



مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان  
AL MEZAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

# Kill the Witness, Hide the Crimes

Israel's Campaign of Silencing Palestinian Journalists  
and Media Workers to Conceal the Gaza Genocide  
7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025

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## Executive Summary and Key Findings

This report provides a comprehensive account of violations committed by Israeli forces and authorities against Palestinian journalists and media workers<sup>1</sup> during the ongoing genocide in Gaza, as documented by Al Mezan. It covers the period from 7 October 2023 to 30 June 2025. These violations have taken multiple forms, including targeted killings, physical and mental harm, arbitrary detention and torture, incitement to violence, collective punishment, and the wanton destruction of media offices and equipment. The report provides data and documentation of these violations. Specific cases in which Palestinian journalists and media workers were killed, injured, or otherwise harmed, as well as incidents of targeted attacks on press teams and the destruction of media facilities, are included in this report based on sworn testimonies<sup>2</sup> collected by Al Mezan from victims and eyewitnesses.

The report concludes with an analysis of Israel's violations of its legal obligations towards Palestinian journalists and media workers. Based on the evidence presented in this report, Al Mezan has determined that this campaign of violence, directed by Israeli authorities at the highest political and military levels, is not incidental. It forms part of a deliberate effort to silence the documentation, reporting, and public exposure of Israeli atrocities against Palestinians. This conclusion is further reinforced by the fact that Israeli authorities have imposed a blanket ban on foreign journalists entering Gaza in an apparent attempt to further conceal Israel's genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

### Key Findings

According to Al Mezan's documentation, between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2025, Israeli forces killed 273 Palestinian journalists and media workers in Gaza – 240 men and 33 women.

The field data and sworn testimonies collected by Al Mezan regarding the different ways Israeli forces have attacked Palestinian journalists and media workers clearly indicate that they were deliberately targeted. Israeli forces have launched airstrikes and opened direct fire on media workers while they were on duty, despite wearing visible identification such as press-marked vests, helmets, and equipment. Field data indicate that 96 photojournalists, 79 reporters, 30 editors, 21 writers, 15 news anchors, 10 program hosts, and 19 technicians have been killed by Israel. These attacks have

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, *journalists* are defined as all individuals professionally engaged in journalism, including reporters, editors, and photojournalists. The term *media workers* refers to presenters, program hosts, and professionals in technical roles such as editing, production, programming, directing, and audio-visual engineering. It also encompasses media administrators, social media content creators and activists, as well as those involved in media-related work within official institutions or civil society organizations.

<sup>2</sup> The testimonies included in this report have been edited for length and clarity. Full testimonies can be found in the Annex included at the end of this report.

also caused physical injuries and the destruction of media equipment. During the reporting period, 420 Palestinian journalists and media workers were injured. The nature of these attacks indicates deliberate intent to kill or intimidate professionals in the media and stop them from speaking out on the genocide.

Palestinian journalists and media workers have been the targets of smear campaigns by Israeli officials. High-level figures from the government and the military, including army spokespersons, have singled out journalists by name. Israel has assassinated some of these journalists, while others remain at serious risk as they continue to do their work. Journalists' families have also become the targets of attacks by Israel. For example, the family of Al Jazeera journalist Wael Al-Dahdouh was targeted due to his work as a journalist. His wife, son, daughter, and other relatives were killed after an Israeli airstrike targeted the house where they had taken refuge in Deir al-Balah on 25 October 2023 – demonstrating the deliberate targeting of journalists and their families by Israeli forces.

This is further supported by field data, which indicates that most journalists and media workers killed were targeted in residential areas. 34 killed while actively covering events; 11 killed in or near hospitals while on duty but not actively reporting; 12 killed in six targeted attacks against press vehicles; 33 killed in public areas, including streets and civilian gatherings; 168 killed in residential locations (their own homes or homes of relatives/friends); 15 killed in shelters (mainly schools). This constitutes collective punishment, with the additional intention of intimidating all journalists and deterring them from continuing their coverage of the genocide in Gaza.

Journalists and media workers have also been targets of death threats made by Israeli soldiers who make calls to their mobile phones to intimidate them and discourage them from reporting. This intimidation campaign includes concerted efforts by Israeli forces to detain journalists and media workers while they were covering events on the ground, seeking treatment in hospitals, or evacuating with their families from northern to southern Gaza. Detained workers faced both physical and psychological torture during their imprisonment, with interrogators focusing on their activities as journalists and pressuring them to reveal their sources and methods of gathering information. Al Mezan has confirmed the identity of 48 journalists and media workers who were arbitrarily detained during the reporting period and subjected to torture or other forms of inhumane treatment while in Israeli custody. Testimonies from detained journalists detail inhumane, degrading, and cruel treatment in detention centers and prisons. In addition to physical abuse, they suffered psychological trauma, deliberate medical neglect, insufficient food and water, and interrogations about their professional reporting.

Israeli forces have directly targeted media infrastructure, destroyed offices, and inflicted severe damage to press institutions across Gaza. Approximately 100 media institutions have been completely or partially destroyed by Israeli attacks. Journalists and support staff working with outlets on the international, regional, and local level

have all been targeted, with data demonstrating that local Palestinian media have been affected the most.<sup>3</sup> Power outages and the blockade on fuel supplies have further crippled operations. Journalists have been prevented from accessing their workplaces, bringing many Palestinian radio and television broadcasts to a standstill. The destruction of media offices has forced journalists to operate in the vicinity of hospitals. Yet, Israeli forces have continued to target their equipment. Frequent internet and communication blackouts have severely hindered their ability to connect with their newsrooms, while repeated attacks have restricted their movement, dramatically impacting their reporting and output.

In the face of these systematic and grave violations, journalists have found no safe space in which to continue their work or protect themselves and their families. Attacks come in many forms; of the journalists and media workers killed, 253 were killed in airstrikes, 14 by live gunfire, and 6 by artillery shelling. Due to the immense risk to journalists and media workers in Gaza, numerous international media outlets have evacuated their Palestinian staff and their families to capitals around the world. Meanwhile, amid Israel's actions and its ongoing crimes in Gaza, a series of restrictive measures have blocked dozens of foreign journalists, media crews, and news agencies from entering the territory to report on unfolding events. These restrictions are widely seen as part of a deliberate effort to conceal the realities of the ongoing genocide.

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<sup>3</sup> Of the journalists and media workers killed, Al Mezan's field data shows that: 7 worked with international outlets; 26 with regional media outlets; and 240 with local Palestinian media, see Table 5 in Annex II

## Introduction

In October 2023, Israel launched a genocidal campaign against the Palestinian people in Gaza. From the very beginning, Israeli forces have systematically targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure essential to sustaining human life, such as hospitals, health centers, water and sanitation systems, farms, and agricultural lands. The destruction of culturally significant institutions, including schools, universities, places of worship, and archaeological sites, has had deep consequences for the fabric of Palestinian society.

As part of their intent to destroy the Palestinian people in Gaza, Israeli authorities have deliberately and systematically persecuted specific groups within Palestinian society. Among these groups are medical personnel, aid workers, journalists, and media workers. Palestinians working in the media sector have been singled out with particular intensity: reporters, photojournalists, other media workers, and their families have been the object of targeted attacks by Israel. Hundreds have been killed. Their homes have been destroyed. Their family members were killed. Their press equipment bombed. Media institutions and their offices across Gaza have been deliberately targeted. Altogether, the pattern of attacks against the media, their families, their equipment, and their offices appears to be a coordinated effort to silence Palestinian reporting on the genocide in Gaza and obstruct the recording and documentation of Israel's international crimes.

The scale and intensity of violations committed against Palestinian journalists and media workers is beyond exceptional when viewed in comparison with other conflicts. In modern history, no level of violence and suppression has been inflicted upon journalists comparable to that endured by Palestinian journalists during this genocide. During World War II (1939–1945), 69 journalists were killed. At the height of the U.S. war in Vietnam, 66 journalists were killed. In Algeria, during the “Black Decade” (1992–2002), 120 journalists were killed. In Iraq, approximately 70 journalists were killed in 2003 alone, and by 2006, the number reached 168. More broadly, the year 2007 was one of the deadliest years for journalists worldwide, with 172 journalists killed. In 2015, 111 journalists were killed globally, and in 2023, the total number was 99.<sup>4</sup> In stark contrast, during just 22 months of the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza – from 7 October 2023 to 30 June 2025 – 273 journalists and media workers have been killed.

Although Israel has turned Gaza into the most dangerous place on earth to be a media professional since October 2023, Israel's pattern of targeting journalists, media workers, and press infrastructure long predates the current genocide. For example, during the Great March of Return demonstrations in Gaza between 2018 and 2019, Israeli forces carried out 249 attacks on journalists, killing two Palestinian journalists

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<sup>4</sup> Al Jazeera Center for Studies, “The Israeli War on Gaza and its Role in Engineering the Media Genocide of the Palestinian Journalistic Community (2023-2024)”, 15 July 2024, available in Arabic at: <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/article/5972>.

while they were reporting – Yasser Murtaja<sup>5</sup> and Ahmed Abu Hussein<sup>6</sup> – and injuring 173 others, of whom 43 were injured more than once. During the May 2021 war on Gaza, Israel launched a series of attacks on multiple high-rise buildings in Gaza City that contained the media offices of a dozen local and international media outlets.<sup>7</sup> In 2022, renowned Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was deliberately targeted and killed by an Israeli sniper while she was reporting for the outlet in Jenin.<sup>8</sup> Israel's longstanding practice of attacking journalists and news outlets and the escalation of this practice during the ongoing genocide in Gaza reflect an intentional effort to target news outlets to obstruct the dissemination of vital information by silencing journalists via targeted killings and intimidation.

