

January 3, 2024

Urgent Call to Action: Support South Africa's Application to Initiate Genocide Proceedings against Israel

Dear Colleagues from our Fellow National Human Rights Institutions Worldwide,

On behalf of the Palestine Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), I extend warm greetings and best wishes for the New Year.

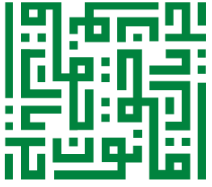
In Palestine, we begin 2024, heavy with the unfathomable losses we have suffered over the past three months. At the same time, we write with renewed hope as people across the world and, increasingly, governments, UN agencies, and other international humanitarian and human rights organisations raise their voices to collectively demand an end to the genocidal acts being conducted by Israel against the Palestinian people, immediate implementation of a ceasefire and immediate and unimpeded provision of urgently needed humanitarian assistance to the nearly 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza, almost half of them children, who Israel has subjected to what [analysts](#) describe as one of the “heaviest conventional bombing campaigns” in the history of modern warfare.”

In particular, [ICHR](#) welcomes South Africa's [Application](#) to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), submitted on 29 December, through which it has initiated Genocide proceedings against Israel for breach of its obligations under the Genocide Convention.

As detailed further in the attached [memo](#), the weight and value of South Africa's case against Israel at the World Court, lies not only in its substance, but in the availability of “**provisional measures**” (akin to a domestic law interim order/injunction) that could impose limitations on Israel's military activities against Gaza until the substantive claim before the Court is heard. It is understood that **the hearing will take place on 11 – 12 January** in the Hague. Notably, any provisional measures issued at this stage will be legally binding on Israel.

In light of the urgency of our situation and the anticipated hearings at the ICJ expected on 11-12 January in the Hague, **we appeal to you to work with your respective Governments as a matter of utmost urgency to:**

- **Issue a public statement in support of South Africa's proceedings before 11 January 2024, in particular, urging the need for provisional measures**, which provide emergency measures of the utmost urgency to protect the people of Gaza against genocidal acts;
- **Fully support South Africa's proceedings at the ICJ, including by intervening with written statements upon the Court's request for State written interventions;**
- **Apply a two-way arms embargo against Israel**, to bring its genocidal aggressive acts to an end;



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- **Adopt parliamentary motions recognising that the situation in Gaza, amounts to Genocide**, and addressing the obligations of non-recognition of the internationally wrongful acts of Israel, the obligation to not provide support to maintain the internationally wrongful act, and the duty to cooperate to bring those acts to an end.

Together let us seize this critical opportunity to work to ensure that the rights of peoples everywhere are advanced in 2024,

Issam Aruri
Commissioner General

Ammar Dwaik
Director General