

SPECIAL FOCUS

DISPLACED PALESTINIANS CRUSHED BY ISRAELI TANKS



AL-HAQ

As part of its continuing genocidal campaign, Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) have deliberately crushed Palestinians with military tanks in Gaza. The use of tanks to mutilate Palestinians constitutes a blatant outrage on personal dignity and wilful killing — both war crimes — as well as the genocidal act of killing, and is a calculated tactic that falls within a broader effort to further dehumanise the Palestinian people.

The dehumanisation of Palestinians represents a long-pursued strategy by Israel and its allies to normalise and justify the plethora of international crimes being committed against Palestinians. Now, it also functions as a systematic enabler of genocide. Israel's horrific acts and rhetoric facilitate multilayered injustices: stripping individuals not only of their lives, but also of their identity, dignity, and memory — even in death. Continued calls for the destruction of Gaza by Israeli Ministers, its Palestinian population, and the ultimate resettlement of the territory continue unabated. Israel's genocidal statements and pervasive attempts to strip Palestinians of their humanity are not isolated occurrences — they reflect a deeply rooted and widely accepted, and supported, rhetoric that is central to Zionism and Israel's settler colonial apartheid regime and system of State violence.

I. Beyond Brutal - IOF Tank Attack on Raja Hamdouna

Al-Haq has documented the IOF's attack on Raja Hamdouna, a 36-year-old mother of four. On 6 June 2024, around dawn, while seeking refuge in their tents in Rafah after countless displacements, IOF tanks deliberately ran over her, her husband, and her children. Her husband and two of her children were killed. Somehow, Raja managed to escape with severe injuries to her body. One of her children also sustained serious bodily injuries.

Speaking to Al-Haq, Raja reflected on her life before Israel's genocidal onslaught. She recalled how:

“A week before everything happened, we were, like everyone else, living comfortably, a simple life. Children’s homework is done, ready to start another week of school on that Saturday morning, so we were surprised, like everyone else, that we woke up to a war.”

On 7 October 2023, Raja and her family, Akram Hassan Ismail Al-Harbaiti, 39 (husband); Mohammad Hassan Akram, 15 (son); Ahmad Akram Al-Harbaiti, 12 (son); Ibrahim Akram Al-Harbaiti, 6 (son); and their youngest, Sanaa Akram Al-Harbaiti, 4 (daughter) stayed in their home for three days under constant bombardment, with debris and smoke. Raja recounted how they *“woke up to the sounds of bombardments, like everyone back then; we did not understand what was happening.”*

Between 7 October 2023 and 27 April 2024, Raja and her family were forcibly displaced a total of thirteen times — pursuant to unlawfully issued evacuation orders designed to erase Palestinians from the Gaza Strip — before relocating to Rafah. Israel's widespread and systematic policy of mass forcible transfer has directly resulted in the forced displacement of around 90 percent of Gaza's population, with 85 percent of the territory under active displacement orders or designated as an Israeli-militarised zone. Each forcible displacement further subjected Raja and her family to inhumane and worsening conditions created by severe

overcrowding, a lack of proper shelter, food, water, sanitation facilities, and medical care.

Palestinians began to evacuate Rafah, once again, around the end of April to early May. Raja's family remained along with their neighbors, a family consisting of a husband, a wife, and three children. Their tents were about four meters apart. On Thursday, 6 June 2024, Raja decided to bake on the griddle for the first time. Raja remembered the day vividly, stating:

"I told my neighbor to make the dough. Her son was crying hysterically at the time, and she put her hand on her chest and said she felt like something was going to happen. But I didn't know what was yet to come. I reassured her that nothing would happen. I prayed, then I continued baking while she made the dough."

At around 5:30 pm, as Raja was baking on the griddle, she and her family were shaken by a series of airstrikes near Al-Izba area. Out of fear, she put sand on the fire to put it out and threw the rest of the dough on the ground. Raja explained how — despite the tent offering no protection against Israel's heavy weapons, or even shrapnel — in search of some semblance of safety, she took her son inside and told her neighbour to join her with her children. As they lay flat on the ground, listening to Israel's bombardment of an area densely packed with displaced Palestinian men, women, and children, Raja's husband returned with their son and his friend. He tried to reassure her that, despite targeting the homes of Palestinians, she should not worry since "they [IOF] can see them in the tent."

