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Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**The International Legal Framework for Protecting Children during Armed Conflicts: A Case Study of Israel-Palestine Conflict****Aisha Cheema**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The Israel-Palestine conflict, characterized by prolonged violence and violations of international law, has had devastating humanitarian consequences, particularly for Palestinian children. This research article explores the systematic violations committed by Israel, including genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, focusing on the impact on Palestinian civilians. It discusses the destruction of homes, infrastructure, and healthcare facilities, food and water insecurity, and the violation of children's rights, as outlined by international treaties like the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The article calls for immediate action from the United Nations and the International Court of Justice to investigate these violations and hold Israel accountable. Additionally, it recommends humanitarian interventions such as providing essential aid, rebuilding infrastructure, and ensuring the safety of Palestinian civilians, particularly children. While the focus is on the suffering of Palestinian people, the article also acknowledges the impact of the conflict on Israeli civilians. The ultimate goal is to foster a lasting peace that ensures the rights and dignity of all people involved.*

**Keywords:** *Israel-Palestine Conflict, Human Rights Violations, Genocide, War Crimes, Children's Rights, Humanitarian Intervention.*

**Introduction**

The name of Palestine historically refers to the southwestern region of Bilad al-Sham, which encompasses Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. This region, located at the heart of the Arab Muslim world, has held immense cultural and religious significance. Positioned on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, it serves as a bridge between Asia and Africa. Palestine's geographical location between the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Jordan River to the east has provided it with unique cultural and geopolitical importance throughout history. The land of Palestine has long been viewed as a blessed and important region. Its proximity to the Mediterranean has also made it a key crossroads between continents. It is surrounded by Lebanon to the north, Syria to the northeast, Jordan to the east, and Egypt to the south, making it an integral part of the Levant region (Sami, 2005).

This holy land is home to several sacred religious sites, including the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which holds the distinction of being the first Qibla (direction of prayer) for Muslims. It is also the site of "Al-Isra" (The Night Journey), a miraculous event in Islamic tradition where the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is believed to have traveled from Mecca to Jerusalem and then ascended to the heavens. This divine event further emphasizes the religious significance of the land for Muslims. The land of Palestine is also revered by Jews and Christians, with important religious sites such as Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Nazareth holding great value. Jerusalem is a central place for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. The city is historically significant as the birthplace of Prophet Hazrat Issa (Aaliyh Salam) and the location of pivotal events in his life, including his ministry (Sami, 2005).

Over the centuries, Palestine has been under various rulers. It was once part of the Islamic Caliphates, beginning with the Rashidun Caliphate and continuing through the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Fatimid dynasties. Following the decline of the Islamic caliphates, the land came under the control of the Crusaders, and later the Ottoman Empire, which ruled the region from 1517 until the early 20th century. During the Ottoman period, the population of Palestine was predominantly Arab Muslim, though there were also Christian and Jewish communities present. Historical evidence suggests that in the late 19th century, approximately 87% of the population was Muslim, 10% was Christian, and 3% was Jewish (Arafat, 2010).

The modern conflict between Israel and Palestine, however, traces its origins to the late 19th century, when the Zionist movement, led by Theodor Herzl, sought to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The movement aimed to create a national home for Jews in the region, and it garnered the support of the British government (Kaplan, 1994). Herzl's vision, known as the World Zionist Organization, began to gain traction, particularly after the First World War, when the British gained control of Palestine through the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British government, expressed support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, a move that set the stage for future conflicts (Smith, 2001).

With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, British rule in Palestine was solidified under the mandate system, and Jewish immigration to the region increased significantly. Between 1918 and 1946, the Jewish population in Palestine rose from 7% to 33%, as large waves of Jewish immigrants arrived, many fleeing persecution in Europe (Schneer, 2010). These immigrants, with the support of the British, began establishing their own economic, social, and military institutions, including settlements, agricultural communities, and political organizations. This created significant tension with the Arab population, who saw these developments as an infringement on their rights and their land (Arafat, 2010).

