



[UNITED4GAZA/LTR/2026/007](#)

15 April 2026

Letter addressed to H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet Jeria  
Candidate for Secretary-General of the United Nations

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Dear Ms. Bachelet,

We have the honour of writing you as [United Staff for Gaza](#), an informal association of current and former members of United Nations personnel, acting in our private capacities. The association was created in 2025 to offer colleagues a way to contribute to the UN's efforts to ensure that the human rights of Palestinians are respected. Today we count some 2,500 participants and supporters in our network.

We hereby transmit the memorandum in annex, prepared by some of our colleagues. It contains information regarding the Question of Palestine. The supporters of our association would be deeply grateful for your consideration of its contents, as you progress with your candidature for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity, Ms. Bachelet, to express the assurances of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



United Staff for Gaza

**MEMORANDUM**  
**TO THE ATTENTION OF CANDIDATES FOR SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS**

15 April 2026

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Dear Candidate:

We have the honour of addressing you as current and former members of United Nations personnel, who are deeply concerned by the ongoing and grave violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people. Their rights have been violated “beyond comprehension,” as the Secretary-General has [stressed](#). “There are no words left to describe the living hell in Gaza,” he has [said](#), where “the levels of death and destruction... are without parallel in recent times.” In the West Bank, too, the situation has deteriorated so severely that the High Commissioner for Human Rights has [issued](#) “a stark warning” about the risk of “ethnic cleansing.” In our considered and informed view, if the United Nations fails to resolve the Question of Palestine in a just manner whereby fundamental rights are respected, the credibility of the Organization would suffer mightily and the legacy of the Charter would be at risk. We therefore attach great importance to the Organization’s treatment of the Question of Palestine.

We welcome your candidature, appreciate the Vision Statement that you submitted, and wish you every success. We would appreciate it deeply if, as you proceed with your candidature, you would kindly consider the following information.

**(1) The Palestinian right to self-determination**

Self-determination is a fundamental right which has yet to be fulfilled for the Palestinian people. Despite decades of promises that Palestine will enjoy sovereignty and that Palestinians will see their inalienable right to self-determination realized, the Two-State Solution appears, at this moment, to be in terminal decline.

The State of Israel’s persisting occupation of Palestinian territory has been [adjudged illegal](#) by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The General Assembly consequently [demanded](#) that Israel end its illegal occupation by 18 September 2025. Nevertheless, not only has Israel ignored the ICJ and the General Assembly, it has instead further entrenched its occupation, including military occupation of Gaza and land seizures and settlement of the West Bank.

Although large swathes of the international community rightly condemn Israel’s persisting illegal occupation and its efforts to annex the West Bank, rhetorical condemnations absent meaningful punitive and preventative measures have failed to restrain Israel’s conduct. The impunity that Israel

has enjoyed despite its violations of international law has only emboldened further violations. Similarly, although most Member States are committed, rhetorically, to the Two-State Solution, they have not taken meaningful measures to discourage Israel from continuing to pursue permanent occupation, ethnic cleansing, and annexation.

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to:

- ensuring that the Palestinian people see their right to self-determination realized;
- encouraging Israel to abide by its legal obligation to vacate its unlawful occupation of Palestinian territory; and
- advancing the Two-State Solution despite Israeli measures to exercise sovereignty over the illegally occupied Palestinian territory.

## **(2) Accountability for killing and injuring of United Nations personnel and related categories of protected persons**

As at this writing, to our knowledge, 398 members of United Nations and associated personnel have been killed by Israeli forces in Gaza since October 2023. This is the single largest killing of United Nations personnel in the Organization's 80-year history. Hundreds more have been maimed, detained, tortured, and mourn family and friends. Certain preliminary indications suggest that at least some of our colleagues killed may have been deliberately targeted. Moreover, scores of other persons with protected status, including humanitarians, journalists, and medical workers, have been killed as well, having often been targeted deliberately.

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to:

- promoting accountability for the killing, injuring and torturing of our colleagues, including by establishing an appropriate investigative mechanism;
- encouraging Member States to observe their binding obligations under the Convention on the Safety and Security of United Nations and Associated Personnel; and
- discouraging Israel from targeting humanitarians, journalists, and medical workers.

## **(3) Keeping UNRWA afloat**

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is the backbone of all humanitarian response and basic services for Palestine refugees and is indispensable to a just and sustainable settlement to the Question of Palestine, as repeatedly [reaffirmed](#) by the General Assembly. The ICJ has also [rejected](#) Israel's allegations about UNRWA's supposed lack of impartiality and neutrality, and has reaffirmed Israel's binding obligation to cooperate with the United Nations, including UNRWA.

Nevertheless, in violation of international law and in contempt of the ICJ and General Assembly, Israel has sought to dismantle the Agency. It has enacted laws to ban UNRWA from operating, it has demolished and damaged hundreds of the Agency's premises and seized other facilities, it has orchestrated disinformation campaigns to discredit the Agency and justify violence against its personnel, it blocks UNRWA international staff from entering the illegally occupied Palestinian territory, and it has killed 391 members of UNRWA personnel and injured, detained, and tortured many more. In his final statement to the General Assembly, the recently departed Commissioner-General [said](#): "I must state my horror that a United Nations entity has been allowed to be crushed as UNRWA has."