After a while, when Israeli airstrikes appeared to have temporarily subsided, Raja recounted:

"My neighbor told me she wanted to go back to her tent to breastfeed her son. I told her hopefully nothing would happen. When my kids saw that the bombing was close, they got scared, so we promised them that we would leave first thing in the morning. My husband and I agreed on this."

Raja went on to prepare food for her children. When asking her son what he wanted, he responded: "I don't want to eat, I am scared I will need the bathroom. I will eat in the morning". When asking her other son, Ahmad, the same question, he answered: "No, I will do the same as Mohammed." Her youngest son, Ibrahim, was terrified and buried his face in the pillow, sleeping in an attempt to escape his reality. Raja told Al-Haq:

"They didn't eat. My neighbor's son came to me and asked me for some of what I had baked. I gave him half while the other half went untouched. My husband and I also did not eat. I am 36 years old, and this is the first time I have felt this kind of fear. I was very scared. I could not even put a sentence together...We spent the whole night on our nerves, scared of what would happen."

1. IOF Tanks Attack and Crush Displaced Palestinians in Tents

After a while, the bombing resumed. This time, it was accompanied by tanks and military cruisers. They had little to no time to react. She recounted:

“At around 2 am, my husband asked me to give him my passport in case they came to evacuate us that night so we could be able to show our identities and leave. I had identification papers next to me. My kids, Mohammad and Ahmad, were sleeping on the side of the tent that overlooks Al-Izbaa. I was sleeping on the other side while my husband slept in the middle. [He would reassure me] saying, ‘[c]alm down, Um Hassan, God willing, they will not hurt us.’”

As the chaos unfolded, and already displaced Palestinians frantically attempted to gather what little remained of their belongings before fleeing for their lives once more, Raja heard a woman scream as an IOF cruiser began firing at her. Her voice faded as the IOF began to detonate the water lines next to Raja and her family. Raja stated:

“This is when we realized this would be it. Either we will die or live, God willing. But we let our hopes go. My kids were between sleeping and being awake. My husband would say to Mohammed, ‘Hamoud, are you scared?’ He would reply, ‘No, baba, wallah [I swear] I am not scared. They will not do anything to us.’ For me, due to the amount of fear, I was unable to put together my sentences. I froze in my place. We did not turn on any lights at all. My phone was on silent, and I had it turned over so no light could show [from the screen]. We were planning that as soon as it became morning, we would hold the white flag and leave.”

Around 4:30 am, Raja and her family, watching from their tent, bore witness to Israel's atrocities. She recalled seeing a yellow light that she believed was coming from the tanks. From what they could see, the IOF struck the houses nearby in Al-Izbaa area. Her husband, who was looking through the net of the tent, said a bulldozer was flattening the homes that had been bombed while people were still inside.

“I started to cry. Where is the mercy? There were no red lines for them. My fear began to rise. They [IOF] have complete immunity to do as they please. My husband [tried] to reassure me that they will not hurt us. [He told me] that they [IOF] for sure have footage of the area and know of their presence in the tents. [It was an area uncovered for the displaced]. He reassured me that there was no reason they would target the area. We spent the whole night besieged, hoping we would leave in the morning.”

At approximately 5:30 am, Raja's neighbours were directly targeted with live ammunition. Raja recounted how her neighbour was holding a white flag, while her son, 11, was with her other son, Aboud:

“She had no time to [even] return to the tent. Live ammunition was fired violently [at that time]. It seems it was coming from an artillery tank. As soon as I heard this, she began screaming for her husband, ‘Mohammad, Mohammad...’ He was the first one to be injured [from the shooting].”

After some time, the screaming of her neighbours faded. It was at this point that Raja and her family also began to be targeted by the IOF:

“[T]he shooting was aimed at both us and them. My husband was in the middle of the

tent, trying to calm us down. Suddenly, we were all injured. My husband was hit on his back. I was hit in my lower foot.”