The situation further escalated in 1947 when the United Nations proposed a partition plan that divided Palestine into two separate states: one Jewish and one Arab. The partition plan allocated 54.7% of the land to the Jewish state, 44.8% to the Arab state, and the remaining 0.5% was to be administered as an international zone, primarily focused on Jerusalem (Harris, 2000). The Zionist community accepted the plan, but the Palestinian leadership and the Arab states rejected it, leading to the declaration of the state of Israel in May 1948. This marked the beginning of the first Arab-Israeli war, which resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and the establishment of Israel as a sovereign state (Pappe, 2006).

The displacement of Palestinians became a significant issue, with many being forced into refugee camps in neighboring Arab countries. An estimated 700,000 Palestinians were displaced during the 1948 war, and approximately 400 Palestinian villages were demolished (Pappe, 2006). The newly established Israeli state confiscated Palestinian land and property, a move that exacerbated the humanitarian crisis and created long-lasting resentment. Despite the Israeli government's assertions of legitimacy, the conflict continued to simmer, leading to further wars and disputes over the years.

In 1967, the Six-Day War between Israel and its neighboring Arab states resulted in a decisive Israeli victory. Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Sinai Peninsula, territories that have remained contested ever since (Morris, 1999). This victory created new tensions, as Palestinians living in these territories found themselves under Israeli military occupation. The psychological and emotional toll of the conflict on Palestinian civilians, especially children, has been profound, with many experiencing trauma, displacement, and violence.

The 1973 Yom Kippur War saw Egypt and Syria launch an unexpected attack on Israel, aiming to reclaim the territories lost during the 1967 war. While initially successful, the war ended in a ceasefire, and the United Nations passed Resolution 338, calling for negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. The Camp David Accords, signed in 1978 between Egypt and Israel, aimed to bring peace to the region, but Palestinians were not represented in these talks, which limited the effectiveness of the agreement (Beinin, 2012).

In 1987, the First Intifada (uprising) began, as Palestinians took to the streets in protest against the Israeli occupation and its policies, including settlement expansion and military violence (Klein, 2007). The First Intifada was a mass civil resistance movement that saw Palestinians across the occupied territories engage in acts of civil disobedience, including strikes, protests, and boycotts. The struggle for self-determination and an end to Israeli occupation remains at the heart of the Palestinian cause.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rooted in historical, religious, and political disputes, has been one of the most complex and enduring conflicts in modern history. Numerous attempts at peace have been made, but none have been successful in bringing about a lasting resolution. The situation remains unresolved, with both sides continuing to experience immense suffering and loss (Abu-Lughod, 2002). The future of Palestine and Israel continues to hang in the balance, and the quest for peace and justice in the region remains a central challenge for the international community.

### **The Oslo Accords and the Shifting Dynamics of the Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The Palestinian protest movement, which erupted as a response to Israeli occupation, was characterized by nonviolent tactics such as civil disobedience, strikes, and boycotts of Israeli products. These protests were met with severe repression from the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), who not only fired tear gas at demonstrators but also targeted homes, schools, and hospitals, exacerbating the suffering of the Palestinian population (Shadid, 1993). According to reports, the IDF killed over 1,200 Palestinians and wounded around 130,000 individuals, including 240 children who lost their lives during this period (Erlanger, 2003). Despite the widespread violence, both Israel and Palestine eventually agreed to hold secret negotiations, which led to the historic Oslo Accords on September 13, 1993. These agreements marked the first time that both parties officially recognized each other (Rubin, 1995).

The Oslo Accords, also known as Oslo One, were followed by the Gaza-Jericho Agreement in 1994, which furthered the implementation of the Oslo accords. The agreement was aimed at

creating a framework for Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, with Israeli authorities still retaining control over the borders, airspace, and water resources (Alpher, 2004). Subsequently, the Oslo Accords led to a second agreement, known as Oslo II, signed on September 28, 1995. This divided the West Bank into three areas: Area A, which was under full Palestinian control; Area B, which was under joint Israeli-Palestinian control; and Area C, which remained under full Israeli control (Sabbagh, 1996). However, despite these agreements, tensions remained high, and the hopes for peace began to fade.