I work as a freelance journalist and was stationed at Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis, as the hospital was considered a relatively safe space.

At around 1:20 a.m. on Monday, 7 April 2025, while I was asleep in one of the journalists' tents near the main eastern entrance of the complex, I was suddenly awakened by a loud explosion. I rushed out and saw flames devouring the "Palestine Today" agency's tent, which was directly across from mine. I immediately began filming the scene with my mobile phone.

Inside the targeted tent, I saw journalist Ahmed Mansour, a correspondent for Palestine Today Agency, seated at a desk with flames consuming his body. I grabbed his pants and legs to pull him out, but the fabric tore in my hands from the intensity of the fire that had already burned his upper body.

Several fellow journalists and others nearby arrived. With their help, I was finally able to pull Ahmed Mansour out. At that moment, I felt dizzy and collapsed, losing consciousness.

When I woke up, I learned that I had sustained burns on the fingers of my right hand while trying to rescue Ahmed. I later learned that the strike had killed three media professionals, including Ahmed Mansour, and critically injured several others.

**Abdel-Raouf Shaath, journalist wounded during this attack on Nasser Hospital**

<sup>5</sup> Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan), "Five years after Israeli forces killed Gaza journalist Yasser Murtaja during the Great March of Return, still no accountability in sight", 6 April 2023, available at: <http://mezan.org/en/post/45778>.

<sup>6</sup> Al Mezan, "Justice Denied: Six Years After Israeli Sniper Killed Gaza Journalist Ahmed Abu Hussein, Nobody Has Been Held Accountable", 25 April 2024, available at: <http://mezan.org/en/post/46426>.

<sup>7</sup> Al Mezan, "News Brief: Al Mezan issues a report on the challenges faced by Palestinian and international journalists during Israel's military offensive in May 2021", 11 July 2021, available at: <http://mezan.org/en/post/32390>; Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), "Israeli air strikes destroy building housing more than a dozen media outlets in Gaza", 13 May 2021, available at: <https://cpj.org/2021/05/israeli-air-strikes-destroy-buildings-housing-more-than-a-dozen-media-outlets-in-gaza/>.

<sup>8</sup> Forensic Architecture, "Shireen Abu Akleh: The Extrajudicial Killing of a Journalist", 3 November 2022, available at: <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/shireen-abu-akleh-the-targeted-killing-of-a-journalist>.



# Israeli Violations Against Palestinian Journalists and Media Workers

In the context of its ongoing genocide in Gaza, the Israeli military has committed numerous acts amounting to war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide, and other human rights violations against Palestinian journalists and media workers. These violations have taken multiple forms, including killings, physical injury and harm, arbitrary arrests, obstruction and prevention of journalistic work, and deliberate targeting of media equipment and institutions.

## Incitement to Violence and Death Threats

Palestinian journalists and media workers have been the subject of orchestrated efforts to incite violence against them. Israeli officials, including those at the highest levels of political and military leadership, and Israeli media have repeatedly made unsubstantiated claims, labeling certain Palestinian journalists as “terrorists,” framing their work as criminal and illegitimate, and explicitly calling for their killing.

I have been covering the events of the genocide as a correspondent for Al-Ghad TV. I received a phone call from a person who identified himself as an officer in the Israeli army, who said, ‘If you are Mohammad Abu Namous, then you need to be careful.’ He described Al-Ghad, the channel I work for, as a promoter of lies, and told me that the punishment for spreading such lies would be my life and the lives of my family. Since that call, I have left my home and distanced myself from my family out of fear for their safety. I have continued my journalistic work under constant anxiety and fear.

**Mohammad Abu Namous, journalist**

Specifically, Israeli authorities have coordinated targeted smear campaigns against Palestinian journalists and media workers. On many occasions, these campaigns have been spearheaded by “Honest Reporting,” a self-described Israeli media watchdog organization. On 8 November 2023, Honest Reporting published an article based on unsubstantiated allegations against six Gaza-based photojournalists working for the Associated Press and Reuters, claiming they were affiliated with Palestinian armed groups and involved in the events of 7 October 2023.<sup>9</sup>

The Israeli government widely amplified Honest Reporting’s article as part of efforts to incite violence against Palestinian journalists. For example, Israel’s National Information System, a department within the Prime Minister’s Office, declared: “These

<sup>9</sup> Honest Reporting, “Broken Borders: AP & Reuters Pictures of Hamas Atrocities Raise Ethical Questions”, 8 November 2023, available at: <https://honestreporting.com/photographers-without-borders-ap-reuters-pictures-of-hamas-atrocities-raise-ethical-questions/>.



media people are complicit in crimes against humanity.”<sup>10</sup> These unfounded allegations were also echoed by multiple Israeli political and military leaders, who issued statements amounting to explicit incitement to violence against Palestinian journalists and media workers.

On 9 November 2023, Benny Gantz, former Israeli Defense Minister, former Chief of General Staff of the Israeli army, and member of the Israeli war cabinet from 11 October 2023 until 13 June 2024, posted X (formerly Twitter): “Journalists found to have known about the massacre, and still chose to stand as idle bystanders while children were slaughtered - are no different than terrorists and should be treated as such.”<sup>11</sup> The same day, Danny Dannon, a member of the Israeli parliament (Knesset) and the current Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in New York, posted on X: “The Shin Bet announced [...] the elimination of those who participated in the [7 October] massacre. The photographers who took part in photographing the massacre should be added to the list.”<sup>12</sup> (Translated from Hebrew).

Hassan Aslih was among the photojournalists falsely accused by Honest Reporting in the above-mentioned article, which suggested – without presenting any concrete or credible evidence – that his early presence near the breached eastern perimeter fence on the morning of 7 October 2023 raised “serious ethical questions.”<sup>13</sup> Aslih categorically denied these allegations. On 13 May 2025, he was killed in a targeted aerial attack while lying in a hospital bed at the Nasser Medical Complex, where he was receiving treatment. He had previously been injured in another Israeli airstrike that targeted a tent housing journalists at the same hospital. On the day of his targeted killing, the Israeli military sought to justify his murder by repeating the unfounded allegation, first made by Honest Reporting, that he had taken part in the 7 October attacks, portraying Hassan Aslih as a Hamas operative who had been “eliminated.”<sup>14</sup>

On several other occasions during the reporting period, the Israeli military publicly claimed responsibility for the targeted killing of Palestinian journalists and media workers – as in the case of Al Jazeera journalists Hamza al-Dahdouh and Mustafa Thuraya<sup>15</sup> – and attempted to justify these actions by alleging that they were affiliated with Palestinian armed groups.

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<sup>10</sup> Times of Israel, “Israel demands clarification from global media over photographers during Hamas assault”, 9 November 2023, available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-demands-clarification-from-global-media-over-photographers-during-hamas-assault/>.

<sup>11</sup> Benny Gantz (@gantzbe), post on X (formerly Twitter), 9 November 2023, 9:42 AM CET, at: <https://x.com/i/web/status/1722535046400061853>.

<sup>12</sup> Danny Dannon (@dannyanon), post on X (formerly Twitter), 9 November 2023, 1:05 PM CET, at: <https://x.com/dannyanon/status/1722586229709922365?t=t8CDCDMhpUTHlqDkHtDp8Q&s=19>

<sup>13</sup> Supra note 9.

<sup>14</sup> Israeli Defense Forces (@IDF), post on X (formerly Twitter), 13 May 2024, 10:00 PM CET, at: <https://x.com/IDF/status/1922381573514551333/history>.

<sup>15</sup> Israeli Defense Forces (@IDF), post on X (formerly Twitter), 10 January 2024, 09:14 PM CET, at: <https://x.com/IDF/status/1745177413565223266>.

At approximately 3:00 p.m. on Monday, 24 March 2025, I was covering the forced displacement of civilians from Beit Hanoun in North Gaza Governorate, while wearing clearly marked press gear. My colleagues, Hossam Shabat and Mohammed Abu Ouda, arrived in a vehicle marked with the PRESS TV logo.

They stepped out of the vehicle just a few meters from where I was standing and began interviewing displaced civilians. Moments later, I saw smoke rise from their location. They had been directly struck.

I rushed to the scene and found both colleagues bleeding heavily from multiple wounds. With the help of other colleagues, we rushed them to the Indonesian Hospital. The doctors immediately attempted to resuscitate them, but both were pronounced dead within minutes of our arrival.

**Mahmoud Abu Salama, correspondent for Al-Ghad TV**

In another article published on 16 October 2024, Honest Reporting singled out journalist Maha Abu Al-Kas, France 24's Gaza long-time correspondent, accusing her of affiliation with a Palestinian faction.<sup>16</sup> The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Israeli military adopted the false claims made by Honest Reporting and produced their own, employing them not only to retrospectively justify the killings of Palestinian journalists and media workers but also to actively incite their killing, alleging affiliation with Palestinian factions without providing credible evidence.

In an unprecedented escalation of its incitement campaign, on 23 October 2024, the Israeli military published a statement on its official account on X alleging that six Palestinian journalists reporting from northern Gaza – Anas Al-Sharif, Alaa Salama, Hossam Shabat, Ashraf Al-Sarraj, Ismail Abu Omar, and Talal Al-Arrouqi – were affiliated with Palestinian armed groups, effectively declaring the intent to kill them.<sup>17</sup> These claims, amounting to incitement to violence, were further amplified by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to being targeted by this state-led incitement campaign, Palestinian journalists and media workers have also received direct threats to their lives. Investigations conducted by Al Mezan confirm that several journalists received clear, direct death threats through phone calls made by the Israeli military, solely because of their work in the field of journalism. In many cases, these death threats were conveyed personally via phone calls to their mobile devices by Israeli soldiers, placing them under immense psychological pressure and severely hindering their ability to perform journalistic work.