Raja could no longer hear her son Mohammad’s voice; it seemed he was the first to be killed. As Raja’s daughter lay in her lap, injured, Raja witnessed the moment an IOF tank ran over her neighbor’s tent, in which a family of five, the oldest child being 11 years old and the youngest only seven months, were taking shelter. Recalling the horrific scene to Al-Haq, Raja stated:

“It [the tank] was running over them. I started hysterically telling Akram [her husband], ‘the tank is approaching us. I held up my phone as my family member was calling. I answered without putting the phone up to my ear and started screaming, ‘The tanks are approaching us, my children have been killed. We are all injured.’ I wanted to do something. My mother’s instinct kicked in. I wanted to take my daughter, but I could do nothing. I wanted to do something, but I did not know what to do. I was telling my husband, [may he rest in peace], that the tank was approaching while he was bleeding out from his back. My two children were in the middle. My husband opened up both his arms and placed his body over the children.”

Raja grabbed her daughter in a desperate attempt to escape from the other side of the tent. Raja recalled:

“I got stuck while I attempted to flee, and as I managed to move. At first, I thought that the tank had seen my kids and husband and stopped. As I looked behind me, I saw that the tank was running over them.”

Raja detailed that, after the tank crushed her husband and two children, it followed her. In a plea for survival, Raja picked up her bleeding and injured three-year-old daughter and waved to the tank in the faint hope that it would stop. Seeing that the Israeli forces carrying out the massacre were undeterred, she tried to flee but hit a mound of packed sand and fell to the ground. She described:

“It [the tank] went over half my body. I was buried in the sand. I stayed in my place, unable to do anything... The tank went over me and reached the middle of my back. [As a result] I was buried in the sand with my daughter in between my arms. At that moment, I thought that was going to be it. I felt my soul leaving me. My daughter’s head was buried in the sand, and the only thing protecting her was my shoulder, which the tank had run over as it also ran over my daughter’s back. I’m not sure what type of tank it was, but it was a tank. What ran over me was a tank. [It ran over] my neighbors and then my kids and husband.”

When she attempted to raise her head and look to the side, she saw the mutilated body of her husband, covered in blood, his arm severed, and his legs not showing. She stated:

“His face was okay. I tried to talk to him, and he called for my forgiveness as I reassured him. ‘Do you forgive me, Raja?’ ‘Yes, I forgive you, Akram.’... I looked at my

daughter, who was buried [under the sand]. I felt like she was going to die as her eyes flipped backward. I told Akram, ‘Susu is dying.’ he answered, ‘Habibi [my love] Susu, habibti ya baba [my daughter].’ As we were talking, my [six-year-old] son Ibrahim emerged from between his brothers. He was covered in blood, so I thought he was passing away and moving unconsciously. He was screaming hysterically. I asked him if he had anything [any injuries], and he answered that he was just scared. I told him to go near his father, as he was closer than I was. He told me, ‘No, I am scared.’”

Raja understood her son’s fear:

“How my husband looked was scary, and my child was scared to approach his father. I told him to come to me. My son came to me, and I tried to check on my son. My husband was dying as he recited (Al shahadah), as he was saying it, my son Ibrahim continued the rest [of the phrase] as he was behind me.”

As Raja attempted to check her son’s injury, she heard the sound of the tank once more. Terrified, she told her son to play dead.

“He asked, ‘Why? Would it run us over again?’ I told him to play dead. I am just like you [she said]. I had my eyes closed; I was too scared to open them. My son made no movement out of fear and did exactly as I said. He stayed in his place. The tank came, but it went towards the asphalte, not us, as we played dead. After a while, my son needed to use the bathroom. He was crying; he was in pain. I told him, ‘Habibi, you can do it on yourself [there was no other choice], and I will change you. Stay as you are.’”

Raja recalled needing to find her ID card in fear that if she bled out, she could be identified. With the tent behind her, she begged her son — still frozen with fear — to go find it:

“After he was convinced, he went to get it, and I put the wallet in my shirt, thinking: this is it, we will die, there is no hope. My husband was still moaning, passing away. I looked at Ahmad, my son, and he was still breathing, drenched in blood. I could not see his head, but he was breathing. I could not get to them.”

