

STATEMENT

Paris, 14 November 2025

Israel

UIA-IROL calls for respect for the rule of law, independence of prosecutors, and an independent investigation in the case of Major General Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi

The Institute for the Rule of Law of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA-IROL) expresses its concern regarding the criminal and disciplinary proceedings initiated against Major General Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi, former Chief Military Advocate General of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), following the alleged release of classified footage allegedly showing the assault by IDF personnel of a Palestinian detainee at the Sde Teiman detention facility in southern Israel.

According to publicly available information, Major General Tomer-Yerushalmi, who as the chief military prosecutor was prosecuting 9 IDF personnel for sexual assault of a Palestinian detainee, reportedly authorized the disclosure of the footage to the media with the stated intent of demonstrating transparency and accountability in the IDF's investigation of alleged abuses. She has denied any unauthorized release of the video and maintains that her actions fell within her official mandate. She was initially arrested along with her chief prosecutor and placed in solitary confinement. She was subsequently placed under house arrest and later hospitalized, facing several charges including abuse of authority, unauthorized disclosure of classified information, and obstruction of justice.

Major General Tomer-Yerushalmi's arrest and prosecution led to online abuse and protests against her. A lawmaker of the the same party to which the Israeli National Security Minister belongs called her a "criminal" and an enemy within. Prime Minister Netanyahu called the video documenting the abuse "the most severe propaganda attack." In her resignation letter, Major General Tomer-Yerushalmi's said that in her resignation letter that it was her "duty to investigate". She also said that her officers were subjected to attacks and personal insults because they "stood guard over the rule of law in the IDF."

UIA-IROL notes with concern that these proceedings appear to constitute retaliation linked to prosecution of serious human rights violations against detainees, and reflects an attempt to undermine prosecutorial independence and the effective functioning of the rule of law within the military justice system. The case raises serious questions about the independence of the military justice system, the transparency of accountability mechanisms, and the protection of legal professionals acting in the public interest.

UIA-IROL emphasizes that, regardless of the outcome of these proceedings, it is imperative that any investigation be conducted independently, impartially, and free from political or military interference, in accordance with the fundamental principles of the rule of law.

UIA-IROL recalls that Israel remains bound by its international obligations, including common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions, the United Nations Convention against Torture, and Articles 7 and 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which require States to prevent, investigate, and sanction acts of torture or ill-treatment and to ensure fair proceedings and effective accountability mechanisms.

UIA-IROL also recalls the 1990 UN Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors, which, inter alia, requires States to “ensure that prosecutors are able to perform their professional functions without intimidation, harassment, improper interference or unjustified exposure to civil, penal or other liability.”

UIA-IROL therefore calls upon the Israeli authorities to:

- Ensure full independence, impartiality, and transparency in the ongoing proceedings against Major General Tomer-Yerushalmi;
- Conduct impartial investigations into all credible allegations of abuse of mistreatment of detainees at the Sde Teiman facility or elsewhere; and
- Safeguard the independence of the military legal corps and of all legal professionals working to uphold human rights and international humanitarian law.

UIA-IROL reiterates that the independence of military justice and the impartial investigation of serious human rights violations are essential components of the rule of law and of the credibility and any system of justice.

More about UIA-IROL

The Institute for the Rule of Law of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA-IROL) promotes the Rule of Law and supports and defends, in particular, (1) lawyers, judges and human rights defenders who are harassed, threatened and/or persecuted in the exercise of their professions, (2) the independence of the legal and judicial professions, and (3) the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, especially in defense of human rights.

For more information go to: www.uianet.org - uiacentre@uianet.org
Contact person: Julie ROSA, Communication & Digital Strategy Manager - jrosa@uianet.org