The failure of the 2000 Camp David Summit to produce a lasting agreement between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat marked a turning point in the peace process (Bickerton, 2009). The failure of the peace talks, largely attributed to disagreements over the status of Jerusalem and the right of return for Palestinian refugees, led to the eruption of the Second Intifada in September 2000 (Tibi, 2005). During this uprising, over 3,000 Palestinians and 400 Israelis were killed, with many others injured. In response, Israel began constructing a security barrier, or "separation wall," in 2002, citing security concerns over attacks from Palestinian militants (Schiff & Yaari, 2008).

The international community's position on Hamas, a Palestinian militant group, further complicated peace efforts. The United States, the European Union, and other countries designated Hamas as a terrorist organization, significantly affecting aid and diplomatic efforts to address the Palestinian issue (Lustick, 2010). The kidnapping of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit by Hamas in 2006 and Israel's subsequent military response in Gaza escalated tensions further, leading to a major military offensive on Gaza in December 2008 (Barak, 2009). Despite a prolonged negotiation process involving Egypt and the United States, Shalit was only released in 2011 as part of a prisoner exchange deal (Harel, 2011).

The political landscape shifted again with the 2013-2014 peace talks brokered by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry. However, the negotiations collapsed after several months of talks, and in response, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014. The operation, which lasted for over 50 days, resulted in the deaths of over 2,000 Palestinians and 66 Israelis, including both soldiers and civilians (Sly, 2014). This offensive exacerbated the already dire humanitarian crisis in Gaza, further straining relations between the two parties.

The political dynamics took another dramatic turn in December 2017 when U.S. President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a move that was widely criticized by the international community, including countries like Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom, as well as the United Nations (Krauss & Landler, 2017). This decision was seen as undermining the prospects for peace, as Jerusalem holds significant religious and political importance for both Israelis and Palestinians. Trump's administration also recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, a territory captured by Israel from Syria during the Six-Day War in 1967, marking a further shift in U.S. foreign policy (Harel & Lappin, 2019).

Despite these setbacks, some Arab nations took steps toward normalizing relations with Israel. In September 2020, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Sudan, and Morocco signed agreements to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel, breaking decades of Arab unity against the Jewish state (Abed, 2020). However, the peace agreements faced criticism from Palestinians, who felt that these agreements undermined their struggle for self-determination. As a result, the peace process continued to stagnate, and in 2021, violence erupted once again between Hamas and Israel, signaling the continued volatility of the situation (Benny, 2021).

In October 2023, Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel, citing Israel's ongoing blockade of Gaza and its occupation of Palestinian lands as the justification for the attack (Benny, 2023). The Israeli military responded with airstrikes on Gaza, and the situation escalated further, leading to renewed violence and an uncertain future for the region. The continued occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel, alongside the growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, underscores the urgent need for a lasting peace agreement that respects the rights of both Palestinians and Israelis (Shor, 2020).

As the conflict continues to evolve, it is essential to examine the legal framework surrounding the occupation of Palestinian territories. International law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations of 1907, provides guidelines for the treatment of occupied populations and their rights to self-determination (Freeman, 2009). The continued violations of these laws by Israeli authorities, particularly through settlement construction and the demolition of Palestinian homes, highlight the ongoing challenges to achieving a just and lasting peace in the region.

### **International Law Violations and Humanitarian Consequences in the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

The United Nations Charter emphasizes the obligation of all member states to develop principles based on equal rights and self-determination, while also refraining from the use of force against any nation (United Nations, 1945). However, Israel has maintained the position that International Humanitarian Law (IHL) does not apply to the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) (Ben-Naftali, 2011). This stance is contested, as it is the duty of Israel to respect and comply with international laws, especially in territories under occupation (B'Tselem, 2020). Unfortunately, Israel's actions have consistently violated these laws, and the fundamental rights of Palestinian civilians continue to be infringed upon in the OPT.

Israel has been accused of systematically using various methods to displace Palestinian civilians, including children, while demolishing homes, schools, and hospitals. These actions are in direct violation of the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention, both of which outline the rights and protections for civilians in occupied territories (Sultany, 2019). The destruction of civilian infrastructure not only violates these international agreements but also exacerbates the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank, leaving many Palestinians without access to basic necessities such as housing, education, and healthcare.