After a while, a woman holding a white flag walked by Raja with her children. Raja pleaded for her help, telling her a tank had run her and her family over:

“She asked me what she could do, and I asked her if she could take my son to my family in Mawasi, Khan Younis. My son went to her barefoot and was drenched in blood. During this time, my husband was still alive and asked if she could call an ambulance. The woman heard him and replied that there were no ambulances nor journalists; there were only the army and tanks in the area. She took my son and left, and after that, I lay back in the sand, thinking that was it. I was bleeding out. I picked up my daughter and found that her right leg was maimed, and her whole body was loose. I looked over to my husband, and it seemed that he had passed away or was unconscious.”

There was nothing Raja was able to do for the rest of her family, who — like tens of thousands

of others — had been subjected to a slow, painful death at the hands of the IOF. She had her son and daughter to save now. This realisation still haunts Raja:

“The thing that I still have trouble understanding is why didn’t I go near the tent. I didn’t see my children [there in the tent], I don’t know why. I didn’t see them. I still haven’t seen them. I never knew what happened to them. I blame myself for not staying with the rest of my children. I could have held them in my arms. I blame myself. Why did I not stay and bleed out to die with them? But I had to think of Ibrahim. He will have no one. What’s worse, when I saw my daughter’s leg was injured, I was scared I would die, that she would be left alone, and that the soldiers would take her. Not knowing what will happen to her, with all the stories we heard of . . . I decided to save myself and my daughter. I knelt down on my hands and knees [to pick her up]. I could not feel my leg. Back then, I thought that it needed an amputation. I started to crawl on the sand, and I had my ID card in my pocket.”

As she crawled through the sand, Israeli forces continued their assault. A sniper continued to shoot in her direction, a cruiser was in front of them, and quadcopters hovered overhead.

“While I was crawling, I thought they would shoot us at any moment. I continued crawling for almost 900 meters till I couldn’t anymore. My daughter was falling off my back, and I could no longer hold her. My arm had been run over by the tank, and it was injured. I could no longer continue. I lay down on the sand and held my daughter next to me. I covered myself from the flies, and my daughter would tug on my headscarf and say, ‘Mama, the flies’ and ‘Mama, I’m thirsty’. I put my finger in her mouth to remove the sand, as there was no way I could get her any water. I screamed, saying, ‘Ya Rab [O God] for Susu and Ibrahim ya Rab.’ I needed the strength to continue. I want to save my daughter’s life. I want to save her. No one was around us.”

2. IOF Prevent Medical Personal Reaching the Injured

While on the verge of collapse, Raja spotted a UNDP villa marked with an UNRWA flag. Upon seeing a security room, she started to cry for help. A man heard her, and when Raja informed him that she was injured, he tried to approach to offer assistance. However, IOF snipers positioned nearby were targeting anyone who attempted to help:

“There were no people but the army and the tanks. This was the first attempt by someone trying to save me. He instructed me to go over a sand hill, but I told him I had my daughter with me and could not manage. He hadn’t seen her until then, [so] I told him she’s injured.”

Based on the IOF’s documented pattern of targeting civilians, aid workers, and medical personnel, the man was afraid he would be targeted by the sniper if he approached Raja and tried to offer what little assistance he could. Raja soon lost consciousness and woke to the sound of a woman crying as she walked with her children, holding up a white flag. Raja pleaded for the woman to take her daughter to the nearest hospital. The woman responded that she:

“[W]ould not be able to as her young son tugged at her and told her the tank was behind them. I pleaded with her to put down the mattresses she was carrying and take my daughter. She told me she will take her, and she will take care of her. She took my daughter, and when I looked up to see, I felt relief that someone was able to take her.”

