Statement issued by 285 civil society organizations in the Arab World



A statement condemning the crime committed against the relief convoy and demanding the dismantling of the blockade on Gaza and the turnover of the Israeli`s war criminals to International Justice

We, the civil society organizations of the Arab World (representative of more than 800 NGOs in 16 Arab countries), strongly condemn the crime (armed assault) committed upon the Freedom Convoy which by the special units of the Israeli Navy at the order of their higher authorities at 4:00 am on Monday, 31 May 2010. The armed forces' crime served to kill at least 10 activists on the boat "Mavi Marmora" and wound dozens of persons coming of varying origins.

The action taken by Israel is a clear and outright violation of the rules and principles of public international law and the humanitarian international law: the Fourth Geneva of 1949 convention in particular.

This aggression constitutes an act of piracy which is prohibited by public international law and humanitarian international law which guarantee for the ships the right of safe passage in international waters in accordance with the principle of the freedom of navigation. They also allow the passage of relief convoys to civilians in the cases of blockade and armed conflict.

Therefore, the storming of the convoy, the killing or wounding of some of its passengers, and threatening to tow by force the ships to the Israeli`s port of Ashdod constitute a crime of international piracy stipulated by the public international law and is a blatant violation of the humanitarian international law which bans attacks on relief ships and blocking their arrival to the needy civilians, children, women, the ill and others if they are hosting the flag of a certain country and if they declare their route, load, and ports of embarkation and disembarkation, and the goal behind their journey.

Moreover, the Israeli decision to expand the area of its military exercises from 20 to 68 miles within the regional waters of Gaza to confront the Freedom Convoy is a "violation of international law of the sea, particularly that the

expansion of the scope of the military exercises to such a large area is only done to confront military ships carrying arms and ammunition, not freight and passenger ships carrying humanitarian and relief aid to the blockaded Gaza Strip."

Obviously the international criminal court and the Geneva conventions prohibit such actions which are tantamount of war crimes, particularly the legal provisions which prohibit the attacks on ships and the relief crews which belong to neutral countries.

The issue of running relief convoys is based on two essential factors. The first one is the provisions` enforcement of public and humanitarian international law. In other words, it should not be permissible whether in the state of peace or in the state of war to block the outlets of humanitarian relief aid or to deny this relief aid to any group of people or to starve them.

The second factor is the aim to forestall giving a political reward to the aggressor for the war crimes and for the crimes against humanity which this aggressor had committed. In other words, to forestall the consolidation of the blockade of civilians and starving them so as to gain political concessions from the won party.

The action taken by Israel is a crime that violates the provisions of the public international law which guarantees the right of passage in the High Seas or in the international waters.

The aim of the Freedom Convoy was to offer medical and food assistance to the residents of the Gaza Strip.

This makes the Israeli action of intercepting the convoy and storming it by military force one of continuing to starve the civilian population who are living under the occupation`s yoke. This fact is prohibited by the rules and conventions of international humanitarian law. Consequently, the states which the ships are hoisting their flags or the persons who belong to several nationalities are entitled, as states or individuals, to take legal action against Israel in the international courts, particularly against the leaders who issued the orders of storming and killing or wounding the passengers of the convoy.

Therefore, this action constitutes at all a crime of international piracy and It is a war crime which is prohibited and punishable by the Articles of Association of the International Criminal Court because the action was taken in violation of the provisions of Article 8 of these Articles of Association.

The signatories of this statement believe that failure by the international community to pursue the Israel`s war criminals who have committed shameless and massacres (as, for example, was the case of the massacres committed in Dayr Yaseen, Kafr Qassem, Qibyah, Al¯Samu', the Bahr Al¯Baqar school, the first and second massacres committed in Qana, Gaza in 2008/2009 and other places) encouraged the war criminals to commit this ugly crime in international waters.

Moreover, It`s necessary to underline that the continued attempts to outflank the Report of the Goldstone Committee in order to abort criminal justice and block the trial of the Israeli war criminals by the relevant international courts has specifically encouraged the mentality of arrogance of the Israeli`s leaders who took the decision of the military storming thinking that they were acting above the law.

While we appeal to the international community that it should support the issues of justice, freedom and human rights, not have double standards in its judgment and not fail to draw a clear line between the victim and the

executioner، as we have been frequently accustomed to see.

We appeal to the international community to adopt the standards which can hold to accountability those who committed this massacre against civilians coming from several countries and to impose "smart" sanctions on the racist occupation State (exactly as was done with South Africa during the rule of apartheid).