The Hague Regulations (Articles 42-56) and the Fourth Geneva Convention (Articles 27-34, 47-78) set forth the responsibilities of an occupying power, emphasizing the protection of civilians, their property, and ensuring their basic rights, including their right to live with dignity (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2016). Article 47 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in particular, prohibits the occupying power from exploiting the rights of civilians or infringing on their fundamental freedoms under any circumstances (Geneva Conventions, 1949). These provisions make clear that the rights of Palestinians under occupation must be respected, yet Israeli authorities continue to violate these legal protections.

Moreover, international law safeguards the individual freedoms of those in occupied territories, particularly regarding their personal property, dignity, and the right to freely practice their religion and speech. Article 46 of the Hague Regulations and Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention guarantee these rights, and any attempt to undermine them is considered unlawful (Sultany, 2019). Despite these legal protections, Israel continues to demolish Palestinian homes

and confiscate property in the OPT, causing immense harm to civilian families and violating their basic rights (United Nations, 2020).

International Humanitarian Law also upholds the protection of civilian property, and according to the Geneva Conventions, the occupying power must ensure that the population has sufficient food, medical supplies, and access to public health systems (Geneva Conventions, 1949). However, Israel's military operations have led to the destruction of critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and water systems, exacerbating the suffering of Palestinians. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has documented and verified the destruction of civilian lives and infrastructure in Gaza, including the killing of 8,219 Palestinians by Israeli forces between 7 October 2023 and 2 September 2024, which includes 2,056 women and 3,688 children (OHCHR, 2024).

Furthermore, Israel's policy of demolishing homes as a form of collective punishment violates the provisions of both the Fourth Geneva Convention and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees the right to housing and protection from unlawful interference (United Nations, 1966). Since 2009, more than 8,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished, displacing thousands of children, women, and elderly people in the West Bank. In 2020 alone, around 11,000 homes were demolished, displacing over 5,000 people, including 535 children (Amnesty International, 2020). These actions reflect a clear disregard for international law, as Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention explicitly prohibits the destruction of homes in occupied territories unless absolutely necessary for military operations (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2016).

The systematic targeting of healthcare facilities further compounds the violations against Palestinians. Israeli forces have repeatedly attacked hospitals, medical centers, and ambulances, thus violating IHL provisions that ensure the protection of healthcare during armed conflicts (Cohen, 2015). In November 2023, Israeli forces bombed Al-Shifa and Al-Nasr children's hospitals in Gaza, which are crucial to the region's healthcare infrastructure (Cohen, 2015). The destruction of these facilities, combined with the ongoing siege, has left thousands of Palestinians without adequate medical care. The number of hospital beds in Gaza decreased by 80% by April 2024, and the shortage of kidney dialysis beds increased by 75%, further intensifying the health crisis (Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2024).

The UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) also highlights the right of children to be protected from violence, abuse, and the destruction of their homes. Articles 16, 27, and 31 of the CRC emphasize that no child should be subject to arbitrary interference with their property or privacy (United Nations, 1989). Despite these protections, Palestinian children continue to face hardships, such as the destruction of their homes and the psychological trauma of living under constant military occupation (Al-Haq, 2018). These violations not only breach international agreements but also contribute to the ongoing cycle of violence and trauma for Palestinian children.

In addition, the continued settlement expansion in the West Bank and the displacement of Palestinians from their homes further undermine the possibility of achieving a two-state solution. The international community, including organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, has repeatedly condemned these actions, yet Israel persists in its settlement policy, despite clear legal prohibitions (European Union, 2019). The construction of settlements in occupied territories is prohibited under Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva

Convention, which prohibits the transfer of the occupying power's civilian population into the occupied territory (Geneva Conventions, 1949). International Humanitarian Law also ensures that civilians in occupied territories have access to sufficient food, clean water, and medical supplies. However, Israel's blockade of Gaza has led to severe shortages of basic goods and services, worsening the humanitarian crisis (Gordon, 2019). The restriction of goods, including essential medical supplies, has created significant challenges for health professionals and left many Palestinians without access to life-saving treatments.