Less than two minutes later, the woman's son called Raja, informed her that there was a person waiting to help her near the sea. She described the scene to Al-Haq:

“The time I was in the sand, the sound of bullets from the sniper surrounded me . . . while some hit the sand right next to me. I felt like there was blood; I could smell it. I looked next to me and saw a pool of blood. I did not know that I was also injured in my right arm. I lifted my clothes and saw a wound. At this moment, I knew I had made it through all this and that someone was waiting to help me. God wanted me to save myself. I found a melted rope next to me on the ground. I pulled my pants over my injury and tied around it. I was hoping this would stop the bleeding. My leg was covered with dirt, and the flies kept bothering me as they kept flying near my wound.”

Raja went on to describe the state of her injuries as she attempted to crawl on the asphalt, noting that the injuries from the tank were the most painful. Raja recounted:

“I had to crawl using one hand and one leg. What was even harder was that I had to do this on asphalt, which was filled with shrapnel and rocks, while the sun was hot...I crossed the asphalt with much hardship. Before I reached the room of the fishermen, I saw a quadcopter and stopped to wave at it hysterically in hopes that they would help me in any way, to no avail. I tried to lean on the first wall I saw. It fell down once I rested my arm on it, and I noticed that the area was bombed. I was now facing the [military] cruiser. I waved at it, hoping they would save me, but I knew it was hopeless.”

Completely surrounded, but desperate to make her way to the sea and the medical care she hoped to find there, Raja saw that there was another man who wanted to help her. She stated:

“They wanted me to get closer, but I had no energy. They kept getting closer till they reached me. They took turns holding me, but they were very scared as they were rescuing those injured from Al-Alam area . . . I woke up to them putting me in an ambulance. I was screaming in pain from my injuries from where the tank had run me over.”

In the ambulance, someone tried to calm Raja down. When she opened her eyes, she saw that it was her brother. The woman who had taken her son informed the Red Cross what had happened. Raja explained:

“She [the woman] asked them to go rescue us, but they told her they can't. The IOF refused any coordination [with the Red Cross]. They took the woman and my son in an ambulance; they took her to Deir Al-Balah, where her relatives were, and took my son to my parents. My mom was sitting in front of her tent at 7 AM, waiting for people to bring water. When she saw my son, she started to scream hysterically as he was drenched in

blood. He told them the story, and my brother came right away. They were scared for him, but he came anyway.”

Raja expressed that she had not known her son had seen his siblings when he went down to get her ID. She detailed:

“He described that his brother Mohammad’s body was severed . . . The tank had run him over. Ahmad’s neck was severed, and there was glass on him. I didn’t know this. He told them [my family] ‘Mama and Susu were killed’ [he didn’t know if they had survived or not].”

Not knowing if this was true or not, Raja’s brother came looking for them. Raja recalled the moment her brother found her daughter as he was looking for them:

“When he [her brother] arrived at the area [Al-Alam], people told him that it was very dangerous. He saw an injured man and approached to help him. He found that my daughter was with him. It seems the woman I gave [my daughter] to gave my daughter to this man so he could take her to the hospital. He was targeted [it seems] while holding her. My daughter lost consciousness in his lap, and the young man was bleeding. My brother took my daughter to the Red Cross field hospital and asked for an ambulance to rescue me. The ambulance could only reach the Al-Alam areas, so the men who saved me took me by car to the area. I cried when I saw my brother, asking for my kids, my son and daughter, asking where they were.”

3. Inadequate Medical Treatment for Severe Injuries

Raja’s brother reassured her that her daughter, Sanaa [Susu], was okay and that she was in surgery. Raja eventually made it to the hospital, where she and her daughter spent about a month and a half. Raja recalled the moments she first woke up in the hospital:

*“As soon as I woke up, I asked about my husband and kids. Asking if anyone found them or if they were okay, if any of them survived. I thought they didn’t want me to see them. I was surprised to know that no one had been able to enter the area. I kept waking up and asking the same thing: if anyone was able to enter the area. I want to see them. I remember one time a French woman working in human rights approached me. She started to cry and asked for my forgiveness, saying that the [Israeli] army had refused any coordination efforts; they are not letting anyone into the area. **What about my husband and kids, who are civilians? What about the baby [that was crushed] who was seven months old? What was his fault? Nothing can justify what has been done to us.** Every day, I would wait for the news that they were able to enter and retrieve the bodies. I don’t know what was done to them. Did they bury them? Did the [stray] dogs eat them? Did they throw them into the sea? I don’t know. My life’s wish is to be able to see them one last time and bury them.”*

