# Our Narrative...

## Operation Al-Aqsa Flood

Hamas Media Office

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

**Our steadfast Palestinian people,**

**The Arab & Islamic nations;**

**The free peoples worldwide and those who advocate for freedom, justice and human dignity**

In light of the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and as our people continue their battle for independence, dignity and breaking-free from the longest-ever occupation during which they have drawn the finest displays of bravery and heroism in confronting the Israeli murder machine and aggression. We would like to clarify to our people and the free peoples of the world the reality of what happened on Oct. 7, the motives behind, its general context related to the Palestinian cause, as well as a refutation to the Israeli allegations and to put the facts into perspective.

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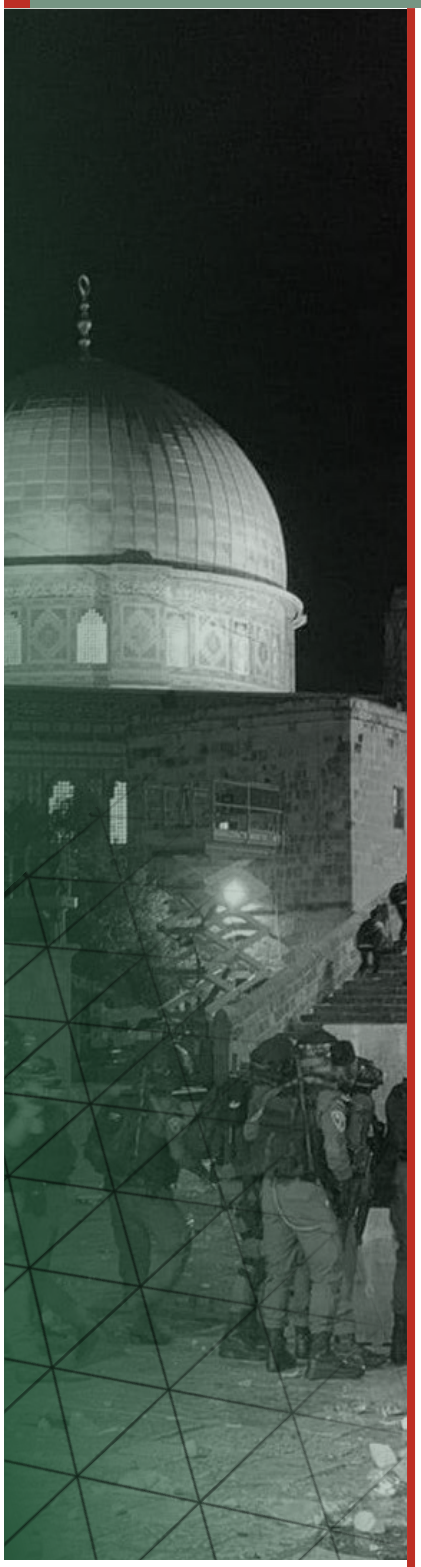
# First
# Why Operation Al-Aqsa Flood?



1. 1- The battle of the Palestinian people against occupation and colonialism did not start on Oct. 7, but started 105 years ago, including 30 years of British colonialism and 75 years of Zionist occupation. In 1918, the Palestinian people owned 98.5% of the Palestine land and represented 92% of the population on the land of Palestine. While the Jews, who were brought to Palestine in mass immigration campaigns in coordination between the British colonial authorities and the Zionist Movement, managed to seize control of not more than 6% of the lands in Palestine and to be 31% of the population prior to 1948 when the Zionist Entity was announced on the historic land of Palestine. At that time, the Palestinian people were denied from the right to self-determination and the Zionist gangs engaged in an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Palestinian people aimed at expelling them from their lands and areas. As a result, the Zionist gangs seized control by force of 77% of the land of Palestine where they expelled 57% of the people of Palestine and destroyed over 500 Palestinian villages and towns, and committed dozens of massacres against the Palestinians which all culminated in the establishment of the Zionist Entity in 1948. Moreover, in continuation of the aggression, the Israeli forces in 1967 occupied the rest of Palestine including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem in addition to Arab territories around Palestine.