<sup>16</sup> Honest Reporting, "Exposés Journalist or Mouthpiece? Hamas Shared Anti-Israeli Message by France24 Correspondent", 16 October 2024, available at: <https://honestreporting.com/journalist-or-mouthpiece-hamas-shared-anti-israeli-message-by-france24-correspondent/>.

<sup>17</sup> Israeli Defense Forces (@IDF), post on X (formerly Twitter), 23 October 2024, 04:01 PM CET, at: <https://x.com/IDF/status/1849088691450339461>.

<sup>18</sup> Israel Foreign Ministry (@IsraelMFA), post on X (formerly Twitter), 23 October 2024, 04:02 PM CET, at: <https://x.com/IsraelMFA/status/1849088897055174710>.

## Killings and Injuries Caused by Unlawful and Indiscriminate Use of Lethal Force

The Israeli military has deliberately targeted Palestinian journalists and media workers with both direct and indirect use of lethal force, in a manner that indicates an intent to kill. As part of its broader genocidal campaign, a total of 273 journalists and media workers, including 240 men and 33 women, have been killed over the course of 239 separate attacks. Another 420 Palestinian journalists and media workers have been injured. These figures are likely to rise once the situation on the ground allows Al Mezan's staff to undertake a more comprehensive documentation process. The following is a breakdown of the killings based on Al Mezan's current documentation.

The Gaza Governorate recorded the highest number of incidents involving the targeting of Palestinian journalists and media workers, both at their homes and while on duty. This is largely due to Gaza City hosting the highest concentration of media offices and news agencies. The Gaza Governorate also experienced widespread and relentless attacks, which led to a significant media presence, as journalists and various media outlets were deployed there to report the unfolding events.

Data collected by Al Mezan show that the largest number of journalists killed were working as photojournalists, followed by those serving as reporters for various media outlets.<sup>19</sup> The disproportionate effects on photojournalists and reporters can be explained by their continuous presence in the field to capture footage and report live

"On 5 January 2024, due to the growing risk and attacks in Deir al-Balah, where we had been displaced, we were forced to relocate again – this time to an unfinished two-story house that was not suitable for habitation, with a large open area behind it.

At approximately 10:45 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 February 2024, while we were inside the house, I suddenly felt as if I had been thrown into the air. I fell from the second floor to the ground and realized the house had been directly bombed. Flames were spreading rapidly around me. I tried to shield my face, fearing it would catch fire, and felt intense pain throughout my body.

[...] I was taken by a neighbor to Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah. [...] I drifted in and out of consciousness from the severe pain. When I finally regained full awareness, a doctor told me that at one point, they had lost hope that I would survive. [...] While hospitalised, I learned that my husband, my son, and my mother had all been killed in the strike, and my other family members were severely or moderately wounded.

After undergoing approximately 50 surgeries at Al-Aqsa Hospital, I was transferred abroad for medical treatment on 26 March 2024. I left Gaza through the Rafah border crossing. I am still suffering from my injuries and now rely on a wheelchair for mobility."

**Rula Hamdan (Al-Durra), program producer at Palestine TV**

<sup>19</sup> See Table 4 in Annex II.



on location. Airstrikes have been by far the most widespread and lethal method of killing used by Israeli forces, accounting for 92.6% of all killings of Palestinian journalists and media workers during the reporting period.<sup>20</sup> More than 60% were killed in their homes, with the bombing of residential homes while occupants are inside constituting the predominant pattern of killing during the ongoing genocide.<sup>21</sup> Many were killed alongside their families.

Al Mezan's documentation also shows that at least 14 journalists and media workers were killed by direct gunfire, including sniper and drone fire, providing further evidence that Israeli forces deliberately targeted them to prevent reporting on the ongoing genocide.<sup>22</sup> At least 90 journalists and media workers were killed while on duty and near locations highly frequented by the media, whether at sites of ongoing events, during news coverage, in or near hospitals, or inside vehicles.<sup>23</sup> They were attacked while documenting unfolding events, recording the arrival of the wounded, reporting on the conditions of displaced people sheltering in hospital corridors, and covering the situation in and around medical facilities they had sought as safe spaces. The data and testimonies collected by Al Mezan provide evidence to conclude that Palestinian journalists and media workers are being deliberately targeted, and that these attacks amount to war crimes, particularly as the victims are targeted in their capacity as journalists and media workers.

### **Arbitrary Detention and Torture**

Israeli authorities have arbitrarily detained approximately 48 Palestinian journalists and media workers from Gaza, all of them male.<sup>24</sup> Field investigations conducted by Al Mezan indicate that several remain in detention at the time of publishing, including journalists Mohammad Arab, Tawfiq Al-Sayyed Salim, and Islam Ahmed. In addition, journalists Nidal Al-Wahidi and Haitham Abdel Wahid remain forcibly disappeared, with their fate unknown since 7 October 2023.

Journalists and media workers were arrested in different circumstances: in their homes, in areas under Israeli attack, in hospitals, and while fleeing through routes declared "safe" by Israeli authorities. Al Mezan's research shows that a significant number of the detained journalists were residents of northern Gaza, the area that the Israeli military first invaded, destroyed, and placed under siege. Civilians were forced to evacuate toward the southern part of Gaza via so-called "safe passages," which were full of Israeli checkpoints used to carry out arbitrary arrests. Journalists were also arrested during Israeli raids on hospitals such as Al-Shifa, Kamal Adwan, Al-Awda, and the Indonesian Hospitals.

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<sup>20</sup> See Table 6 in Annex II.

<sup>21</sup> See Table 7 in Annex II.

<sup>22</sup> Supra note 20.

<sup>23</sup> Supra note 21.

<sup>24</sup> Ismail Al-Thawabteh, Director General of the Government Media Office in Gaza, interview dated 18 June 2025.

At around 9:00 a.m. on 7 December 2023, while at my family's home in Beit Lahiya, I heard loudspeaker announcements ordering residents to evacuate their homes. My family and I stepped outside, where Israeli forces ordered us to strip down to our underwear. They made me sit on the ground, then arrested me along with several relatives and neighbours.

One soldier tied my wrists behind my back with plastic zip ties and blindfolded me. I was transported to a military site and held for hours in an open area, exposed to the cold and deprived of food and water. Later, I was called in for interrogation. The investigator asked about my work and personal details, then searched for my journalistic reports on a device connected to the internet. When I asked him to loosen the restraints because I was in pain, he refused, shoved me to the ground, and caused sand to enter my mouth. [...]

I was then transferred to a second location, which I later learned was Sde Teiman detention center, where a doctor briefly examined me and asked about chronic illnesses. I informed him that I suffered from herniated discs in my back and neck. The soldiers gave me a number (059889), and a grey uniform (pyjamas), and placed me in a barrack with an asbestos roof and an asphalt floor. I remained there for 25 days, forced to kneel on the asphalt from 4:00 a.m. until around 11:00 p.m. daily. The prolonged kneeling caused severe skin inflammation and sores on my thighs. My repeated requests for medical care were ignored. Food was extremely limited: slices of bread with jam, processed cheese, and tuna, along with a small amount of water. I remained handcuffed and blindfolded throughout my detention, even while sleeping. Bathroom access was restricted to once a day for a very short time due to severe overcrowding.

I underwent a second interrogation, during which I was questioned about my Facebook activity. Several days later, I was interrogated for a third time, this time about my journalistic work for Al Jazeera Net website and Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, my sources, and which political leaders I had contacted.

Later, I was transferred to another location, where soldiers ordered me to remove all my clothes. One of them gave me an adult diaper to wear before allowing me to dress again. I was then placed in a corridor, shackled with metal cuffs on my wrists (behind my back) and on my ankles, and forced to stand with my hands raised for several hours under the hot sun. Alongside other detainees, I endured this stress position for about six hours without rest, sleep, or relief, which severely worsened the pain in my shoulders, back, and neck.

I was then moved to a new section, where my wrists were again tied with plastic restraints. I remained there for about eight days, during which my back pain intensified, my shoulders ached, and numbness spread in my legs. On one occasion, I collapsed during roll call. Other detainees called for help, and I was eventually taken to the facility's clinic on a stretcher. A doctor examined me and gave me a single painkiller, the first and only medication I received during my detention, which provided minimal relief.

After 33 days in detention, Israeli soldiers transferred me to the Karem Abu Salem crossing near Rafah, along with other detainees. I was released on 9 January 2024.

**Journalist Daa Al-Kahlout, Gaza Bureau Chief for the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper**



## **Destruction of Media Facilities and Infrastructure**

Israeli forces have systematically targeted media facilities along with other civilian infrastructure in Gaza. The key buildings that housed most of the media institutions in Gaza City, such as the Shawa and Hosari Tower, Watan Tower, and Mushtaha Tower, are now destroyed. According to available data, approximately 100 media institutions and facilities have been either completely or partially destroyed.<sup>25</sup>

These media facilities encompass a wide range of operational entities, including offices of news agencies, journalistic institutions, printing presses, and media service providers.<sup>26</sup> They are spaces where journalists produce, edit, and publish news content, communicate with the outlets they represent, and store vital equipment, such as fixed and mobile tools, cameras, broadcasting devices, and vehicles. These losses are estimated to amount to 800 million USD.<sup>27</sup> These figures are likely to rise once the situation on the ground allows Al Mezan's staff to undertake a more comprehensive documentation process.

In the early days of the genocide, Zaman FM Radio was forced to cease operations and coverage due to power outages, the ban on fuel entry, and the inability of staff to reach the headquarters because of the continuous bombardment and severe dangers of movement within the city.

At the onset of the Israeli ground invasion of Gaza City, the station's headquarters was directly targeted. Our radio broadcasting equipment was destroyed, and various media tools were heavily damaged. Despite the destruction, we continued our journalistic work through social media platforms to convey the truth to our audience.