Aside from the unimaginable trauma Raja and her children have sustained, they also bear

physical scars from the incident. Sanaa, Raja's daughter, is not able to walk. Both her legs had been broken, her hip was displaced, and she was hit with an explosive shot in her right leg. Sanaa also lost a bone from her leg, and her whole back was covered with bruises — “the doctors could not comprehend the idea of a tank running over her”. The doctor's thought Raja was hallucinating when she explained what had happened. Because of the pain, Raja did not want them to carry out any X-rays, but “when my body turned blue and was covered with bruises, they realized the extent of what had happened to my daughter and me.” Raja detailed her injuries to Al-Haq:

“My injuries are: an explosive bullet in my right arm that they [doctors] removed from a different exit point. They kept treating my right leg for twenty days until the tissues were revived, and they could salvage it after they said it might need to be amputated. It had 4 fractures and an explosive bullet wound, but God willing, they were able to do it after 7 operations. I have shrapnel all over my body. I developed issues with my left leg, the cartilage in my knees, and a femoral lordosis, and I still have 17 pieces of shrapnel in my leg. To this day, I still suffer from my injuries. I still can't walk well with my right foot because they never plastered my fracture, as the wound's condition was bad and it risked an amputation.”

The injuries inflicted on her three-year-old daughter are even more severe:

“My daughter's situation is worse. They plastered her legs, but it didn't really work. We recently discovered that her pelvic bones are shattered, and there are no medical transfers. She needs a surgical operation. Other than this operation, she needs reconstructive/plastic surgery and bone grafting in her leg, where she had an explosive bullet wound. She walks 10-20 meters and falls.”

Since the incident, Raja and her daughter sought refuge at the hospital, then her parents' house, then her uncle's home, and now at a French [Relief] camp, where she has resided for four months. She recalled:

“I stayed one and a half months in the hospital, then stayed with my parents in a shared tent. Then, I went to my uncle's house, as my wounds were heavily infected. I walked on crutches for four months. My daughter had the plasters for a long time. The doctor said that it was not healing because her wound was infected, and her ankle bone was eroded. My uncle's house was bombed [there was a lot of debris, and it didn't help with the infections]. I stayed with him for three months . . . After a while, someone from the French [Relief] camp for Orphans in Khan Younis told me they want to take me in. I have been here for four months. There is water, a daily meal, and a private space for me and my kids, and we try to continue with our lives. When they first announced the ceasefire, I was relieved. I may go to retrieve their [husband and son] bodies and bury them. But they [the IOF] are still in that area; they didn't retreat from it.”

Israel has since shattered this ceasefire, and with it any hopes of an end to its genocidal onslaught on Gaza. The settler colonial apartheid regime's long-held goal of Palestinian erasure is now within reach, as it advances plans to deport Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. Over 1.9 million

people have now been forcibly displaced to just 15 percent of Gaza's territory — and what little space remains continues to shrink. At the same time, Israel has continued to weaponise life-saving aid after placing the entire Gaza Strip under complete siege since 2 March 2025. What little aid enters must be collected from so-called “aid distribution sites” run by the notorious, and now complicit, Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. Since their establishment, these sites have functioned as killing fields where starving, exhausted Palestinians have been targeted on a daily basis.

Raja Hamdouna's full testimony in Arabic can be found using the following [link](#).

II. General Context

Since 7 October 2023, Gaza's critical and civilian infrastructure has been completely decimated by Israel's systematic and widespread targeting of hospitals, clinics, warehouses, road systems, as well as schools, universities, religious buildings, and even agricultural facilities. The meticulous, and ongoing, attack on Gaza's infrastructure, in particular its healthcare system and humanitarian infrastructure, has in turn led to the collapse of Gaza's social fabric — and inflicted incalculable, lasting harm to the future of the Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip. This collapse is not a mere consequence of Israel's acts. It is the goal. The past 25 months have crystallised genocide as an integral component of Israel's settler-colonial apartheid regime, aimed at ensuring the permanent destruction — and replacement — of the Palestinian people. Israel's Zionist, genocidal agenda has been intricately outlined, explained, and carried out in front of the world. This has only been possible owing to its systematic demonisation and dehumanisation inciting the genocide of the Palestinian people.