2. 2-Over these long decades, the Palestinian people suffered all forms of oppression, injustice, expropriation of their fundamental rights and the apartheid policies. The Gaza Strip, for example, suffered as of 2007 from a

suffocating blockade over 17 years which turned it to be the largest open-air prison in the world. The Palestinian people in Gaza also suffered from five destructive wars\ aggressions all of which "Israel" was the offending party. The people in Gaza in 2018 also initiated the Great March of Return demonstrations to peacefully protest the Israeli blockade, their misery humanitarian conditions and to demand their right-to-return. However, the Israeli occupation forces responded to these protests with brutal force by which 360 Palestinians were killed and 19,000 others were injured including over 5,000 children in a matter of few months.

3. According official figures, in the period between (January 2000 and September 2023), the Israeli occupation killed 11,299 Palestinians and injured 156,768 others, the great majority of them were civilians. Unfortunately, the US administration and its allies did not pay attention to the suffering of the Palestinian people over the past years but provided cover to the Israeli aggression. They only lamented the Israeli soldiers who were killed on Oct. 7 even without seeking the truth of what happened, and wrongfully walked behind the Israeli narrative in condemning an alleged targeting of Israeli civilians. The US administration provided the financial and military support to the Israeli occupation massacres against the Palestinian civilians and the brutal aggression on the Gaza Strip, and still the US officials continue to ignore what the Israeli occupation forces commit in Gaza of mass killing.

4. The Israeli violations and brutality were documented by many UN organizations and international human rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and even documented by Israeli human rights groups. However, these reports and testimonies were ignored and the Israeli occupation is yet to be held accountable. For example, on Oct. 29, 2021, Israel's Ambassador to the UN Gilad Erdan insulted the UN system by tearing up a report for the UN Human Rights Council during an address at the General Assembly, and threw it in a dustbin before leaving the podium. Yet, he was appointed in the following year - 2022 - to the post of vice-president of the UN General Assembly.

5. The US administration and its western allies have always been treating Israel as a state above the law; they provide it with the needed cover to maintain prolonging the occupation and cracking down the Palestinian people, and also allowing "Israel" to exploit such situation to expropriate further Palestinian lands and to Judaize their sanctities and holy sites. Despite the fact that the UN had issued more than 900 resolutions over the past 75 years in favor of the Palestinian people, "Israel" rejected to abide by any of these resolutions, and the US VETO was always present at the UN Security Council to prevent any condemnation to "Israel's" policies and violations. That's why we see the US and other western countries complicit

and partners to the Israeli occupation in its crimes and in the continued suffering of the Palestinian people.

**6.** As for "the peaceful settlement process". Despite the fact that the Oslo Accords signed in 1993 with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) stipulated the establishment of a Palestinian independent state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; "Israel" systematically destroyed every possibility to establish the Palestinian state through a wide campaign of settlements' construction and Judaization of the Palestinian lands in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem. The backers of the peace process after 30 years realized that they have reached an impasse and that such process had catastrophic results on the Palestinian people.

The Israeli officials confirmed at several occasions their absolute rejection to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Just one month before Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presented a map of a so-called "New Middle East," depicting "Israel" stretching from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea including the West Bank and Gaza. The entire world at that - UN General Assembly's - podium were silent towards his speech full of arrogance and ignorance towards the rights of the Palestinian people.