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member states with a view to:

- ensuring that UNRWA is equipped with the political and financial support it needs to remain viable and able to discharge its mandate, fully and without interference; and
- obtaining Israel's respecting of its obligations under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

#### **(4) A genuine and permanent ceasefire in Gaza**

A ceasefire supposedly went into effect on 10 October 2025, whereby both Israel and Hamas would put a halt to their hostilities, further to the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and Security Council Resolution 2803. Israel has, nevertheless, continued to strike Gaza repeatedly, killing more than 700 civilians and injuring over 2,000 more. On 10 April 2026, marking six months since the notional ceasefire entered into force, the High Commissioner for Human Rights [said](#): "Palestinians have no blueprint for survival: whatever they do or don't do, wherever they go or don't go, there is no safety or protection afforded to them. It is hard to square this with a ceasefire."

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to:

- ensuring a genuine and permanent ceasefire in Gaza; and
- holding the parties to the conflict to account for violations of said ceasefire.

#### **(5) Guaranteeing humanitarian access in Gaza**

In violation of international law, Israeli authorities have consistently prohibited or obstructed the entry of humanitarian assistance into Gaza. This denial of humanitarian access was so severe last year that Israel created a [famine](#), as declared by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. At the time, the Secretary-General [called](#) it "a man-made disaster, a moral indictment, and a failure of humanity itself," and recalled Israel's duties to enable the provision of the means to sustain life. Israel moreover sought to displace the reliable and legitimate systems of humanitarian aid

distribution with a militarized model whereby civilians seeking the means to survive were brutally killed *en masse*.

This situation was supposed to change with the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and Security Council Resolution 2803. The Comprehensive Plan said that “full aid will be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip” and that “entry of distribution and aid in the Gaza Strip will proceed without interference.” The Council resolution moreover promised “the full resumption of humanitarian aid.”

Israeli authorities have continued to block and obstruct the delivery of critically needed food aid, medical supplies, fuel, and other basic needs for survival, as [reported](#) by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on a near-daily basis. Israeli authorities open and close crossings at will and reject humanitarian convoys, sometimes outright without justification, at other times spuriously claiming “double-use” application. They also restrict what supplies may be brought in on what day and in what quantities and limit passage to lengthy and damaged routes that require onerous offloading and reloading.

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to ensuring that Israel allows full, unhindered and unrestricted humanitarian access at scale, in line with its legal obligations, and that it observes its obligations not to starve the civilian population.

## **(6) Prevention of and accountability for genocide**

Pending the completion of its ongoing case “*Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*”, the ICJ, in early 2024, [ordered](#) binding provisional measures to mitigate the actual or potential commission of genocide. These measures have not been implemented. In September 2025, moreover, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, mandated by the Human Rights Council, [found](#) that Israel “bears responsibility for the failure to prevent genocide, the commission of genocide and the failure to punish genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.” The Commission concluded that the only reasonable inference that could be drawn on the basis of Israel’s conduct is that it has acted with genocidal intent.

Despite this finding, the international community has largely failed to undertake appropriate measures in line with the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This failure to act in the face of actual or potential genocide risks irreparable harm to the Palestinian people, and equally risks fatally undermining the force of applicable international law and the strength of norms against genocide. In April 2026, nearly seven months after its initial

finding that Israel had committed genocide, the Commission [warned](#) that “Israel continues to perpetrate genocidal acts in Gaza.”

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to:

- encouraging Israel to implement the binding provisional measures ordered by the ICJ; and
- encouraging the international community to observe its obligations under the Genocide Convention.

### **(7) Ending settler violence, preventing the annexation of the West Bank, and combating racial discrimination and segregation**

In the West Bank, settler violence, often with the explicit or tacit support of Israeli security forces, has intensified since October 2023 and accelerated in recent weeks and months. Settlers and security forces perpetrate exceptionally cruel violence against Palestinian families, killing and beating, destroying homes and infrastructure, forcibly displacing thousands, imposing movement restrictions, and obstructing medical services. Seventeen independent experts mandated by the Human Rights Council recently [warned](#) of “settler terrorism,” and affirmed that Israel is pursuing the ethnic cleansing of the West Bank. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has reported that, between 1 January 2026 and 9 April 2026, Israeli settlers perpetrated an average of six attacks per day against Palestinian communities in the West Bank. In all, since October 2023, more than 1,000 Palestinian civilians have been killed in the West Bank, a quarter of them children.

Concurrently, in contempt of the ICJ and General Assembly, Israel has intensified land expropriations throughout the West Bank, with the apparent intent of annexing it. Furthermore, as [determined](#) by the ICJ, Israel enforces a regime of systemic discrimination against Palestinians in the West Bank, in violation of several treaties to which Israel is Party, including the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). “There is a systematic asphyxiation of the rights of Palestinians,” the High Commissioner for Human Rights [said](#) recently. “This is a particularly severe form of racial discrimination and segregation, that resembles the kind of apartheid system we have seen before.”

Should you become Secretary-General, we hope that you would help to mobilize and support Member States with a view to:

- urgently ending State-backed settler violence in the West Bank;
- preventing further land seizures and ensuring that Israel does not unlawfully annex the West Bank; and
- encouraging Israel to respect its binding obligations under the ICERD.