We also appeal to the international community to place the Israel`s nuclear arsenal under international control and supervision so as to preclude the use of this arsenal against the people of the region.

All the crimes committed by the Israel، which we have seen in these days against can only represents the beginning of the end of the Israel`s apartheid state.

Finally، we would like to appeal to the United Nations and the international community to work for the immediate dismantling of the blockade clamped on Gaza.

Names of the organizations signing the statement according to alphabetical order:

Regional Arab NGOs

1- The Arab organization for human rights/Jordan (included 202 organizations and 18 arab countries)

2- Arab Comitee for Human Rights

3- Preparation comitee for arab network to protect the human rights defenders (included a team's organization from 9 arab countries)

4- Arabi coalition for democracy، development and human rights (included 32 organization from 10 arab countries)

5- Arab's coalition against death penality (included 7 national's coalitions and 7 arab countries)

6- Arab society for Acadamic freedom

7- International society to support political prisoners

8- Arab league for culture and literature and arts

9- International institute for peace، justice and human rights

10- Salma network for life without violence (included 10 organizations from ten arab countries)

11- Election network on the arab regions (included 30 networks and organizations in 12 arab coutries)

12- Human rights trainers networks in the arab regions (included 132 trainers)

13- Campaign for the arab day of human rights

14- Al-Quarama foundation

JORDAN

15- Amman Center for Human Rights Studies [ACHRS]

16- Amnesty International/ the Jordan Group.

17- Adel Center for legal support

18- The Arab Organization for Human Rights/ Jordan.

19- Al-Badil Center for Studies and Training

20- Center for International Law and Human Rights

21- Center for families awareness

22- Center for defense the freedom of the Jordan's journalists

23- Equal center for democratic studies in reserch

24- Eletronic society ghrorg for human rights culture

25- Human Rights group and postal Arab Society

26- The Arab-European Center for Human Rights.

27- The Academy of Change and the Studies of Democracy and Development.

28- The General Federation of the Societies of the Young women Christian Association [YWCA] in Jordan.

29- The Jordanian Network for human rights organization (included 18 organizations).

30- The Jordanian Alliance Opposed to the Capital Punishment.

31- The Jordanian Alliance of the international Criminal Court.

32- The Jordanian Society for Human Rights.

33- The Jordanian network for Human Rights Trainers (included 41 trainers)

34- The Jordanian coalition against Death Penality

35- The Jordanian Women Union

36- The Jordanian Workers Forum.

37- The Cultural Society for Youth and Childhood.

38- The Chechen Society.

39- The International Institute for Solidarity with Women.

40- The Legal Network of Arab Women.

41- The National Forum for Youth and Culture.

42- The Humanitarian Forum for Women's Rights.

43- The Jordanian Association of Democratic Culture.

44- The Al-Karamah Association Against Violence.

45- The Society of Working Women.

46- The Association of the Al-Sukhnah Women.

47- The Society of Khawlah Bint Al-Azwar.

48- The Society of Arab Women.

49- The Society of the Rights of the Jordanian Child.

50- The Society of Housewives.

51- Al-Mahabah Society/ Madaba.

52- The Society for the Development of the Family.

53- The East and West Center for the Development of the Local Community.

54- The Al-Hayah Center for the Development of the Local Community.

55- The Arab Al-Jisr Center for Development and Human Rights.

56- The Center of Arab Women media Workers.

57- The Al-Phenix Center for Economic and Information Studies.

58- The Al-Janub Center for Strategic Studies.

59- The Empowerment Center for Legal Aid and Human Rights.

60- Al-Adl Center for Legal Aid.

61- The Societal Rehabilitation Center.

62- The Charity Society for Rehabilitation.

63- The Observatory of Man and the Environment.

64- The Al-Wahdat Cultural Forum.

65- The Al-Ard Organization for Supporting Development.

66- The Al Musawah Center for Democratic studies and research.

67- The Madaba Organization for Supporting Development.

68- The Al-Thuraya Studies Center.

69- The Club of the Alumini of the Iraqi Universities and institutes.

70- The Al-Wahdat Sports Club.

71- The Women Union/Zarqa

72- Mizan/the Series of Laws on Human Rights.

73- The Club of Alumni of Universities and Institutes of the former Soviet union and the Federal Republic of Russia.

Palestine:

74- The Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO) (Consists of 132 human rights organizations).

75- The Palestinian Human Rights Council (Consists of 10 human rights organizations).

76- Addameer/Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

77- The Palestinian Association for Human Rights (Monitor).

78- The Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy.

79- The Palestinian Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (MUSAWA).

80- The Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People/Beit Sahour.

