

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PRESS RELEASE

AI Index: MDE 15/126/2002 (Public)
News Service No: 134
1 August 2002

Israel/Occupied Territories/Palestinian Authority: UN Secretary-General's report on Jenin underscores the need for a full inquiry

The UN Secretary-General's report released today, which is consistent with many of Amnesty International's findings, underscores the need for a thorough, on-the-spot investigative inquiry into the reports of grave human rights abuses that occurred in the context of the Israeli army incursions into Jenin and other cities last April.

Such an investigation is all the more important in view of Israel's continuing failure to carry out proper investigations into allegations of human rights violations as required by international law

The report released today, which is a compilation of reports from various sources, sets out the chronology of events in Jenin and other cities. Among the serious human rights concerns highlighted in the report and shared by Amnesty International are the blocking of medical aid for 11 days in Jenin and the destruction of homes in Hawashin.

However, inevitably the report falls short of a comprehensive inquiry. Amnesty International regrets that the Israeli Government has impeded the search for truth and justice. It failed to provide information to the UN Secretary-General for his report and in April rejected the deployment of a fact-finding mission established by the Secretary-General, composed of distinguished international experts, and included military, police and forensic advisers.

Amnesty International is dismayed at the continuing failure of all sides to take all necessary measures to protect civilians. The unlawful killing of Palestinians, collective punishments, including closures and curfews, destruction of homes and threatened expulsions by Israel, and the targeted attacks on Israeli civilians by members of armed Palestinian groups must come to an end.

"For Israelis, Palestinians and the international community, the lesson of Jenin, Gaza, and the ongoing bomb attacks on civilians, is that until the cycle of revenge and reprisal is broken, human rights abuses will only be met with more human rights abuses.

"Amnesty International reiterates its call for international monitors with a strong human rights mandate to be deployed as a matter of urgency. There will be no peace and security until human rights are respected and there is truth, justice and redress for the victims," Amnesty International said, "the fundamental importance of a full investigation to uncover the truth cannot be overestimated. "

Background

Amnesty International delegates gained access to Jenin on 17 April and has carried out a series of fact-finding missions in Jenin, Nablus and other cities. Among the serious concerns identified as requiring thorough and impartial expert investigation are war crimes and crimes against humanity. Amnesty International has raised

concerns about the blocking of medical and humanitarian assistance and direct attacks on medical and humanitarian workers, the use of "human shields", unlawful killings, and wanton destruction of homes, arbitrary and administrative detention and torture and ill-treatment, by Israel, as well as targeted attacks on Israeli civilians carried out by armed Palestinian groups.

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