

Monday 22 September 2025

## **Joint civil society statement on Australia's recognition of Palestine**

Overnight, at the United Nations General Assembly, Australia formally recognised the state of Palestine, joining the 147 UN member states that had already done so.

The international community's support for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state based on justice, equality, and the will of the Palestinian people is essential. Palestinians have a right to live freely and with dignity.

While we welcome Australia's recognition of Palestine, it is no substitute for the urgent and meaningful action that Australia must take to uphold its moral and legal obligations to prevent further atrocities against the Palestinian people, and to avoid complicity in the war crimes Israel is committing.

Just last week, the 'United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel' found that Israel is responsible for the commission of genocide in Gaza. This follows the International Association of Genocide Scholars resolution passed earlier this month that stated that Israel's policies and actions in Gaza fulfil the definition of genocide set out in the 1948 United Nations Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In January 2024, the International Court of Justice found that Israel's actions plausibly amount to genocide. These findings underpin the increasingly urgent calls from Palestinians, UN experts, genocide scholars and human rights organisations for the international community to uphold its legal obligations and intervene.

Throughout this conflict, Israel has repeatedly, illegally and systematically, prevented humanitarian access to Gaza. Israel has blocked aid crossings, allowing almost no aid to enter Gaza since the start of March 2025. It has created preventable famine-level conditions that are putting millions of lives at risk.

By conservative estimates, since October 2023, the Israeli military has killed over 61,000 people in its deadly assault on Gaza. According to Israel's own data, [83% of these people have been civilians](#), including at least [17,400 children](#).

Israel's hostilities have also resulted in the highest known death tolls among journalists and health and humanitarian workers in any conflict zone. Palestinian staff have accounted for [98% of aid worker fatalities](#).

Despite the International Court of Justice ruling its occupation and settlements as illegal, and the United Nations General Assembly resolution ordering Israel's withdrawal by 18 September 2025, Israel has made no attempt to end its occupation of Palestine. To the contrary, it has approved major expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank in the period since the United Nations resolution.

Israel's military aggression is unprecedented, grossly disproportionate, and unjustifiable. It is in flagrant breach of international law.

The international community, including Australia, has obligations under the Genocide Convention, International Humanitarian Law and the Arms Trade Treaty to hold Israel to account for its violations.

As Israel escalates its military offensive on Gaza City and displaces hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians, we reiterate our call to the Australian Government to show leadership and demand justice for the people of Palestine. Words are not enough. Australia must move beyond mere rhetoric and condemnation of Israel's actions and take steps to uphold its international legal obligations. It must utilise every political, diplomatic and economic channel available to:

- Continue to demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire and the immediate release of all Israeli hostages and unlawfully detained Palestinians.
- Take action to uphold international law and back international accountability mechanisms, including the International Court of Justice and broader accountability measures.
- Halt transfer of lethal weapons and military support to Israel to ensure Australia is not complicit in crimes committed in illegally occupied Palestinian territory.
- Apply full diplomatic pressure to restore principled, safe, unimpeded and sustained access to humanitarian relief in Gaza via a return to UN-led aid delivery mechanism grounded in humanitarian law.
- Advocate for a political solution that ends Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine, lifts the blockade on Gaza and respects Palestinian right to self-determination.

