

Permanent Observer Miss
of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations

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deplorable situation is corroborated by numerous UN reports, including the Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict, which documents the devastating impact of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian children and their extreme vulnerability. Yet over the decades and despite the calls for protection, Palestinian civilians have been deprived of effective protection from such systematic violations and crimes.

The international community has clear responsibilities, particularly High Contracting Parties to the 4th Geneva Convention, which must be upheld. Protection should not be viewed as unreasonable or unimaginable by any party that respects the law and human rights and seeks peace. Civilians, women and men must not be used as cannon fodder and all efforts must be made to spare them the atrocities of war and protect their lives. As a State Party to the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols, the State of Palestine requests the Government of Switzerland, in its capacity as the Depositary of the Geneva Conventions, to convene a meeting of the High Contracting Parties to consider measures to enforce the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including measures to provide protection to the Palestinian people due to the grave breaches of the provisions of the Conventions being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, and to assess and evaluate the implementation of the Declaration adopted by the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention of 17 December 2014.

Moreover, the State of Palestine reiterates its call on the international community to consider providing the Palestinian people with protection in Occupied Palestine including East Jerusalem, until the end of occupation and the independence of the State of Palestine. In this connection, we also highlight the essential role that can be played by humanitarian organizations, as well as civil society, in providing protective civilian presence.

For the Palestinian people, this call is more urgent than ever in an unsustainable and dangerous situation still requiring sustained international attention and action. We implore the international community to rise to the challenge and act to protect civilians and uphold human rights in Palestine and everywhere else in the world where innocent civilians are suffering in conflicts and to restore credibility to IHL and strengthen it for the benefit of the international community as a whole.

Thank you.