and concrete measures to dismantle such regime, end Israel's military occupation and *de facto* and *de jure* annexation of Palestinian territory;
9. Support both the peace and security within the region while recognising the collective right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the collective right of return of Palestinian refugees in the diaspora.

Yours sincerely,

Shawan Jabarin

General Director, Al-Haq