**Rami Al-Sharafi, Director of Zaman FM Radio**

<sup>25</sup> Ismail Al-Thawabteh, Director General of the Government Media Office in Gaza, interview conducted on 22 June 2025.

<sup>26</sup> For a breakdown of attacks by type of media operation, see Table 8 in Annex II.

<sup>27</sup> Ismail Al-Thawabteh, Director General of the Government Media Office in Gaza, interview conducted on 22 June 2025.

# Protection for Journalists Under International Law

## Protection of Journalists Under International Humanitarian Law and During Armed Conflict

The standard that those not bearing arms or affiliated with armed forces or armed groups, such as journalists, doctors, and other non-combatants, must not be targeted, has an established and undisputed principle of International Humanitarian Law (IHL).<sup>28</sup> The principle of distinction means that civilians and combatants are distinct groups, and that only combatants and objects with military purpose can legally be targeted during armed conflict.<sup>29</sup> Every feasible precaution must be taken by belligerents to verify that their targets are military objectives<sup>30</sup> and to avoid incidental loss of civilian life or damage to civilian objects.<sup>31</sup> If there is any doubt of a target's status as a potential military object, civilian status must be assumed.<sup>32</sup>

Considering the documented incidents described in this report, including journalists being killed or injured in their homes, shelters, vehicles, hospitals, or while on duty, it becomes clear that these victims were not engaged in any military activity nor carrying weapons. As journalists, they fall squarely under the protections granted to civilians and must be considered as such under Article 79(1) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions.<sup>33</sup> This is further reflected in Customary IHL, which states that journalists working in their professional capacity as civilians and not partaking in active hostilities must be protected.<sup>34</sup>

There is overwhelming evidence to disprove Israel's accusations that journalists and other media workers are legitimate targets due to affiliation with armed groups in Gaza

<sup>28</sup> International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is a branch of international law that regulates the conduct of parties during armed conflicts, including belligerent occupations, and seeks to mitigate the effects of war. The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols contain strict provisions addressing what are known as 'grave breaches.' They also outline protections for those not participating in hostilities, such as civilians and humanitarian personnel as well as those who are *hors de combat*, including wounded, sick, and shipwrecked combatants and prisoners of war.

<sup>29</sup> Customary International Humanitarian Law reflects accepted international standards and applies to all actors involved in armed conflict regardless of if they are party to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. Rule 7 of Customary International Humanitarian Law states that "The parties to the conflict must at all times distinguish between civilian objects and military objectives. Attacks may only be directed against military objectives. Attacks must not be directed against civilian objects."

<sup>30</sup> Rule 16 of Customary International Humanitarian Law.

<sup>31</sup> Rule 15 of Customary International Humanitarian Law.

<sup>32</sup> Article 50(1) of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977, which states: "In case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered to be a civilian."

<sup>33</sup> Article 79(1) of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977, which states: "Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians within the meaning of paragraph 1 of Article 50."

<sup>34</sup> Rule 34 of Customary International Humanitarian Law.



or being direct participants in hostilities.<sup>35</sup> Even so, civilians may lose their protection from direct attack – but not their status as members of the civilian population – “unless and for such time” that they are actively participating in hostilities and regain protective status the moment that participation ends.<sup>36</sup> Palestinian journalists and media workers reporting from the field do not present a military threat, and in no way do they meet the criteria of direct participation in hostilities, regardless of mere affiliation or sympathy for specific factions.<sup>37</sup> Targeting journalists with lethal force or causing them injury constitutes a serious violation of IHL and is a blatant disregard of the principle of distinction.

Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention classifies such acts, including willful killing, torture, inhumane treatment, and unlawful detention, as grave breaches when committed against protected persons, such as civilian journalists. These grave breaches are equally recognized as war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) under Article 8(2)(a), which explicitly references the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Incidents of journalists being targeted warrant the attention of the ICC Prosecutor in the context of his Office’s ongoing investigation into the Situation in the State of Palestine. This investigation should examine cases where

I use Al-Awda Hospital in Al-Nuseirat refugee camp as a meeting point and base to cover unfolding events, including the real-time arrival of the wounded and the dead. On 26 December 2024, at around midnight, I was on duty, standing at Al-Awda Hospital gate with my colleague Ayman Al-Jadi. We walked over to sit near the satellite broadcast vehicle of Al-Quds Al-Youm channel. At approximately 1:05 a.m., I heard a loud explosion. I rushed out immediately, camera in hand, assuming the blast had struck somewhere near the hospital.

I was shocked to see flames engulfing the satellite broadcast vehicle where my fellow journalists had been. It was a horrifying scene: the fire consumed the vehicle and those inside, while those of us nearby stood helpless, unable to put out the flames. About 20 minutes later, a civil defense fire truck arrived.

Shortly afterward, I was devastated to learn that my colleagues – Ayman Al-Jadi, Faisal Abu Al-Qumsan, Ibrahim Al-Sheikh Ali, Fadi Hassouna, and Mohammed Al-Lada’ah – had been killed in the attack. I later learned that the explosion was a targeted strike by the Israeli forces on the broadcast vehicle while my colleagues were inside or nearby.

**Momen Al-Qrinawi, photojournalist for Al Jazeera Mubasher**

<sup>35</sup> Yuval Abraham, “Legitimization Cell: Israeli unit tasked with linking Gaza Journalists to Hamas” +972 Magazine, 14 August 2025, available at: <https://www.972mag.com/israel-gaza-journalists-hamas-hasbara/>.

<sup>36</sup> Nils Melzer, “Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities” ICRC, May 2009, p. 70, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0990.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. Specifically: “the notion of direct participation in hostilities does not refer to a person’s status, function, or affiliation, but to his or her engagement in specific hostile acts” (p.44) These specific acts are determined by the threshold of harm, direct causation, and their belligerent nexus. (p.46).

journalists have been killed, detained, tortured, and prevented from carrying out their professional role as civilian journalists and uncover those responsible to ensure that they are brought to justice before the Court.

As long as a person does not bear arms or directly participate in military operations, any harm against them is strictly prohibited according to the principle of distinction. Statements made by Israeli officials alleging that some journalists are affiliated with Palestinian factions or armed groups do not justify their killing, nor do they hold up under the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibit targeting journalists as protected persons and stipulate that any doubt must be interpreted in favor of civilian status. The Convention permits the use of proportionate force only against military personnel, combatants, or other persons directly participating in hostilities. Journalists are considered civilians and, as such, it is a breach of IHL to deliberately target them. Since Israeli forces have exceeded the Convention's legal boundaries by intentionally targeting civilian journalists, their actions constitute violations that demand serious attention and firm response by the parties to the Convention, per their obligations under Article 1 to ensure its full implementation and respect in all circumstances.

The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1738,<sup>38</sup> affirmed the protection of journalists during armed conflict, explicitly condemning deliberate attacks against them, and against media personnel and individuals associated with them during armed conflicts. This resolution equated the safety and security of journalists, media organizations, and support staff in conflict zones with the protection afforded to civilians. It further affirms the status of journalists and independent correspondents as civilians who must be respected and treated as such under international law, provided they do not partake in hostilities or otherwise adversely affect their civilian status. Moreover, the resolution designated media facilities and equipment as civilian objects, declaring that they must not be targeted or subjected to reprisals.

The content of Resolution 1738 reflects widely established protections granted to journalists and their status as civilians under IHL<sup>39</sup> and underscores the obligation to ensure journalists' safety during armed conflict.<sup>40</sup> The protection owed to journalists also extends to their professional infrastructure, including offices, buildings, and broadcasting locations, as well as their equipment, such as cameras, broadcast

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<sup>38</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 1738, S/RES/1738, 23 December 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Article 3 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949, which states: "Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of the armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, color, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria."

<sup>40</sup> Article 79(2) of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977, which states: "They [journalists] shall be protected as such under the provisions of the Conventions and of this Protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians. This is without prejudice to the right of accredited war correspondents accompanying the armed forces to the status provided for in Article 4(A)(4) of the Third Convention."

vehicles, and technical tools used while reporting out in the field, provided they are being used for civilian objectives.<sup>41</sup> These elements are equally reflected in UNSC Resolution 2222, which reiterated the civilian status of journalists, as well as the need to respect and protect them as such.<sup>42</sup> It further condemns the targeting of journalists and related personnel, calling upon all parties to armed conflict to cease violations and abuses against them.<sup>43</sup> Journalists in armed conflict zones and their equipment are considered civilian objects by their nature and purpose and must not be targeted, as they do not have strictly military operations.<sup>44</sup>

I was covering the events at the Al-Aqsa Hospital [...] Drones spread across the vicinity of the hospital, so my team and I left due to the growing danger in the area.

The following day, 10 January 2024, I returned to the hospital to reconnect with colleagues and continue press coverage. Near the western gate of the hospital, I met my colleague, Ahmed Naeem Bdeir, beside our dedicated media tent. He was wearing clearly marked press gear and a helmet. I left him and headed toward the main journalists' tent.

At approximately 3:58 p.m., I heard a loud explosion. [...] A colleague ran past me, shouting, 'Ahmed has been hit,' and kept running. As I moved closer, I saw that Ahmed's protective helmet had been torn apart. Moments later, I saw the emergency medical team carrying his body, which had been shredded into pieces.