81- The National Society for Democracy and Law.

82- The Association School for Mothers.

83- The Right to Life Association.

84- Al Amal Charitable Society Bethlehem.

85- The Health Work Committees.

86- The Palestinian Youth Network.

87- The Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC).

88- Human Rights and Democracy Media Center (SHAMS)/Ramallah.

89- The Palestinian Woman's Information and Media Center.

90- The Palestinian Center for Justice in Sweden.

91- The Jerusalem Center for Studies، Media، and Publishing.

92- Disabled Without Borders Organization.

93- Al Maqdese for Society Development.

Egypt

94- The Egyptian Center for Development and Human Rights.

95- The Arab Foundation for Civil Society and Human Rights Support.

96- The Egyptian Association in the Defense of Human Rights.

97- The Youth Organization Network.

98- The Technological Center for Human Rights.

99- The Egyptian Society for Human Development and Philanthropy.

100- Al Adalah Foundation for Human Development and Training in Sohaj.

101- The Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights.

102- The Egyptian Democratic Centre.

103- Al Gharbia Regional Civil Society Union.

104- The Egyptian Society for Science and Scientists in Alexandria.

105- The Red Sea Women Union.

106- The Egyptian Foundation for Family Development.

107- The Egyptian Association for Training and Human Rights.

108- The Egyptian Association for Participation and Sustainable Development.

109- The Egyptian Centre for Human Rights.

110- The Egyptian Center for Citizenship and Women Rights Support.

111- Al Kelmah Center for Human Rights.

112- Land Center for Human Rights.

113- The Child Rights Center.

114- The Rural Women Center.

115- Maat for Juridical and Constitutional Studies.

116- The Development and Institutionalization Support Center.

117- Al Oyoun Center for Human Development and Studies.

118- The Enlightenment Center.

119- Al Sarkhah Center for the Disabled and Child Right.

120- Mossawa Centre for Human Rights.

121- The Arab Association for Democracy and Human Rights Studies.

122- Al Mashreq Foundation for Development and Population.

123- Women Development Forum.

124- Shabab Al Sharkia Society for Development.

125- The Key of Life Society in Biqna.

126- Human Resource Development Society.

127- The Alumni Association for Asian Studies and Research Institutes.

128- The Assiut Human Rights and Development Society.

129- The Assiut National Association for Development and Social Welfare.

130- The Assiut Social Development Association.

131- The Saqiltah Community Development Association for the Care of Rural Women.

132- Al Aswan Christian Youth Association.

133- Al Kardasah Global Society for Development.

134- The Qena Development Society for Rural and Urban Women.

135- Al Amal Association for Women، Child، and Family Development in Jamaliya.

136- The Armant Family Development Association.

137- The Egypt's Daughter Association for Development.

138- Al Hilaliya Society for Development and Social Aid.

139- Al Muntazah Association for Development.

140- The Omar Bin Al Khattab Association for Community Development in the Red Sea.

141- The Red Sea Society for Short Heritage Preservation.

142- Al Mansoura Human Development Society.

143- The Human Rights Care and Protection Association.

144- The Cooperative Association for Local Social Development.

145- Al Shammou Society.

146- Safeer Al Kheir Society.

147- The Assuit Exporters Association.

148- The Ummi Association for Rights and Development.

149- The Young Entrepreneurs Association.

150- The Association of Compassion and Philanthropy.

151- Amwaj Association for Culture and Creative Arts.

152- The Dialogue Forum.

153- Ishraqiya Association for Youth Development.

154- Bareeq Society.

155- Al Mahai Community Development Association in Bandaf.

156- The Maat Foundation for Peace، Development، and Human Rights.

157- New Woman Foundation.

158- His Majesty's Charitable Foundation.

159- Al Adalah Foundation for Development and Human Rights in Gharbia.

160- The Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance.

161- The Dialogue Forum Association.

162- The Enlightenment Foundation for Education and Development.

163- Jaffa Association for Cultural Development.

164- The National Affiliation Foundation.

165- Al Fajer Center for Program، Advocacy، and Human Rights.

166- Al Hilali Foundation for Freedom.

167- Women of the Future.

168- New world foundation for development and human rights.