**7.** After 75 years of relentless occupation and suffering, and after failing all initiatives for liberation and return to our people, and also after the disastrous results of the so-called peace process, **what did the world expect from the Palestinian people to do in response to the following:**

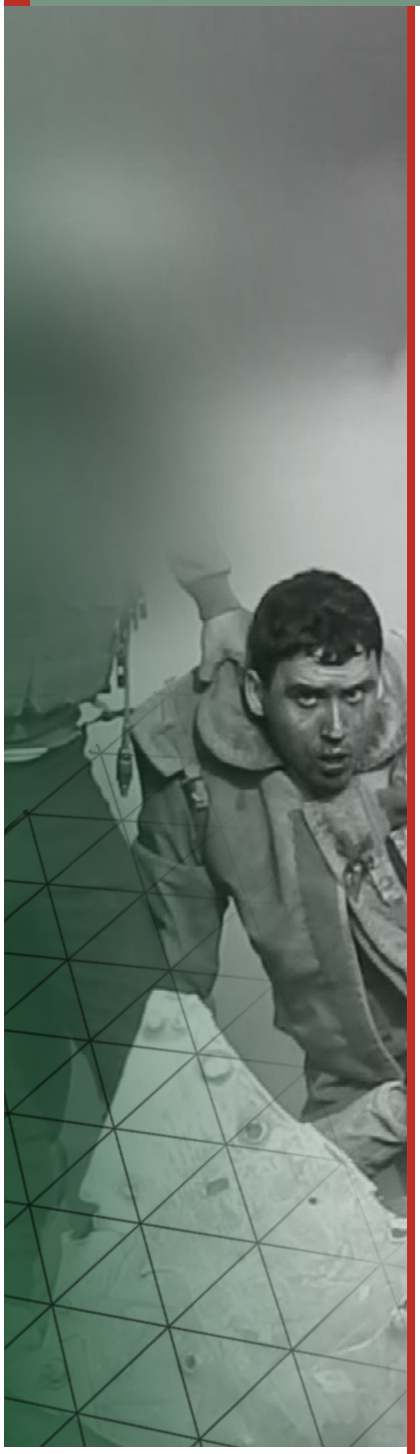
- The Israeli Judaization plans to the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, its temporal and spatial division attempts, as well as the intensification of the Israeli settlers' incursions into the holy mosque.
- The practices of the extremist and right-wing Israeli government which is practically taking steps towards annexing the entire West Bank and Jerusalem into the so-called "Israel's sovereignty" amid plans on the Israeli official table to expel Palestinians from their homes and areas.
- The thousands of Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails who are experiencing deprivation of their basic rights as well as assaults and humiliations under direct supervision of the Israeli fascist minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.
- The unjust air, sea, and land blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip over 17 years.

- The expansion of the Israeli settlements across the West Bank in an unprecedented level, as well as the daily violence perpetrated by settlers against Palestinians and their properties.
- The seven million Palestinians living in extreme conditions in refugee camps and other areas who wish to return to their lands, and who were expelled 75 years ago.
- The failure of the international community and the complicit of superpowers to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.

What was expected from the Palestinian people after all of that? To keep waiting and to keep counting on the helpless UN! Or to take the initiative in defending the Palestinian people, lands, rights and sanctities; knowing that the defense act is a right enshrined in international laws, norms and conventions.

Proceeding from the above, Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on Oct. 7 was a necessary step and a normal response to confront all Israeli conspiracies against the Palestinian people and their cause. It was a defensive act in the frame of getting rid of the Israeli occupation, reclaiming the Palestinian rights and on the way for liberation and independence like all peoples around the world did.

# Second
# The events of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and responses to the Israeli allegations



In light of the Israeli fabricated accusations and allegations over Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on Oct. 7 and its repercussions, **we in the Islamic Resistance Movement - Hamas clarify the following:**

1. Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on Oct. 7 targeted the Israeli military sites, and sought to arrest the enemy's soldiers to pressure on the Israeli authorities to release the thousands of Palestinians held in Israeli jails through a prisoners exchange deal. Therefore, the operation focused on destroying the Israeli army's Gaza Division, the Israeli military sites stationed near the Israeli settlements around Gaza.