**Sami Issa, Managing Editor at Al-Hadaf News Agency and member of the General Secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate**

Although civilian status must always be assumed when there is doubt, journalists go to great lengths to clearly indicate their status as civilians and ensure their personal safety by wearing items that visibly identify them as journalists, such as clothing with **"PRESS"** or **"TV"** markings. The equipment journalists use to do their work, such as still cameras, audio recorders, video cameras, transmission gear, and marked vehicles for transportation, are also indicators of their civilian status. Journalists go above and beyond to clearly identify themselves as civilians, and yet, Al Mezan's documentation points to a concerted campaign of targeting journalists. The consistent targeting of journalists, their families, and media infrastructure despite their civilian status points to a policy of collective punishment and retaliation against Palestinian media workers for reporting on the genocide, another grave breach of IHL.<sup>45</sup> Under the Rome Statute,

<sup>41</sup> Supra note 37.

<sup>42</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 2222, S/RES/2222, 27 May 2015.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> See Article 52 of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977, which defines civilian objects as: "All objects which are not military objectives," Article 52(1). Military objects are those "which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage." Article 52(2).

<sup>45</sup> Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 4(b) of Additional Protocol II, 8 June 1977; Rule 103 of Customary International Humanitarian Law.

targeting identifiable groups on grounds that are universally considered impermissible, as the targeting of civilian journalists is, amounts to the crime of persecution.<sup>46</sup>

The targeting campaign against journalists cannot go unpunished; Israel and those responsible for war crimes must be held to account. Individual criminal responsibility for grave breaches of IHL and war crimes is a longstanding legal principle, and is codified in numerous humanitarian law instruments, including the Geneva Conventions.<sup>47</sup> Criminal responsibility does not stop at those directly responsible for committing war crimes. Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions clearly states that the chain of command is also responsible for breaches of the Conventions when they fail to act and prevent these breaches from happening.<sup>48</sup> Given the numerous examples outlined in this report of incitement and the repeated instances of journalists being deliberately targeted, it is a reasonable conclusion that the chain of command in Israeli forces has failed to prevent their soldiers from committing such acts. Even more so, these war crimes have been called for and encouraged by the highest level of Israel's political and military leadership.<sup>49</sup>

States are required by customary IHL and the Geneva Conventions to investigate war crimes and hold these individuals responsible in domestic courts.<sup>50</sup> There does not need to be a link between the prosecuting State and individuals accused of war crimes for the State to have jurisdiction over the case, as grave breaches, including the targeting of civilians, are subject to universal jurisdiction according to IHL principles.<sup>51</sup> As such, the obligation to try individuals suspected of having themselves committed or ordered the commission of war crimes is one held by all parties to the Geneva Conventions, not just Israel.

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<sup>46</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1)(h), which states: "Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court."

<sup>47</sup> Rule 151 of Customary International Humanitarian Law; Article 49 of the First Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 50 of the Second Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 129 of the Third Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 146 and Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 84 of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977.

<sup>48</sup> Article 86 of Additional Protocol I, 8 June 1977.

<sup>49</sup> Supra note 11, 12, 14, 15, and 17.

<sup>50</sup> Rule 158 of Customary International Humanitarian Law; Article 49 of First Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 50 of the Second Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 149 of the Third Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 146 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949.

<sup>51</sup> Article 49 of the First Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 50 of the Second Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 129 of the Third Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949; Article 146 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949. These articles state that alleged offenders of grave breaches must either be tried by States party to the Geneva convention, or extradited to be tried by another State, regardless of their nationality. These provisions have generally been interpreted as establishing mandatory universal jurisdiction according to the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC Advisory Service Factsheet, "Universal jurisdiction over war crimes", March 2014, available at: [https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file\\_list/universal-jurisdiction-icrc-eng.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file_list/universal-jurisdiction-icrc-eng.pdf)).



The Rome Statute empowers the International Criminal Court to hold individuals criminally responsible for war crimes they have committed within its jurisdiction.<sup>52</sup> The Court established that its territorial jurisdiction extends to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Gaza.<sup>53</sup> This being said, instances where journalists have been killed, tortured, or unlawfully confined must be investigated by the International Criminal Court as part of their investigation into the Situation in the State of Palestine, and States Parties to the Geneva Conventions must equally investigate these crimes and hold responsible those accused of war crimes, no matter their place on the chain of command.

### Provisions for Journalists Under International Human Rights Law

There is a growing consensus within the international community that International Human Rights Law (IHRL) is not suspended during periods of armed conflict.<sup>54</sup> As the International Court of Justice noted in their 2004 advisory opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel cannot suspend IHRL Covenants that they are a party to, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), due to their ongoing military occupation.<sup>55</sup> This sentiment was echoed by the Court in their 2024 Advisory Opinion, which concluded that Israel's occupation is illegal<sup>56</sup> and reiterated that, as a signatory to human rights Covenants, it has an extraterritorial legal obligation to uphold human rights law in the occupied Palestinian territory because they have effective control over the territory.<sup>57</sup>

Only under certain circumstances of existential threat to the nation can some rights in the ICCPR be derogated from, as stated in Article 4 of the Covenant. However, some fundamental rights are non-derogable, meaning they cannot ever be suspended. The right to life<sup>58</sup> and the right not to be subjected to torture<sup>59</sup> are non-derogable.<sup>60</sup> Although the ICCPR does not make explicit reference to Article 9 concerning arbitrary

<sup>52</sup> Article 25 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998.

<sup>53</sup> International Criminal Court, Pre-Trial Chamber I, *Decision on the 'Prosecution request pursuant to article 19(3) for a ruling on the Court's territorial jurisdiction in Palestine'*, para. 118.

<sup>54</sup> See ICJ Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, para. 99, citing ICJ Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004, *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, para. 106; see also ECHR Judgement (Merits) of 9 July 2025, *Case of Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia*, para. 428.

<sup>55</sup> ICJ Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004, *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, paras. 103-106, 111-112.

<sup>56</sup> ICJ Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024, *Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, paras. 259-264.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 88-99.

<sup>58</sup> Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966, which specifies that "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life," reflecting the IHL principle of distinction.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* Article 7.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* Article 4.

detentions in its non-derogable rights clause, unacknowledged detentions and abductions are considered non-derogable rights by the UN Human Rights Committee.<sup>61</sup> As such, the intentional killing of journalists by Israel, instances of torture at the hands of the Israeli army, and the unlawful detention of journalists are all breaches of IHRL as well as IHL.

On 8 October 2023, at around 11:00 p.m., Israeli forces destroyed the Al-Watan Tower. [...] The tower housed the Ma'an News Agency office on the eighth floor, alongside other media outlets and dozens of additional offices.

The agency's headquarters was completely destroyed, along with all its contents, offices, and furniture. We were unable to recover any of our equipment – cameras, audio devices, editing systems, computers, or even the office mobile phones. As a result, my colleagues and I were left without a workplace, and the agency suffered more than \$50,000 in material losses.

**Imad Eid, Director of the Ma'an News Agency Office**

Protections relating to the freedom of the press,<sup>62</sup> the prohibition of interference with journalistic work,<sup>63</sup> and the safeguarding of the right to freedom of opinion and expression,<sup>64</sup> along with journalists' rights to access information and share it with the public<sup>65</sup> can be found in the ICCPR and ICESCR. Journalists are also entitled to the right to work<sup>66</sup> and the right to peaceful assembly.<sup>67</sup> The right to freedom of expression and the right to freely disseminate information are not included in Article 4 of the ICCPR as a non-derogable right. However, any derogation from the ICCPR must be limited and specifically tailored to the emergency at hand.<sup>68</sup> In other words, States need to ensure any derogations from the ICCPR are contextually necessary and proportionate.<sup>69</sup> The need for proportionality means that States must demonstrate that measures taken to derogate from specific provisions must meet the exigencies of the situation.<sup>70</sup> As such, even though States may take limited measures to derogate from certain rights enshrined in the ICCPR, derogable rights can't be entirely ignored.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>61</sup> UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), *CCPR General Comment No. 29: Article 4: Derogations during a State of Emergency*, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.11, 31 August 2001, para. 13(b).

<sup>62</sup> Supra note 57, Article 19(2) which states "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice."

<sup>63</sup> Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966

<sup>64</sup> Supra note 57, Article 19.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., Article 19(2); see also Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 10 December 1948, which states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

<sup>66</sup> Supra note 62, Article 6.

<sup>67</sup> Supra UDHR note 64, Article 20; and Supra note 57, Article 21.

<sup>68</sup> Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

<sup>69</sup> Supra note 60, paras. 3-4.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., para. 4, which states that "... the mere fact that a permissible derogation from a specific provision may, of itself, be justified by the exigencies of the situation does not obviate the requirement that specific measures taken pursuant to the derogation must also be shown to be required by the exigencies of the situation."

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

Contrary to the ICCPR, the ICESCR does not include a general derogation provision. Instead, it recognizes that States may subject limitations to the rights included in the covenant, so long as those limitations remain compatible with the rights in the Covenant.<sup>72</sup> Israel's campaign of silencing journalists by targeting them is illegal under IHL because it violates the principle of distinction and exhibits a disproportionate effort to silence Palestinian journalists as a whole through illegal acts of killing, torture, and arbitrary detention, infringing on their right to freedom of expression beyond any acceptable limitations allowed for by the ICESCR. The importance of upholding the human rights of journalists, specifically when they are working from conflict zones is further reinforced by the 1978 UNESCO Declaration on Fundamental Principles Concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War,<sup>73</sup> along with numerous other international documents and UN reports affirming the protection of journalists and the freedom of the press during times of armed conflict.<sup>74</sup>

The 1978 UNESCO Declaration also reinforces the important role mass media plays in countering racism because the contribution journalists can make to society when they are able to freely disseminate information is "more effective to the extent that the information reflects the different aspects of the subject dealt with."<sup>75</sup> In the context of Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, the growing violence against Palestinians in the West Bank since October 2023,<sup>76</sup> and the ever-present regime of apartheid against Palestinians across the occupied territory and in Israel,<sup>77</sup> Israel's abuses against journalists in Gaza must be examined as a continuation of Israel's racially motivated policies of segregation and persecution against Palestinians.