Dehumanisation is foundational to the facilitation of genocide. In Israel, the dehumanisation of Palestinians is not limited to institutionalised political rhetoric and a tightly-controlled media narrative; rather, [incitement](#) to genocide through the portrayal of Palestinians as terrorists, animals or monsters — leading to the oft-[repeated](#) statement that there are no innocent people in Gaza — is deeply entrenched within the broader Zionist settler colonial strata. As indicated in a [survey](#) conducted in March 2025, 82 percent of Jewish Israelis support the expulsion of Gaza residents, 47 percent support the biblical model of total annihilation through warfare, and 56 percent support the expulsion of Palestinians with Israeli citizenship. A more recent [poll](#) carried out in early June 2025 revealed that an overwhelming majority of Jewish Israelis agree with the idea of there being “no innocents in Gaza.” 64 percent of the Israeli public agree with this statement.

During the ongoing genocide, Palestinians displaced in Gaza have been crushed and maimed under IOF tanks, whether dead or alive. The tank, the heaviest symbol of ground military power, has been used to [deliberately](#) crush displaced families in moments of complete vulnerability. These cruel acts of terror are often carried out with the use of Merkava tanks, weighing 60,000 kg (66.1 tons). This unimaginable brutality embodies the extent of Israel's dehumanisation of Palestinians and genocidal intent, stripping them of their dignity even in death.

III. Legal Analysis

The situation in Gaza has been described as [apocalyptic](#). Gaza has far surpassed the threshold of inhumane, cruel, and degrading treatment, denying Palestinians the right to life and dignity. The willful killing, outrage on personal dignity, and murder of displaced Palestinians with IOF tanks amounts to an act of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity under Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Israeli tanks have driven over Palestinian dead bodies, *constituting* a flagrant violation of Rule 113 of Customary IHL (ICRC) and of Article 34 of Additional Protocol I (1977).

Concurrently, as [Al-Haq's 2025 report](#) outlined, Israel's so-called "evacuation orders" have served a dual purpose: they have enabled the forced displacement of Palestinians and Israel's control of large swaths of Gaza's territory, while at the same time helping Israel conceal its military strategy with humanitarian language. Forced transfer or displacement, a crime against humanity and a war crime, has been a core feature of Israel's ongoing Nakba and genocide against the Palestinian people. Although forcible transfer in and of itself does not constitute a genocidal act, the forcible displacement and transfer of a population, or part of it, may contribute towards its physical destruction, in whole or in part. In a similar vein, the devastating impact of forcible transfer — as showcased in Gaza — can be legally considered as evidence of genocidal intent. As outlined in the [report](#), jurisprudence of both the ICJ and the ad hoc international criminal tribunals has confirmed that forced displacement in the context of a genocide amounts to a manifestation of the *dolus specialis* of genocide.

As these crimes continue to be [posted](#) and live-streamed by their victims, the international community remains complicit, and even co-perpetrators, in Israel's genocide. Its longstanding impunity and diplomatic and political cover remain unchallenged. Yet, the world — and the Palestinian people — can no longer afford the selective enforcement of international law. States have an *erga omnes* obligation to prevent and punish genocide, and must respect and ensure respect for the Geneva Conventions of 1949. States are also under a binding, legal obligation to uphold Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination. Therefore, States must take concrete measures to bring an end to Israel's unlawful occupation and settler colonial apartheid regime. This includes imposing a three-way arms embargo; severing all diplomatic, political, economic, and trade relations; and supporting and initiating accountability efforts in order to end Israel's entrenched impunity for its ongoing systematic violations against the Palestinian people. The time to act is long overdue, yet the obligations remain.