The destruction of civilian infrastructure, including homes, schools, hospitals, and essential services, as well as the unlawful detention and ill-treatment of Palestinian children, all represent grave violations of international law and human rights. These actions not only violate specific provisions of international law but also perpetuate the cycle of suffering and injustice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

### **Genocide and Violations of International Law in Palestine**

The ongoing situation in Palestine, particularly in Gaza, has raised serious concerns regarding the treatment of Palestinians by Israeli authorities. International law, including the United Nations conventions and treaties, outlines specific protections for civilians in conflict zones, particularly for vulnerable populations such as children. However, the actions of Israel in Palestine have raised the question of whether these violations constitute genocide. Genocide, as defined by international law, involves acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. This can be done through a variety of actions, including killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and forcibly displacing members of the group (United Nations, 1948).

One of the most pressing issues in Gaza and the broader Palestinian territories is the lack of access to basic human needs, such as clean water, food, and healthcare. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that limited access to clean water in Palestine increases the risk of waterborne diseases, including cholera, skin rashes, and diarrhea, which are among the leading causes of death in Palestinian children (World Health Organization, 2024). In the period from October 2023 to June 2024, over 381,000 cases of diarrhea were reported, along with 11,222 cases of chickenpox and 51,055 cases of skin rashes in Gaza (Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2024). Additionally, polio remains a serious threat to Palestinian children, particularly those living in shelters with inadequate sanitation facilities (UNICEF, 2024). These conditions, exacerbated by Israel's blockade and destruction of critical infrastructure, contribute to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the region.

According to Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all member states are required to provide a suitable standard of living for children, including adequate housing, clothing, and nutrition (United Nations, 1989). However, in Palestine, the situation remains dire. The Israeli occupation has led to widespread destruction of homes, schools, and healthcare facilities, which are essential to the survival and well-being of children (B'Tselem, 2023). Communication blackouts, imposed by Israeli military actions, have further compounded the difficulties faced by Palestinian civilians, isolating them from vital information and humanitarian aid (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

The blockade and military operations have also resulted in severe food insecurity and starvation. According to reports from the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, nearly 90% of children, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers in Gaza are suffering from severe food poverty

(Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, 2024). The lack of adequate nutrition has led to widespread malnutrition, with deficiencies in iron and zinc contributing to anemia, particularly among children (UNICEF, 2024). In July 2023, many families reported that their children had not eaten anything for an entire day due to the shortage of food and the lack of money to purchase basic necessities (Oxfam, 2024). This situation represents a serious violation of international human rights and humanitarian law.

In addition to the humanitarian crisis, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have been accused of targeting and killing journalists, further highlighting the severity of the violations being committed in Palestine. Targeted killings of journalists, as well as the destruction of media infrastructure, are clear violations of international law, particularly the Geneva Conventions, which protect the rights of journalists in conflict zones (Reporters Without Borders, 2023). These actions aim to silence dissent and restrict the flow of information, making it difficult for the international community to fully understand the scope of the human rights violations occurring in Palestine.

The situation is further complicated by the destruction of educational infrastructure. According to Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to access education, and governments are obligated to ensure that educational opportunities are available to all children, regardless of their circumstances (United Nations, 1989). However, in Gaza, the Israeli airstrikes have resulted in the destruction of 50 schools in May 2021 alone, affecting approximately 41,897 children (UNICEF, 2021). These attacks, which have damaged or destroyed homes, hospitals, and educational centers, violate the rights of children to education and contribute to the long-term social and psychological trauma experienced by Palestinian children. The destruction of cultural and religious sites is another violation that points to the genocidal nature of Israeli actions in Palestine. On April 23, 2024, the IDF attacked and destroyed 243 mosques in Gaza, causing widespread damage to religious, historical, and cultural heritage (B'Tselem, 2024). These attacks not only violate the right to freedom of religion but also constitute an attempt to erase the cultural identity of the Palestinian people. Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention imposes a duty on occupying powers to protect cultural and educational institutions in occupied territories (International Committee of the Red Cross, 1949). Israel's actions are in clear violation of this provision, further undermining Palestinian rights to culture, expression, and religion.

