

**JOINT STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UIA AND
THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UIA-IROL**

Paris, 20 June 2025

**The UIA and the UIA-IROL Call for the Respect of the Rule of Law and
International Law in face of the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip**

Reaffirming UIA's mission to promoting the Rule of Law and defending human rights, including in situations of armed conflict, when they are the scene of serious violations targeting the civil population,

Recalling its previous statements published in October 2023, whereby the UIA condemned the attacks perpetrated by Hamas in Israel on 7 October 2023 and expressed its deep concern at the massive civilian casualties in Gaza, calling on the State of Israel to respect international humanitarian law,

Expressing its deepest concern over the continued worsening humanitarian catastrophe in the occupied Palestinian territories (particularly in the Gaza Strip, but also in the West Bank and East Jerusalem), where the civil population, especially women and children, disabled and elderly persons, are facing increasingly precarious conditions of survival,

Noting that this situation results in particular from the persistent lack of access to sufficient humanitarian aid, as witnessed in recent months by credible sources – including the United Nations and its specialised agencies, the Resolution approved by the UN General Assembly on 12 June 2025, as well as the orders of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the arrest warrants of the International Criminal Court (ICC),

Noting that a blockade of goods and supplies has led to a virtual standstill of humanitarian operations which are essential to survival, depriving civilians of access to water, sanitation and hygiene, healthcare and food, with more than half a million people now threatened with starvation,

Underlying finally the existence of extensive evidence of deliberate attacks on goods essential to civilian life, directly threatening the survival of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip,

Recalling that hostage-taking constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law, and that the immediate, unconditional and dignified release of all those held is an imperative requirement,

Underlying that any response, including State-led military operations, must respect the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law – in particular the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution – and cannot justify indiscriminate or disproportionate acts,

Recalling in this respect that the deliberate starvation of civilian population amounts to a serious violation of international humanitarian law, expressly prohibited by the Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (12 August 1949) and liable to fall, depending on the case, within the scope of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,

Recalling that the prohibition of genocide constitutes a peremptory norm of international law based on the need to protect essential humanitarian values and that the obligations arising from the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide are binding on all States, which have a common interest that they be observed,

Recalling the Orders of the ICJ s dated 26 January 2024, 28 March 2024, and 24 May 2024, in the case *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)* which the Court found that “at least some of the rights claimed by South Africa [deriving from the Genocide Convention] and for which it is seeking protection are plausible”, and “the right of the Palestinians to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts” (para. 54),

Recalling that in these decisions the Court also emphasised that all parties to the conflict in the Gaza Strip are bound by international humanitarian law;

Noting further that the Court expressed grave concern regarding the fate of the hostages abducted during the attack in Israel on 7 October 2023, and called for their immediate and unconditional release,

Noting finally that the Court ordered the State of Israel, in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, to take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts falling within the scope of Article II of the Convention,

Recalling further that in its last provisional order, of 28 March 2024, the Court directed Israel to ensure, in cooperation with the United Nations, the immediate, unrestricted and large-scale humanitarian access to all civilians in the Gaza Strip,

Noting that this order requires the urgent provision of essential services - including food, water, electricity, fuel, shelter, clothing, hygiene and sanitation requirements, as well as medical supplies and medical care and related equipment,

Underlining that the Court has also demanded increasing the capacity and number of land crossing points and maintaining them open for as long as necessary, to enable the effective delivery of aid,

Recalling the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court for several individuals in connection with the ongoing conflict, and underlining that all States Parties to the Rome Statute have a legal obligation to cooperate fully with the Court and to execute requests to arrest and surrender wanted persons to the Court,

Recalling also that the Court's established case law has confirmed that an individual's assertion of personal immunity cannot be invoked against the execution of these warrants, such immunity having been deemed incompatible with the purpose and objective of the Rome Statute,

Recalling the recent Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations A/ES-10/L.34/Rev.1 entitled “*Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations*” adopted on 12 June 2025 with an overwhelming majority (149 votes in favour; 12 against; 19 abstentions; 13 non-voting; total voting members: 193),

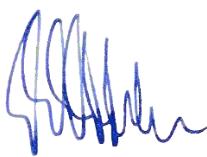
Noting that this resolution demands in particular:

- an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire;
- the immediate, dignified, and unconditional release of all hostages;
- explicit condemnation of the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare;
- and the unlawful denial of humanitarian access,

Recalling that this resolution also reaffirms the obligation of an occupying Power, in particular, to respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence -- in coordination with the United Nations -- thus ensuring unimpeded access to all essential humanitarian aid, including food, drinking water, medical supplies, fuel, equipment, shelter and basic services to all Palestinian civilians.

Whereby the UIA and the UIA-IROL:

- **support the United Nations call** for an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire, the immediate, dignified and unconditional release of all hostages held by Hamas and other groups
- **reaffirm their commitment to the fundamental principles** of humanity, dignity and justice, the compliance with the international humanitarian law, and the unhindered delivery of essential humanitarian aid to all civilians -- in particular the most vulnerable: women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities
- **call upon the international community**, as well as national, regional and international and regional institutions, and civil society, to unite in a concrete commitment to foster a peace based on the fundamental rights and strict compliance with international law, including the obligation to prevent acts of genocide
- in **renewing their commitment** to promoting and defending the Rule of Law, human rights and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, offer their concrete contribution in this respect: by training lawyers in the international negotiation and mediation and by setting up neutral, impartial and independent teams ready to accompany any credible mediation initiative in favour of peace.



Carlo Mastellone
President of the UIA



Martin Pradel
Director General of the UIA-IROL

More about the UIA and UIA-IROL

UIA is the global and multi-cultural organisation for the legal profession, established in 1927 and now with members in 110 countries, which provides professional development, learning, promotes the rule of law, defends the independence and freedom of lawyers worldwide, and emphasizes friendship, collegiality and networking among members.

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.

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