

Spotlighting Palestinian Children's Rights:

Human Rights Defenders with a Child-Centric Perspective

Declaration

The [RAFTO Foundation](#), whose main objective is the promotion and protection of human rights globally, underscores the importance of addressing the rights of Palestinian children on this international platform.

The RAFTO LAUREATES, gathering in the RAFTO Forum's [hybrid event on May 2nd, 2024, to spotlight on the rights of Palestinian children living under occupation and in armed conflict](#), on the challenges faced by children in Gaza, and on the responsibilities of states in supporting and protecting children's rights, preventing crimes against Palestinian children, and ensuring accountability for violations,

STAND

with all children whose rights are violated and who are affected by military occupation in the occupied Palestinian territory, and in solidarity with Defence for Children International - Palestine (DCI-P) who was awarded the [2023 RAFTO Prize](#) for its persistent work to defend and promote the rights of Palestinian children.

STATE

As of [today, 2nd May 2024](#), at least 34,535 people have been killed in Gaza, including **more than 14,500 children**, 8,400 women. At least, one million nine hundred thousand have been forcibly displaced by Israel. The real death toll is likely much higher, as thousands of people remain missing under the rubble or in mass graves.

Armed conflicts and military attacks inflict profound harm upon children who are forcibly displaced, detained, killed, orphaned, maimed, attacked, abducted, injured, traumatised, made homeless and internally displaced, who are deprived of liberty, safety, medical care, food, and water.

All children affected by armed conflicts must enjoy full protection in compliance with the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and its Optional Protocols (particularly the [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict](#), 2002).

CONDEMN

The killing of civilians and children by all parties to the conflict in Gaza and all violations of international humanitarian law.



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Israel's indiscriminate military attacks, following Hamas' attack of 7 October, against the Palestinian people of Gaza, comprising over 2.3 million persons, nearly half of whom are children.

The bombing and destruction of the entire fabric of Gazan life including cultural, social and medical facilities, schools, and universities in Gaza.

The intentional starvation of civilians in Gaza, including children since the 8 October, as denounced by the [UN Special Rapporteur on Food, together with other UN experts](#).

CALL FOR

1. Implementation of the [UN Security Council Resolution 2728](#) that demands "*an immediate ceasefire*", a lasting peace and withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.
2. The immediate release of all civilian hostages taken by Hamas.
3. The immediate release of all Palestinian civilians, including children, arbitrarily detained by Israel.
4. Urgent humanitarian aid to ensure adequate shelter, food, water, and protection for all internally displaced civilians, with special attention to the specific rights and needs of children affected by the conflict.
5. An immediate end to all war crimes, crimes against humanity and Genocide perpetrated, including all human rights violations against children.
6. The mobilisation of all relevant international human rights procedures and bodies to carry out an investigation into war crimes, including a special focus on children's rights.
7. All those responsible for the attacks and other war crimes against civilians, including children, to be held criminally accountable.
8. A renewed commitment by all parties and the international community to put an end to the illegal military colonial occupation of the Palestinian territory, and respect for the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

WELCOME

The active engagement of young people in universities and academia all over the world who underline the urgency to act and react now, to prevent further bloodshed. They have been at the forefront, driving protests throughout the world, and calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Demonstrations against Israel's war on Gaza reflect widespread outrage at the relentless Israeli military assault and deep solidarity with the suffering people of Palestine.

RAFTO LAUREATES COMMIT

To collectively support the defence of human rights in Gaza, Palestine and all countries in armed conflict or under occupation, to promote respect for children's rights and to mobilise collectively to rebuild a culture of hope, reconstruction and accountability.

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Rafto Laureates Declaration**

Nedal El Salman, Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (Rafto laureate 2013/Bahrain)

Beena Johnsen and Paul Divakar, National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (Rafto laureate 2007/India)

Charbonnel Nodjigoto, Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non-Violence (AJPNV) (Rafto laureate 2022/Tsjad)

ECPAT (Rafto laureate 1998/Thailand)

Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (Rafto laureate 2020/Egypt)

José Raúl Vera López and Jackie Campbell (Rafto laureate 2010/Mexico)

Khaled Quzmar; Defence for Children International Palestine (DCIP) (Rafto laureate 2023/Palestine)

Nnimmo Bassey (Rafto laureate 2012/Nigeria)

Padre Melo (Rafto laureate 2015/Honduras)

Paulos Tesfagiorgis (Rafto laureate 2003/Eritrea)

Penelope Faulkner, representing Thích Quảng Độ (Rafto laureate 2006/Vietnam)

Rouba Mhaissen (Rafto laureate 2019/Libanon)

Sidi Mohammed Daddach (Rafto laureate 2002/Western Sahara)

Jostein Hole Kobbeltvedt, Executive Director, Rafto Foundation for Human Rights (Norway)