IRAQ

169- Iraqi coalition for human rights organizations (included 30 human rights organizations)

170- Freedom`s coalition in Iraq (included 72 organizations)

171- General Union for petrol`s workers syndicates in Iraq

172- Iraq's institute for human rights

173- Iraq's institute for supporting democracy

174- Iraq's national assembly human rights Maysan

175- Civic coalition for minorities in Iraq

176- High representative indigenous people and the Iraq`s minorities

177- Iraq's national center for human rights studies and democracy`s development

178- Non-violence network in the south of Iraq

179- Iraq's team for civic awareness

180- League for mass awareness

181- Free Iraq youth organization

182- Kofan organization for human rights and democracy

183- Woman for supporting Woman Association

184- Development without borders Institution (DWBI) Kirkuk

185- Azidi Solidarity and Fraternity Organizations

186- Social Humanitarian Organization

187- Alrafedeen Center to ensure human rights

188- Muslim Peacemaker Teams

189- Zunahi establishment for cultural and social activities

190- Iraq'a Amal society

191- Alnuah women society

192- Iraq's flag society for human rights

193- Iraq's network for peacebuilding (included 45 organizations)

194- Society for the protection of street`s and poor children

195- Society to support handicap people Wassit

196- Mizan society for development and human rights

197- Baghdad women society

198- Hamurabi organization for human rights and democracy watch

199- Monitoring Organization for children Rights violations

200- Equality Organizations for human rights

201- Iraq's women institution

202- Lawyers against torture

203- Human Rights establishment in Iraq

204- Human Rights Center in Iraq

205- Future Makers Organization for Human Rights

SYRIA

206- Arab Organization for human rights in Syria

207- National Organization for Human Rights in Syria

208- Arab Organization for penal reform in Syria

209- Syrian's monitoring for human rights

210- Syrian center for media and freedom of expression

211- Syrian committee for defending journalists

212- Syrian league for defending human rights

213- Syrian committee for human rights

214- Arab European Center for Human Rights and international law

215- Committee for defending democratic freedom and human rights in Syria

216- Women initiative committee

217- Committee "together" to support women issues

218- Organization for defending opinion of prisoners

219- League for Asham literature's writers/London

220- Without borders activities organizations to monitor human rights situation

YEMEN

221- Yemen coalition for transparency and anticorruption (included 60 organizations)

222- Information and rehabilitation for human rights Taaz

223- Yemen monitoring for human rights

224- Yemen coalition against death penalty

225- Yemen organization defending rights and democratic freedom

226- Yemen organization for training and rehabilitation

227- Committee against torture and unlaw arrests

228- Change organization

229- Hod Organization

230- Relief center to support women Aden

231- Yemen center for human rights

232- Youth alliance groups to defense human rights/Aden

233- Democratic social forum

234- Sister hoods for human rights

235- Women and children violation's victims monitoring

236- Yemen's youth development center

237- Al-Jazeera center for human rights studies

238- Center for the protection of journalists

239- Dialogue center

240- Without handcuffs journalists

241- National Forum for human Rights

242- Democracy school

243- General union for Yemen's students

244- Learning a professional syndicate

245- News network for happy news

SUDAN

246- Civil forum in Sudan (include more than 50 organizations)

247- Arab network for developing women's avanguards

248- Sudan's center for developing and democracy

249- Charity organization for donations

250- Al-Zuber charity establishment

251- Center for society's studies

252- Center for gender's studies

253- Establishment for peace and development

254- Eva Organization for women

255- East development organization

256- International center for Emergency

257- Sudan center for civil protection

258- Sudan organization for human rights

259- International members for Islamic dialogue

260- Regional office for civil aid organization

Bahrain

261- Bahrain Women Union (Included 12 organizations).

262- Bahrain Human Rights Society.

263- Bahrain Society for Resisting Normalization with the Zionist enemies

264- Bahrain Human Rights Monitor.

265- Bahrain Democratic Youth Society

Algeria:

266- Algerian League for human rights

Saudi Arabia:

267- Society to protect & defend human rights in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

268- Women Rights Association

269- National committee for work youth in Tabouk area.

Morocco

270- Moroccan Center for Human Rights.

271- forum de l'enfance

Kuwait:

272- Kuwait Society for Human Rights.

273- Umbrella for Kuwait Action.

Libya:

274- Human Rights Solidarity Organization

Qatar:

275- Qatar Foundation for Human trafficking.

Mauritania:

276- Mauritanian Association for Human Rights.

277- Congregation to defend women's rights.

Lebanon:

278- Lebanon Association for Human Rights.

279- Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union

280- Lebanon Women Rights Committee

281- Lebanese Center for Policy Research and Consulting

282- Humanitarian Development Center - protective of human rights.

283- Palestinian Human Rights Foundation (Monitor)

284- Assembly Joy of Giving

285- Alkarama Foundation - Beirut Office

286- National Centre for Development and Rehabilitation.

Source