The ICJ concluded in 2024 that Israel is in breach of Article 3 of its obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

<sup>72</sup> Supra note 62, Article 4, which states "the State may subject such rights only to such limitations as are determined by law only in so far as this may be compatible with the nature of these rights and solely for the purpose of promoting the general welfare in a democratic society."

<sup>73</sup> Article 2 of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Declaration on Fundamental Principles Concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War*, 28 November 1978, which states that "journalists must have freedom to report and the fullest possible facilities of access to information" and that they should be "assured of protection guaranteeing them the best conditions for the exercise of their profession."

<sup>74</sup> UNESCO has compiled a list of basic United Nations documents relating to the rights of journalists, which is available at: <https://www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists/basic-texts>. See also a list of United Nations Resolutions related to the safety of journalists, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/safety-of-journalists/resolutions>.

<sup>75</sup> Supra note 72, Article 1.

<sup>76</sup> Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 Francesca Albanese, *Genocide as Colonial Erasure*, A/79/384, 1 October 2024, paras. 24-34.

<sup>77</sup> See B'Tselem, *A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is apartheid*, 12 January 2021; Human Rights Watch, *A Threshold Crossed: Israeli authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution*, 27 April 2021; Amnesty International, *Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crimes against humanity*, 1 February 2022.



(CERD),<sup>78</sup> which codifies the prohibition of racial segregation and apartheid.<sup>79</sup> The Court echoed previous judgements by reiterating that Israel has a legal obligation to uphold the CERD in the occupied Palestinian territory because the Convention applies to State conduct in territories where they exercise their jurisdiction.<sup>80</sup> Israel therefore owes Palestinian journalists and media workers the human rights protected by the CERD without distinction as to race or national identity, such as the right to protection from violence or bodily harm<sup>81</sup> and the right to freedom of expression.<sup>82</sup> Israel also has an obligation under the CERD to stop its political and military leadership from publishing racially motivated falsehoods about Palestinian journalists and inciting violence against them.<sup>83</sup> Labelling Palestinian journalists as terrorists or terrorist sympathizers puts a target on their backs and perpetuates the racist stereotype that Palestinians are inherently a terrorist threat.<sup>84</sup>

At around 2:00 a.m. on Tuesday, 10 October 2023, we received a warning to evacuate the 'Dream' and 'Haji' buildings [located in western Gaza City]. We looked for the nearest safe spot to film the bombing and stopped in front of Al-Ghifari Tower. [...] The area was crowded with journalists, all of us wearing press vests and helmets. [...]

Due to the overcrowding, we decided to move slightly closer to the Babel Building, which offered a better vantage point for filming. [...]

Just as I was about to exit the building, I heard a loud whistling sound followed by a massive explosion. I quickly retreated inside to avoid flying debris. The area was filled with dust, and visibility was extremely poor. Seconds later, the air began to clear. I rushed outside to locate my colleagues. Flames were erupting from the Dream building. Around four minutes later, a second missile strike hit the same area. I moved in to start filming.

I could no longer see the three colleagues I had been with. Then, another journalist shouted that someone was lying on the ground, and others said he had been killed. I began filming immediately. When I reviewed the footage, I was shocked to realize it was my friend Saeed Al-Taweel. I was in disbelief. He was lying motionless on the ground next to our colleague Mohammad Soboh, who also showed no signs of life.

**Samer Al-Za'anin, journalist reporting for BBC Arabic**

<sup>78</sup> Supra note 55, para. 229.

<sup>79</sup> Article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 21 December 1965, which says: "States Parties particularly condemn racial segregation and apartheid and undertake to prevent, prohibit and eradicate all practices of this nature in territories under their jurisdiction."

<sup>80</sup> Supra note 55, para. 101.

<sup>81</sup> Supra note 78, Article 5(b).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. Article 5(d)(viii).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. Article 4(c), which says that States: "Shall not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination."

<sup>84</sup> Arab-Canadian Lawyers Association, *Anti-Palestinian Racism: Naming, Framing and Manifestations*, 25 April 2022, p. 11, available at: <https://www.canarablaw.org/our-work>.

## Silencing Journalists to Obscure a Genocide

Facts and evidence collected by Al Mezan during the ongoing genocide in Gaza and previous years indicate that Israeli forces have systematically targeted Palestinian journalists, media workers, their equipment, vehicles, offices, and media institutions. This has occurred although Palestinian journalists and media workers have protected status as civilians under IHL,<sup>85</sup> and are owed human rights protections by Israel, exhibiting a blatant disregard for international legal norms and institutions, such as the ICJ and the UNSC. For one, Israel's conduct toward Palestinians and civilian infrastructure in Gaza has not changed following the International Court of Justice's ruling on 26 January 2024 – which called on Israel to take immediate action to ensure that its military does not commit any actions that could amount to genocide, including killing Palestinians, causing them serious bodily and mental harm, and deliberately inflicting on Palestinians conditions of life calculated to bring about their destruction.<sup>86</sup> Civilian casualties remain high, particularly in areas affected by displacement, including locations civilians have fled and areas where they have taken refuge.

Israel's contempt for its international obligations under IHL and instruments of international human rights law signals a willful disregard for the human dignity of Palestinian journalists and media workers. The systematic targeting of the press sector points towards a concerted strategy by Israel to control the narrative by preventing journalists from reporting on violations of international law so that Israel can minimize international attention and continue its genocide of Palestinians in Gaza with impunity. The message to journalists is clear: keep reporting on the genocide in Gaza and risk being tortured, intimidated, and killed. This extreme reaction to prevent reporting on Gaza is in line with Israel's track record of extreme sensitivity toward media coverage of its crimes and its longstanding practice of suppressing journalists across the occupied Palestinian territory. For example, the Israeli government proposed a bill in 2018 that would ban the documentation of Israeli soldiers during certain military operations, even when soldiers are committing violations.<sup>87</sup> Since October 2023, journalists in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have faced increased harassment, physical attacks from Israeli settlers, and imprisonment.<sup>88</sup> In addition to targeting individual journalists, Israel ordered the closure of Al Jazeera's offices and

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<sup>85</sup> For more information on this topic, refer to the International Humanitarian Law Series: International Humanitarian Law and the Protection of Civilian Populations During Armed Conflicts, published by Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, on 1 March 2008, available in Arabic at: <http://mezan.org/ar/post/8792>.

<sup>86</sup> ICJ Order of 26 January 2024, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, para. 86(1).

<sup>87</sup> Raoul Wootliff, "Ministers advance bill criminalizing some filming of IDF, despite AG opposition", *The Times of Israel*, 17 June 2018, available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ministers-approve-bill-criminalizing-filming-idf-soldiers-despite-ag-opposition/>.

<sup>88</sup> Lucas Minisini, "Journalists in the West Bank face mounting suppression", *Le Monde*, 30 July 2025, available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/07/30/journalists-in-the-west-bank-face-mounting-suppression\\_6743892\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/07/30/journalists-in-the-west-bank-face-mounting-suppression_6743892_4.html).

prohibited the news outlet from broadcasting in Israel in May 2024.<sup>89</sup> This reveals a broader agenda to obstruct news coverage by targeting Palestinian journalists and further demonstrates Israel's disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law.

The targeting of journalists serves as a tool of intimidation, aimed at preventing them from fulfilling their duty to report the truth about the grave violations committed by Israeli forces on the ground and the genocide Palestinians in Gaza are facing. Palestinians working in the media sector are witnesses to Israel's genocide. They expose Israel's conduct by sharing with the world the daily abuses committed by Israeli soldiers. The public documentation of Israel's genocide by Palestinian journalists has the potential to fuel international criticism and widen the critical lens to examine longstanding and interconnected issues such as Israel's brutal regime of apartheid against Palestinians across the occupied territory and in Israel proper. The exposure Palestinian journalists bring to the international community is a threat to Israel's global public image and, because of mounting public pressure, poses a threat to the continued support Israel relies on from Western countries.

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<sup>89</sup> Al Jazeera Staff, "Israel Bans Al Jazeera: What Does it Mean and What Happens Next?" *Al Jazeera*, 6 May 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/5/6/israel-bans-al-jazeera-what-does-it-mean-and-what-happens-next>.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Field evidence collected by Al Mezan confirms that the violations committed by Israeli forces and authorities against Palestinian journalists and media workers are not isolated incidents but part of a systematic and sustained State-led policy. In particular, the evidence presented in this report demonstrates that the deliberate targeting of those working in the media sector is taking place. This is part of a concerted effort to suppress information and obstruct the documentation of the ongoing genocide to prevent the international community from witnessing events on the ground.

These acts constitute grave breaches of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law. Al Mezan concludes that they amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity and fall within the legal definition of genocide.

Such violations are being carried out in the context of continued inaction by the international community, which, in effect, provides impunity to those responsible. This failure to act stands in clear contradiction to the binding rulings of the International Court of Justice. The targeting of Palestinian journalists and media workers exemplifies this entrenched absence of justice and accountability.

**Accordingly, Al Mezan calls for the following actions without delay.**

### To Third States and the International Community as a Whole:

- Call for the immediate protection of Palestinian journalists whose killing has been publicly incited or endorsed by Israeli political figures, military officials, or other public personalities, and act upon these threats through urgent preventive measures and accountability mechanisms.
- Take immediate and concrete measures to ensure the protection of Palestinian journalists explicitly named and threatened by the Israeli military on 23 October 2024 – Alaa Salama, Ashraf Al-Sarraj, Ismail Abu Omar, and Talal Al-Arouqi – following the killing of Anas Al-Sharif and Hossam Shabat.
- Impose targeted individual sanctions against Israeli political and military leaders, as well as media figures, who have ordered, incited, or facilitated attacks on Palestinian journalists and media workers.
- Investigate and, where sufficient evidence exists, prosecute their own nationals who have incited attacks on Palestinian journalists and media workers.
- Take urgent and coordinated measures to halt Israel's ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, in compliance with legal obligations under the Genocide Convention and other instruments of international law.