2. **Avoiding harm to civilians, especially children, women and elderly people is a religious and moral commitment by all the Al-Qassam Brigades' fighters. We reiterate that the Palestinian resistance was fully disciplined and committed to the Islamic values during the operation and that the Palestinian fighters only targeted the occupation soldiers and those who carried weapons against our people. In the meantime, the Palestinian fighters were keen to avoid harming civilians despite the fact that the resistance does not possess precise weapons. In addition, if there was any case of targeting civilians; it happened accidently and in the course of the confrontation with the occupation forces.**

Since its establishment in 1987, the Hamas Movement committed itself to avoiding harm to civilians. After Zionist criminal Baruch Goldstein in 1994 committed a massacre against Palestinian worshippers in the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Hebron City, the Hamas Movement announced an initiative to avoid civilians the brunt of fighting by all parties, but the Israeli occupation rejected it and even did not give any comment on it. The Hamas Movement also repeated such calls several times, but received by a deaf ear from the Israeli occupation which continued its deliberate targeting and killing of Palestinian civilians.

**3.** Maybe some faults happened during Operation Al-Aqsa Flood's implementation due to the rapid collapse of the Israeli security and military system, and the chaos caused along the border areas with Gaza.

As attested by many, the Hamas Movement dealt in a positive and kind manner with all civilians who have been held in Gaza, and sought from the earliest days of the aggression to release them, and that's what happened during the week-long humanitarian truce where those civilians were released in exchange of releasing Palestinian women and children from Israeli jails.

**4.** What the Israeli occupation promoted of allegations that the Al-Qassam Brigades on Oct. 7 were targeting Israeli civilians are nothing but complete lies and fabrications. The source of these allegations is the Israeli official narrative and no independent source proved any of them. It is a well-known fact that the Israeli official narrative had always sought to demonize the Palestinian resistance, while also legalizing its brutal aggression on Gaza.

**Here are some details that go against the Israeli allegations:**

- Video clips taken on that day - Oct. 7 - along with the testimonies by Israelis themselves that were released later showed that the Al-Qassam Brigades' fighters didn't target civilians, and many Israelis were killed by the Israeli army and police due to their confusion.
- It has also been firmly refuted the lie of the "40 beheaded babies" by the Palestinian fighters, and even Israeli sources denied this lie. Many of the western media agencies unfortunately adopted this allegation and promoted it.
- The suggestion that the Palestinian fighters committed rape against Israeli women was fully denied including by the Hamas Movement. A report by the Mondoweiss news website on Dec. 1, 2023, among others, said there is lack of any evidence of "mass rape" allegedly perpetrated by Hamas members on Oct. 7 and that Israel used such allegation "to fuel the genocide in Gaza."

- According to two reports by the Israeli Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper on Oct. 10 and the Haaretz newspaper on Nov. 18, many Israeli civilians were killed by an Israeli military helicopter especially those who were in the Nova music festival near Gaza where 364 Israeli civilians were killed. The two reports said the Hamas fighters reached the area of the festival without any prior knowledge of the festival, where the Israeli helicopter opened fire on both the Hamas fighters and the participants in the festival. The Yedioth Ahronoth also said the Israeli army, to prevent further infiltrations from Gaza and to prevent any Israelis being arrested by the Palestinian fighters, struck over 300 targets in areas surrounding the Gaza Strip.

- Other Israeli testimonies confirmed that the Israeli army raids and soldiers' operations killed many Israeli captives and their captors. The Israeli occupation army bombed the houses in the Israeli settlements where Palestinian fighters and Israelis were inside in a clear application of the Israeli army notorious "Hannibal Directive" which clearly says that "better a dead civilian hostage or soldier than taken alive" to avoid engaging in a prisoners swap with the Palestinian resistance.

- Furthermore, the occupation authorities revised the number of their killed soldiers and civilians from 1,400 to 1,200, after finding that 200-burnt corpses had belonged to the Palestinian fighters who were killed and mixed with Israeli corpses. This means that the one who killed the fighters is the one who killed the Israelis, knowing that only the Israeli army possesses military planes that killed, burned and destroyed Israeli areas on Oct. 7.

- The Israeli heavy aerial raids across Gaza that led to the death of nearly 60 Israeli captives also prove that the Israeli occupation does not care about the life of their captives in Gaza.

