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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

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The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 August 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Lack of Access to Critical Infrastructure in Occupied Palestinian Territory

Introduction

The deliberate targeting of critical civilian infrastructure as a collective punishment or reprisal is a human rights violation prohibited by customary international humanitarian law and international humanitarian law governing military occupation. Since the complete blockade of Gaza by the occupying power in October 2023, the critical infrastructure has been frequently targeted.

These shutdowns leave Palestinians in the dark and unable to access vital rights. This document limits serious human rights violations and war crimes that are protected by international human rights law. This is even though, according to international laws and human rights documents, everything that causes people not to have access to their fundamental rights must be guaranteed in armed conflicts. In the meantime, vulnerable groups, especially women and children in Occupied Palestinian Territory, face challenges and problems in achieving their basic needs due to the lack of access to vital infrastructure such as electricity and water, which violates their rights in finds out in the following some of the cases of lack of access to the essential infrastructure of electricity and the Internet are mentioned, which affect the rights of all the people of the State of Palestine.

Lack of Access to Critical Electricity Infrastructure

- Electricity has been almost completely cut off since the first week of the war. With 92 percent of significant roads destroyed or out of service and communication infrastructure in ruins, getting basic humanitarian aid to people has become challenging. The educational system has been destroyed, and 100% of the children have dropped out of school. The central municipalities in Gaza announced on March 30 that the occupiers are deliberately bombing municipal headquarters, water wells, emergency tanks, and water and sewage lines. Blackouts also directly threaten people's safety and well-being. For example, it is impossible to warn people about impending danger and call them for vital services.
- According to the report of the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the deliberate targeting of medical infrastructure and power cuts by the occupiers have led to the deprivation of citizens from access to essential healthcare services, including the killing of 115 babies. The relentless bombing of residential areas and power cuts in Gaza daily kill premature babies in incubators, children, and elderly patients without access to oxygen.
- In addition to emergency services, newsrooms are also left in the dark. Several international and regional media outlets, including the Washington Post, have reported losing contact with their reporters on the ground. This unprecedented volume exacerbates the disconnection of social media disinformation and allows Israel to continue to commit war crimes and human rights abuses with impunity.
- Limiting the entry of fuel needed to transport aid, refuel ambulances, and run backup generators used to operate critical civilian infrastructure, including telecommunications and water and sanitation systems, in the face of total power outages has created catastrophic problems.

Recommendations and suggestions

- We request regional and international institutions to immediately restore communications and internet access for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.
- International organizations must take all necessary measures to restore communication networks, electricity, and vital needs in the Gaza Strip.
- Lack of electricity and destruction of telecommunications infrastructure in the Gaza Strip violates the most fundamental rights of the people of Gaza and is a war crime.