### To the International Criminal Court (ICC):

- Expedite and expand ongoing investigations into war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by Israeli forces in Gaza and the West Bank, including the systematic targeting of Palestinian journalists and media workers.
- Prioritize the collection and preservation of evidence related to the killing, harm, arbitrary detention, and torture of Palestinian journalists and media workers in the occupied Palestinian territory since 13 June 2014.

### To International and Regional Media Organizations:

- Publicly and unequivocally condemn Israeli attacks on Palestinian journalists and media workers and use influence to demand accountability at international levels.
- Apply sustained pressure on Israeli authorities to secure the immediate release of all Palestinian journalists and media workers arbitrarily detained because of their work.
- Implement meaningful measures to protect all Palestinian journalists and media workers operating in the occupied Palestinian territory, including by ensuring recognition and respect for press markings.

## Annex I: Full Testimonies Collected by Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

### Testimony of journalist Mohammad Abu Namous on Death Threats Over Gaza Coverage

"I have been covering the events of the genocide as a correspondent for Al-Ghad TV. I received a phone call from a person who identified himself as an officer in the Israeli army, who said: 'If you are Mohammad Abu Namous, then you need to be careful.' He described Al-Ghad, the channel I work for, as a promoter of lies, and told me that the punishment for spreading such lies would be my life, and the lives of my family. Since that call, I have left my home and distanced myself from my family out of fear for their safety. I have continued my journalistic work under constant anxiety and fear."

### Testimony of Mahmoud Abu Salama, a correspondent for Al-Ghad TV, on the killing of journalists Hossam Shabat and Mohammed Abu Ouda:

"At approximately 3:00 p.m. on Monday, 24 March 2025, I was covering the forced displacement of civilians from Beit Hanoun in North Gaza Governorate, while wearing clearly marked press gear. I was positioned at the Hamouda Junction on Salah Al-Din Road when my colleagues, Hossam Shabat and Mohammed Abu Ouda, arrived in a vehicle marked with the PRESS TV logo.

They stepped out of the vehicle just a few meters from where I was standing and began interviewing displaced civilians. Moments later, I saw smoke rise from their location. They had been directly struck, along with the driver of a donkey cart they had been speaking with about the situation inside Beit Hanoun.

I rushed to the scene and found both colleagues bleeding heavily from multiple wounds. With the help of other colleagues, we carried them into my personal vehicle and rushed them to the Indonesian Hospital. The doctors immediately attempted to resuscitate them, but both were pronounced dead within minutes of our arrival."

### Testimony of journalist Diaa Al-Kahlout on the conditions of his detention while in Israeli custody:

"I am the Gaza Bureau Chief for the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper. At around 9:00 a.m. on 7 December 2023, while at my family's home in Beit Lahiya, I heard loudspeaker announcements ordering residents to evacuate their homes. My family and I stepped outside, where Israeli forces ordered us to strip down to our underwear. They made me sit on the ground, then arrested me along with several relatives and neighbours."

One soldier tied my wrists behind my back with plastic zip ties and blindfolded me. I was transported to a military site and held for hours in an open area, exposed to the cold and deprived of food and water. Later, I was called in for interrogation. The investigator asked about my work and personal details, then searched for my journalistic reports on a device connected to the internet. When I asked him to loosen the restraints because I was in pain, he refused, shoved me to the ground, and caused sand to enter my mouth. The interrogation lasted about 20 minutes, after which I was taken back to where other detainees were held. On the way, soldiers mocked me and my work, hurled insults, and punched me.

I was then transferred to a second location, which I later learned was Sde Teiman detention center, where a doctor briefly examined me and asked about chronic illnesses. I informed him that I suffered from herniated discs in my back and neck. The soldiers gave me a number (059889), and a grey uniform (pyjamas), and placed me in a barrack with an asbestos roof and an asphalt floor. I remained there for 25 days, forced to kneel on the asphalt from 4:00 a.m. until around 11:00 p.m. daily. The prolonged kneeling caused severe skin inflammation and sores on my thighs. My repeated requests for medical care were ignored. Food was extremely limited: slices of bread with jam, processed cheese, and tuna, along with a small amount of water. I remained handcuffed and blindfolded throughout my detention, even while sleeping. Bathroom access was restricted to once a day for a very short time due to severe overcrowding.

I underwent a second interrogation, during which I was questioned about my Facebook activity. Several days later, I was interrogated for a third time, this time about my journalistic work for Al Jazeera Net website and Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, my sources, and which political leaders I had contacted.

Later, I was transferred to another location, where soldiers ordered me to remove all my clothes. One of them gave me an adult diaper to wear before allowing me to dress again. I was then placed in a corridor, shackled with metal cuffs on my wrists (behind my back) and on my ankles, and forced to stand with my hands raised for several hours under the hot sun. Alongside other detainees, I endured this stress position for about six hours without rest, sleep, or relief, which severely worsened the pain in my shoulders, back, and neck.

I was then moved to a new section, where my wrists were again tied with plastic restraints. I remained there for about eight days, during which my back pain intensified, my shoulders ached, and numbness spread in my legs. On one occasion, I collapsed during roll call. Other detainees called for help, and I was eventually taken to the facility's clinic on a stretcher. A doctor examined me and gave me a single painkiller, the first and only medication I received during my detention, which provided minimal relief.



After 33 days in detention, Israeli soldiers transferred me to the Karem Abu Salem crossing near Rafah, along with other detainees. I was released on 9 January 2024.”

**Testimony of Momen Al-Qrinawi, photojournalist for Al Jazeera Mubasher, on the targeting of fellow journalists at Al-Awda Hospital, in Al-Nuseirat refugee Camp:**

”Along with several colleagues, I use Al-Awda Hospital in Al-Nuseirat refugee camp as a meeting point and base to cover unfolding events, including the real-time arrival of the wounded and the dead. On 26 December 2024, at around midnight, I was on duty, standing at the hospital gate with my colleague Ayman Al-Jadi. We walked over to sit near the satellite broadcast vehicle of Al-Quds Al-Youm channel. After a few minutes, I went inside the hospital to use the restroom. At approximately 1:05 a.m., I heard a loud explosion. I rushed out immediately, camera in hand, assuming the blast had struck somewhere near the hospital.

I was shocked to see flames engulfing the satellite broadcast vehicle where my fellow journalists had been. It was a horrifying scene: the fire consumed the vehicle and those inside, while those of us nearby stood helpless, unable to put out the flames. About 20 minutes later, a civil defense fire truck arrived.

Shortly afterward, I was devastated to learn that my colleagues – Ayman Al-Jadi, Faisal Abu Al-Qumsan, Ibrahim Al-Sheikh Ali, Fadi Hassouna, and Mohammed Al-Lada’ah – had been killed in the attack. I later learned that the explosion was a targeted strike by the Israeli forces on the broadcast vehicle while my colleagues were inside or nearby.”

**Testimony of Rami Al-Sharafi, Director of Zaman FM Radio, on the targeting of the station’s headquarters and its aftermath:**

“In the early days of the genocide, Zaman FM Radio was forced to cease operations and coverage due to power outages, the ban on fuel entry, and the inability of staff to reach the headquarters—located in Al-Ru’ya Tower opposite Al-Azhar University in Gaza City—because of the continuous bombardment and severe dangers of movement within the city.

At the onset of the ground invasion of Gaza City, the station’s headquarters was directly targeted and sustained severe damage. Our radio broadcasting equipment was completely destroyed, and various media tools were heavily damaged. The closure of the station left around 12 employees without jobs or any source of income. With the collapse of commercial advertising and corporate sponsorships—the station’s primary funding sources—we could no longer pay salaries. The station’s estimated losses amount to approximately \$200,000.

Despite the destruction, we continued our journalistic work through social media platforms in an effort to convey the truth to our audience. We urgently need emergency

support programs to sustain local radio stations and cover their expenses amid the ongoing state of emergency caused by the genocide. In the long term, reconstruction programs will be essential to restore media institutions to their pre-genocide state.”

**Testimony of journalist Samer Al-Za'anin, on the incident during which three of his colleagues were killed while on duty:**

“I began reporting for the BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation] since the start of the genocide in Gaza. At around 2:00 a.m. on Tuesday, 10 October 2023, we received a warning to evacuate the ‘Dream’ and ‘Haji’ buildings [located in western Gaza City]. These two buildings housed international news agencies, including Agence France-Presse (AFP) and the Associated Press (AP).

My colleague Saeed Al-Taweel, Director of the Khamisa News Agency, called me and said, ‘We need to document the incident.’ I joined him, along with colleagues Hisham Al-Nawajha and Mohammad Soboh from the Palestinian News Agency ‘Khabar’. We looked for the nearest safe spot to film the bombing and stopped in front of Al-Ghifari Tower, around 500 meters from the Dream building. The area was crowded with journalists, all of us clearly wearing press vests and helmets.

Due to the overcrowding, we decided to move slightly closer to the Babel Building, which offered a better vantage point for filming. It was located approximately 300 meters from the Dream Building. At that moment, I stepped into the entrance of Al-Ghifari Tower to adjust my press helmet, while Saeed, Hisham, and Mohammad went ahead toward the Babel building.

Just as I was about to exit the building, I heard a loud whistling sound followed by a massive explosion. I quickly retreated inside to avoid flying debris. The area filled with dust, and visibility was extremely poor. Seconds later, the air began to clear. I rushed outside to locate my colleagues. Flames were erupting from the Dream building. Around four minutes later, a second missile strike hit the same area. I moved in to start filming.