5. It is also a matter of fact that a number of Israeli settlers in settlements around Gaza were armed, and clashed with Palestinian fighters on Oct. 7. Those settlers were registered as civilians while the fact is they were armed men fighting alongside the Israeli army.

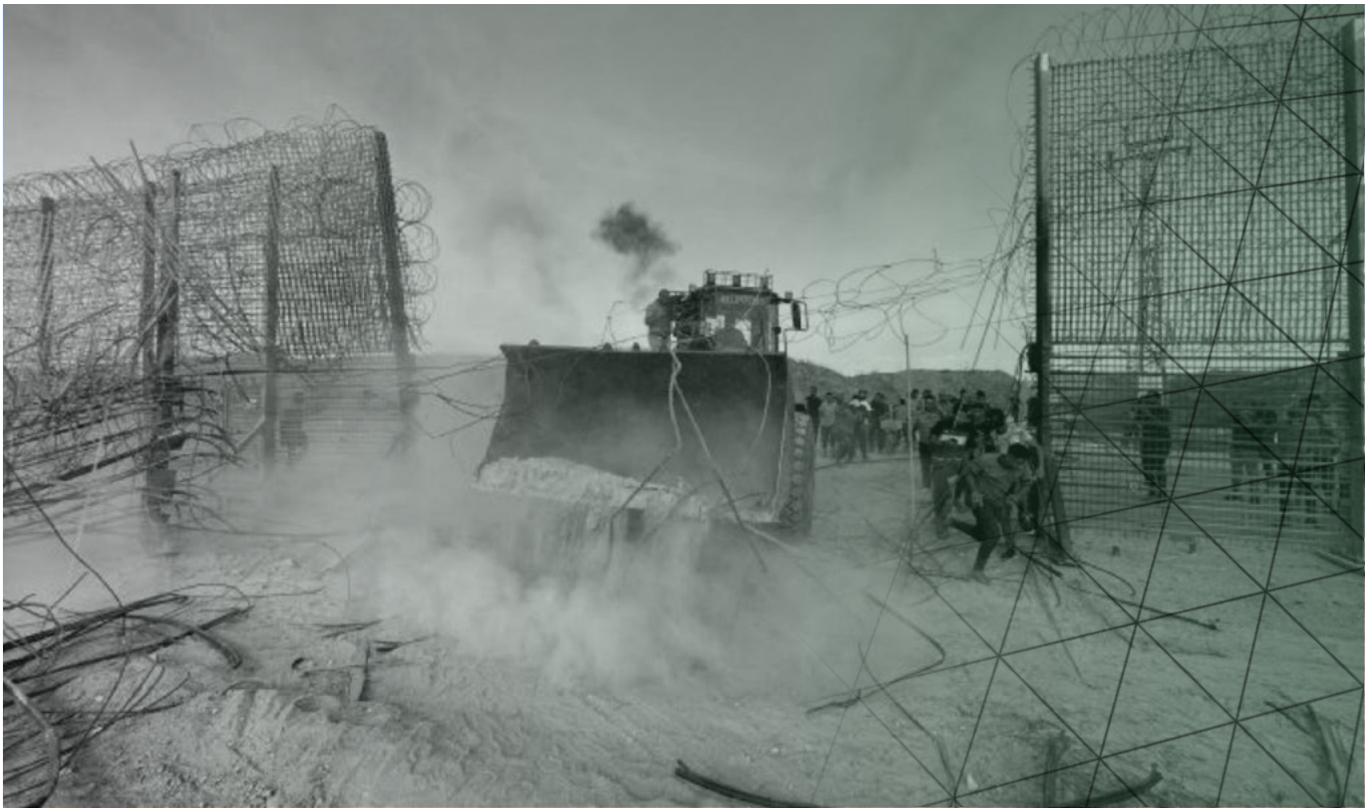
6. When speaking about Israeli civilians, it must be known that conscription applies to all Israelis above the age of 18 - males who served 32 months of military service and females who served 24 months - where all can carry and use arms. This is based on the Israeli security theory of an "armed people" which turned the Israeli entity into "an army with a country attached."