The cumulative effect of these violations targeted killings, destruction of infrastructure, forced displacement, food and water insecurity, and suppression of education raises the question of whether Israel's actions constitute genocide. The United Nations defines genocide as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group (United Nations, 1948). Israel's systematic targeting of Palestinian civilians, particularly children, and its ongoing policies of land confiscation, forced displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure, align with the physical and mental elements of genocide.

The mental element of genocide involves the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a specific group based on its national, ethnical, racial, or religious identity (Schabas, 2017). Israel's actions such as the systematic killing of Palestinians, including journalists, children, and civilians, and the destruction of homes, schools, and religious sites indicate an intent to undermine and erase the Palestinian people's ability to survive and thrive as a distinct group. The physical elements of genocide are evident in the acts of killing, causing serious bodily harm, and imposing conditions



that deliberately worsen the lives of Palestinians, particularly through the destruction of vital infrastructure and the targeting of civilians (International Criminal Court, 2020). Israel's actions in Palestine meet the criteria for genocide as outlined by international law. The destruction of civilian infrastructure, the killing of innocent civilians, the targeting of journalists, and the denial of basic human rights to Palestinians are clear violations of international law and humanitarian standards. These actions must be addressed by the international community, as they constitute not only war crimes but also acts of genocide under international law.

### **Conclusion**

The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine has led to widespread violations of international law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. The situation, particularly in the Gaza Strip, has escalated to the point where innocent civilians, especially children, are facing extreme hardships. The systematic violations of international treaties and human rights conventions must be addressed urgently, and the international community, led by institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the United Nations, must take swift action to hold Israel accountable for its actions. The prolonged nature of the conflict has had severe psychological effects on both Palestinians and Israelis. The trauma inflicted on the people of Palestine, particularly children, who have been exposed to violence, displacement, and deprivation, is deeply concerning. The destruction of homes, healthcare facilities, and schools has further compounded the suffering of the Palestinian people. However, it is equally important to acknowledge that children on both sides of the conflict have endured immense pain and loss, and the trauma experienced by Israeli children, while different, is also significant.

It is essential for the international community to take immediate and decisive action to protect the rights of Palestinian civilians, especially children. Holding Israel accountable for its breaches of international law, including genocidal acts, is paramount. The United Nations, along with the ICJ, should investigate these violations thoroughly and impartially. The protection of Palestinian civilians, particularly the vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly, must be prioritized, and their basic needs for food, clean water, and medical care should be met without obstruction. In addition to ensuring the flow of humanitarian aid, there must be efforts to rebuild the critical infrastructure that has been destroyed, including healthcare facilities, water supply systems, and schools. The reconstruction of these vital institutions is necessary to restore the dignity of Palestinian families and provide them with the means to rebuild their lives. Medical supplies, including diagnostic kits and sanitation equipment, must be delivered immediately to prevent further suffering, especially among children.

The issue of the release of detained Palestinians must also be addressed, with the international community demanding the immediate release of those held unlawfully. Detainees must be treated in accordance with international human rights standards, free from torture and inhumane treatment. Additionally, the international community must apply pressure on Israel to cease the targeted killings of Palestinian civilians, including children. These actions must stop immediately to prevent further loss of life. It is also critical that the international community pressures Israel to respect the rights of Palestinians under occupation. The ongoing violations of their rights to return to their homes and live without fear of violence or discrimination must be stopped. The UN should oversee the safe return of displaced Palestinians, ensuring that their rights are protected in accordance with international law.

This conflict, while deeply tragic for Palestinians, also highlights the broader consequences of war on both sides. While Palestinian children are suffering on a much larger scale, Israeli children are also victims of this war. Both populations need protection, and a meaningful public health and humanitarian policy must be established that addresses the needs of all civilians affected by the conflict, regardless of nationality. Ultimately, the international community must act with urgency and compassion to ensure that both Palestinian and Israeli children, along with their families, are protected from further harm. International law, including human rights law and the law of genocide, must be upheld to bring justice to the victims of this long-standing conflict. Only through genuine efforts to address the root causes of the violence, hold perpetrators accountable, and protect the most vulnerable populations can there be any hope for a future of peace, security, and justice for all.

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