I could no longer see the three colleagues I had been with. Then, another journalist shouted that someone was lying on the ground, and others said he had been killed. I began filming immediately. When I reviewed the footage, I was shocked to realize it was my friend Saeed Al-Taweel. I was in disbelief. He was lying motionless on the ground next to our colleague Mohammad Soboh, who also showed no signs of life.

I found Hisham Al-Nawajha about 20 meters away from them. He was injured but still alive. Nearby, I saw four civilians from the neighborhood, also lying motionless. I began screaming for help for Hisham. I followed him to Al-Shifa Hospital, where I learned he had been taken into surgery and later moved to intensive care.

The following morning, we held the funerals for Saeed and Mohammad. Later that day, around 10:00 a.m., I learned that Hisham had died from his wounds.

Testimony of Imad Eid, Director of the Ma'an News Agency Office in Gaza, on the destruction of the agency's headquarters:

"On 8 October 2023, at around 11:00 p.m., Israeli forces destroyed the Al-Watan Tower, located on Al-Jalaa Street in the center of Gaza City. The tower housed the Ma'an News Agency office on the eighth floor, alongside other media outlets and dozens of additional offices.

The agency's headquarters was completely destroyed, along with all its contents, offices, and furniture. We were unable to recover any of our equipment—cameras, audio devices, editing systems, computers, or even the office mobile phones. Everything was buried under the rubble.

As a result, my colleagues and I were left without a workplace to write reports, publish news, or receive guests. The network lost its headquarters and suffered more than \$50,000 in material losses.

The emotional toll was also profound. That office held countless memories— it was where my colleagues and I worked tirelessly to document events and expose the violations committed by Israeli forces."

Testimony of Rula Hamdan (Al-Durra), Program Producer at Palestine TV, on her injury and the killing of her husband, fellow journalist Nafez Hamdan, in an attack at their shelter in Deir al-Balah:

"We were displaced from our home in Al-Jalaa neighborhood in Gaza City on the third day of the genocide and relocated to Al-Maghazi refugee camp. Two months later, we moved to a house in Deir al-Balah. On 5 January 2024, due to the growing risk and attacks in the area, we were forced to relocate again – this time to an unfinished two-story house that was not suitable for habitation, with a large open area behind it.

We were joined there by my mother, Rajaa Al-Durra, and the families of my siblings. On the ground floor, there were 13 people, including six children and three women. On the first floor, where we stayed, there were 16 people, including five children and six women.

At approximately 10:45 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 February 2024, while we were inside the house, I suddenly felt as if I had been thrown into the air. I fell from the second floor to the ground and realized the house had been directly bombed. Flames were spreading rapidly around me. I tried to shield my face, fearing it would catch fire, and felt intense pain throughout my body.

Someone approached me but fled upon seeing the extent of my injuries. I gathered all my strength and stood up with extreme difficulty as the flames drew closer. I managed to move to an area away from the fire, where a neighbor transported me to an

ambulance. I was taken to Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, where I was laid on the ground as nurses and doctors examined and bandaged my wounds.

I drifted in and out of consciousness from the severe pain. When I finally regained full awareness, a doctor told me that at one point they had lost hope that I would survive. He explained that the entire right side of my body had suffered fractures and wounds, my right cheek was burned, both of my legs were injured, and shrapnel had destroyed the skin on my right thigh. I also had deep wounds and fractures in my left thigh, a perforated abdomen, bleeding in the uterus, and damage to my bladder and intestines, part of which had to be surgically removed.

While I was in the hospital, I underwent several surgeries performed by doctors from visiting medical delegations that had managed to enter Gaza.

While hospitalized, I learned that my husband, Nafez, 59, my son, Mohammad, 18, and my mother, Rajaa Al-Durra, 70, had all been killed in the strike. Two of my brothers, five of their children, my sister-in-law, my uncle Majed and his wife Sahar, 47, were also seriously or moderately wounded and required multiple surgeries.

After undergoing approximately 50 surgeries at Al-Aqsa Hospital, I was transferred abroad for medical treatment on 26 March 2024. I left Gaza through the Rafah border crossing. The journey was extremely painful because of my injuries. I have since remained in Egypt, receiving treatment at Shoubrahor Central Hospital in Dakahlia Governorate. I am still suffering from my injuries and now rely on a wheelchair for mobility.”

Testimony of Sami Issa, a Managing Editor at Al-Hadaf News Agency and member of the General Secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, recounting his own injury and the killing of fellow journalist Ahmed Naeem Bdeir while they were at Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah:

“I was covering the events at the Al-Aqsa Hospital along with a team from [Al-Hadaf News Agency]. While we were there, Israeli military vehicles advanced into the eastern areas of Deir al-Balah and approached Salah al-Din Road. Drones spread across the vicinity of the Al-Aqsa Hospital, so my team and I left the hospital due to the growing danger in the area.

The following day, 10 January 2024, I returned to the hospital to reconnect with colleagues and continue press coverage. Near the western gate of the hospital, I met my colleague Ahmed Naeem Bdeir (29 years old) beside our dedicated media tent. He was wearing clearly marked press gear and a helmet. I left him and headed toward the main journalists’ tent.

At approximately 3:58 p.m., I heard a loud explosion. A thick cloud of dust quickly spread across the area. I stepped out of the journalists’ tent to assess what had happened and saw that the explosion had occurred inside the hospital compound,

near the western gate. I rushed to check on Ahmed and found several wounded people, one of whom had lost a leg.

A colleague ran past me, shouting, 'Ahmed has been hit,' and kept running. As I moved closer, I saw that Ahmed's protective helmet had been torn apart. Moments later, I saw the emergency medical team carrying his body, which had been shredded to pieces. I followed them as they took him to the morgue."

**Testimony of wounded journalist Abdel-Raouf Shaath, 33, on the targeting of a journalists' tent at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis:**

"I work as a freelance journalist and was stationed at Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis to follow developments and document the wounded and the dead, as the hospital was considered a relatively safe space. I was there with many other journalists, and we stayed overnight in tents pitched at the hospital entrances to remain close to the unfolding events.

At around 1:20 a.m. on Monday, 7 April 2025, while I was asleep in one of the journalists' tents near the main eastern entrance of the complex, I was suddenly awakened by a loud explosion. I rushed out and saw flames devouring the "Palestine Today" agency's tent, which was directly across from mine. I immediately began filming the scene with my mobile phone.

Inside the targeted tent, I saw journalist Ahmed Mansour, a correspondent for Palestine Today Agency, seated at a desk with flames consuming his body. In shock, I stopped filming and ran toward him to try to rescue him. I grabbed his pants and legs to pull him out, but the fabric tore in my hands from the intensity of the fire that had already burned his upper body. I moved to another angle, away from the flames, and tried, but the heat was overwhelming.

Several fellow journalists and others nearby arrived, and together we began pouring water from bottles onto the fire until we managed to extinguish part of it. With their help, I was finally able to pull Ahmed Mansour out. At that moment, I felt dizzy and collapsed, losing consciousness.

When I woke up, I was in the hospital's reception area and learned that I had sustained burns on the fingers of my right hand while trying to rescue Ahmed. The doctors reassured me about my condition.

I later learned that the strike had killed journalist Helmi Al-Faqaawi, who was inside the Palestine Today tent, and Youssef Al-Khozondar, a media assistant working in the neighboring tent used by Russia Today and NBC. Several other colleagues were also injured, some critically. Eventually, I was informed that Ahmed Mansour, whom I had tried to save, had died from his injuries."

## Annex II: Data Collected by Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

**Table 1: Violations committed by Israeli authorities against Palestinian journalists and media workers between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2025.**

Killed	Injured	Detained	Media facilities destroyed
<b>273</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 2: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by place of residence (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Governorate	Number	Percentage
North Gaza	49	18.0%
Gaza	140	51.1%
Deir al-Balah	42	15.4%
Khan Younis	27	9.9%
Rafah	15	5.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 3: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by location of killing (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Governorate	Number	Percentage
North Gaza	51	18.9%
Gaza	105	37.8%
Deir al-Balah	63	23.2%
Khan Younis	41	15.4%
Rafah	13	4.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 4: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by role in the media sector (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).<sup>90</sup>**

Media Role	Number	Percentage
Photographer	98	35.89%
Reporter	80	29.30%
Editor	29	10.62%
Writer	22	8.05%
News Anchor	15	5.49%
Program Host	10	3.66%
Technical Roles	19	3.95%
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 5: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by workplace (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Place of Employment	Number	Percentage
International Media Outlets	7	2.2%
Regional Media Outlets	26	9.6%
Local Media Outlets	240	88.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 6: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by methods of killing (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Cause	Incidents	Deaths	Percentage
Gunfire	14	14	5.2%
Airstrikes	219	253	92.6%
Artillery shelling	5	6	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Al Mezan

<sup>90</sup> Some journalists and media workers were engaged in more than one role within the media field. Technical roles are defined as positions involving work in directing, production planning, editing, media production, and image and sound engineering.



**Table 7: Number of Palestinian journalists and media workers killed by Israel, by location at time of death (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Location	Incidents	Journalists Killed	Percentage
Residential Homes	156	168	61.5%
In displacement shelters	11	15	5.5%
Sites of Ongoing Events	29	33	12.1%
During News Coverage	29	34	12.5%
Hospital or Near Hospital	7	11	4.0%
Inside a Vehicle	6	12	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Al Mezan

**Table 8: Number of targeted media facilities by type (7 October 2023 – 30 June 2025).**

Type	Number
Print Newspapers	12
Digital Newspapers & Magazines	23
Radio Stations	11
TV Channels	21
Media Institutions	5
Printing Presses	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Gaza Government Media Office