7. The brutal killing of civilians is a systematic approach of the Israeli entity, and one of the means to humiliate the Palestinian people. The mass killing of Palestinians in Gaza is a clear evidence of such approach.

8. The Al Jazeera news channel said in a documentary that in one month of the Israeli aggression on Gaza, the daily average killing of Palestinian children in Gaza was 136, while the average of children killing in Ukraine - in the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war - was one child every day.

9. Those who defend the Israeli aggression do not look at the events in an objective manner but rather go to justify the Israeli mass killing of Palestinians by saying there would be casualties among civilians when attacking the Hamas fighters. However, they would not use such assumption when it comes to the Al-Aqsa Flood event on Oct. 7.

10. We are confident that any fair and independent inquiries will prove the truth of our narrative and will prove the scale of lies and misleading information in the Israeli side. This also includes the Israeli allegations regarding the hospitals in Gaza that the Palestinian resistance used them as command centers; an allegation that was not proven and was refuted by reports of many western press agencies.



# Third

# Towards a transparent international investigation

1. Palestine is a member-state of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and it acceded to its Rome Statute in 2015. When Palestine asked for investigation into Israeli war crimes committed on its territories, it was faced by Israeli intransigence and rejection, and threats to punish the Palestinians for the request to ICC. It is also unfortunate to mention that there were great powers, which claim to be holding values of justice, completely sided with the occupation narrative and stood against the Palestinian moves in the international justice system. These powers want to keep "Israel" as a state above the law and to ensure it escapes liability and accountability.

2. We urge these countries, especially the US administration, Germany, Canada and the UK, if they are meant for justice to prevail as they claim, they are ought to announce their support to the course of the investigation in all crimes committed in occupied Palestine and to give full support for the international courts to effectively do their job.

3. Despite having doubts from these countries to stand by justice, we still urge the ICC Prosecutor and his team to immediately and urgently come to occupied Palestine to look into the crimes and violations committed there, rather than merely observing the situation remotely or being subject to the Israeli restrictions.

4. In Dec. 2022, when the UN General Assembly passed a resolution seeking opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legal consequences of "Israel's" illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, those (few) countries who back "Israel" announced their rejection to the move that was approved by nearly 100 countries. And when our people - and their legal and rights groups - sought to pursue prosecutions against the Israeli war criminals in front of the European countries courts – through the system of universal jurisdiction - the European regimes obstructed the moves in favor of the Israeli war criminals to remain running free.

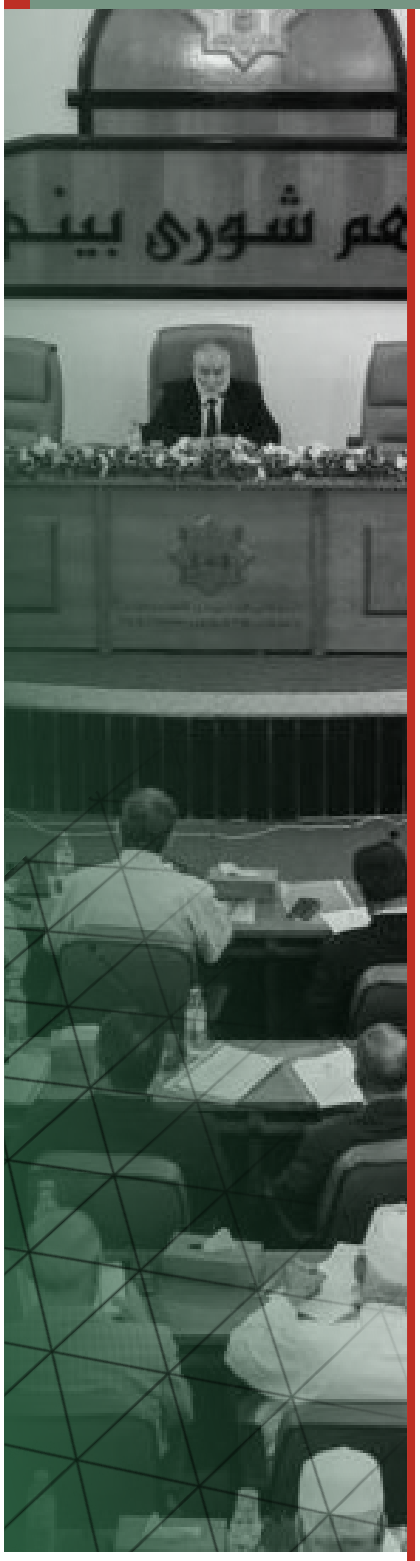
5. The events of Oct. 7 must be put in its broader context, and that all cases of struggle against colonialism and occupation in our contemporary time be evoked. These experiences of struggle show that in the same level of oppression committed by the occupier; there would be an equivalent response by the people under occupation.

6. The Palestinian people and peoples across the world realize the scale of lies and deception these governments that back the Israeli narrative practice in their attempts to justify their blind bias and to cover the Israeli crimes. These countries know the root causes of the conflict which are the occupation and the denial of the right of the Palestinian people to live in dignity on their lands. These countries show no interest towards the continuation of the unjust blockade on millions of Palestinians in Gaza, and also show no interest towards the thousands of Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails held under conditions where their basic rights are mostly denied.

7. We hail the free people of the world from all religions, ethnicities and backgrounds who rally in all capitals and cities worldwide to voice their rejection to the Israeli crimes and massacres, and to show their support for the rights of the Palestinian people and their just cause.

# Fourth

# A reminder to the world, who is Hamas?



1. The Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas" is a Palestinian Islamic national liberation and resistance movement. Its goal is to liberate Palestine and confront the Zionist project. Its frame of reference is Islam, which determines its principles, objectives and means. Hamas rejects the persecution of any human being or the undermining of his or her rights on nationalist, religious or sectarian grounds.

2. Hamas affirms that its conflict is with the Zionist project not with the Jews because of their religion. Hamas does not wage a struggle against the Jews because they are Jewish but wages a struggle against the Zionists who occupy Palestine. Yet, it is the Zionists who constantly identify Judaism and the Jews with their own colonial project and illegal entity.

3. The Palestinian people have always stood against oppression, injustice, and the committing of massacres against civilians regardless of who commit them. And based on our religious and moral values, we clearly stated our rejection to what the Jews were exposed to by the Nazi Germany. Here, we remind that the Jewish problem in essence was a European problem, while the Arab and Islamic environment was - across history - a safe haven to the Jewish people and to other peoples of other beliefs and ethnicities. The Arab and Islamic environment was an example to co-existence, cultural interaction and religious freedoms. The current conflict is caused by the Zionist aggressive behavior and its alliance with the western colonial powers; therefore, we reject the exploitation of the Jewish suffering in Europe to justify the oppression against our people in Palestine.

4. The Hamas Movement according to international laws and norms is a national liberation movement that has clear goals and mission. It gets its legitimacy to resist the occupation from the Palestinian right to self-defense, liberation and self-determination. Hamas has always been keen to restrict its fight and resistance with the Israeli occupation on the occupied Palestinian territory, yet, the Israeli occupation did not abide by that and committed massacres and killings against the Palestinians outside Palestine.

5. We stress that resisting the occupation with all means including the armed resistance is a legitimized right by all norms, divine religions, the international laws including the Geneva Conventions and its first additional protocol and the related UN resolutions e.g. The UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, adopted by the 29th session of the General Assembly on Nov. 22, 1974 which affirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right to self-determination and the right to return to "their homes and property from where they were expelled, displaced and uprooted."

6. Our steadfast Palestinian people and their resistance are waging a heroic battle to defend their land and national rights against the longest and brutalist colonial occupation. The Palestinian people are confronting an unprecedented Israeli aggression that committed heinous massacres against Palestinian civilians, most of them were children and women. In the course of the aggression on Gaza, the Israeli occupation deprived our people in Gaza of food, water, medicines and fuel, and simply deprived them from all means of life. In the meantime, the Israeli warplanes savagely struck all Gaza infrastructures and public buildings including schools, universities, mosques, churches and hospitals in a clear sign of ethnic cleansing aimed at expelling the Palestinian people from Gaza. Yet, the backers of the Israeli occupation did nothing but kept the genocide ongoing against our people.

7. The Israeli occupation's use of the "self-defense" pretext to justify its oppression against the Palestinian people is a process of lie, deception and turning the facts. The Israeli entity has no right to defend its crimes and occupation but the Palestinian people who have such right to oblige the occupier to end the occupation. In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) gave an advisory opinion in the case concerning the "Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory" which stated that "Israel" - the brutal occupying force - cannot rely on a right of self-defense to build such wall on the Palestinian territory. Furthermore, Gaza under the international law is still an occupied land, thus, the justifications for waging the aggression on Gaza is baseless and lacks its legal capacity, as well as lacks the essence of the self-defense idea.

# Fifth
# What is needed?

Occupation is occupation no matter how it describes or names itself, and remains a tool to break the will of the peoples and to keep oppressing them. On the other side, the experiences of the peoples\nations across history on how to break away from occupation and colonialism confirm that the resistance is the strategic approach and the only way to liberation and ending the occupation. Have any nation been liberated from occupation without struggle, resistance or sacrifice?

The humanitarian, ethical and legal imperatives necessitate all countries around the world to back the resistance of the Palestinian people not to collude against it. They are supposed to confront the occupation crimes and aggression, as well as to support the struggle of the Palestinian people to liberate their lands and to practice their right to self-determination like all peoples across the globe. **Based on that we call for the following:**

1. The immediate halt of the Israeli aggression on Gaza, the crimes and ethnic cleansing committed against the entire Gaza population, to open the crossings and allow the entry of the humanitarian aid into Gaza including the reconstruction tools.

2. To hold the Israeli occupation legally accountable for what it caused of human suffering towards the

Palestinian people, and to charge it for the crimes against civilians, infrastructure, hospitals, educational facilities, mosques and churches.

3. The support of the Palestinian resistance in the face of the Israeli occupation with all possible means as a legitimized right under the international laws and norms.

4. We call upon the free peoples across the world, especially those nations who were colonized and realize the suffering of the Palestinian people, to take serious and effective positions against the double standard policies adopted by powers\countries that back the Israeli occupation. We call on these nations to initiate a global solidarity movement with the Palestinian people and to emphasize the values of justice and equality and the right of the peoples to live in freedom and dignity.

5. The superpowers, especially the US, the UK and France among others, must stop providing the Zionist entity with cover from accountability, and to stop dealing with it as a country above the law. Such unjust behavior by these countries allowed the Israeli occupation over 75 years to commit the worst crimes ever against the Palestinian people, land and sanctities. We urge the countries across the globe, today and more than before, to uphold their responsibilities towards the international law and the relevant UN resolutions that call for ending the occupation.

6. We categorically reject any international or Israeli projects aimed at deciding the future of Gaza that only serve to prolong the occupation. We stress that the Palestinian people have the capacity to decide their future and to arrange their internal affairs, and thus no party in the world has the right to impose any form of guardianship on the Palestinian people or decide on their behalf.

7. We urge for standing against the Israeli attempts to cause another wave of expulsion - or a new Nakba – to the Palestinians especially in the lands occupied in 1948 and the West Bank. We stress that there will be no expulsion to Sinai or Jordan or any other place, and if there is any relocation to the Palestinians, it will be towards their homes and areas they were expelled from in 1948, as affirmed by many UN resolutions.

8. We call for keeping the popular pressure around the world until ending the occupation; we call for standing against the normalization attempts with the Israeli entity and for a comprehensive boycott to the Israeli occupation and its backers.

فلسطين
حركة المقاومة الإسلامية - حماس