

JOINT STATEMENT – APPEAL

Athens, 25 October 2023

Even war has rules – Almost half of the dead are children: over [2,000](#) have already been killed and thousands more children will live with disabilities and mental health issues due to war-inflicted trauma. The blatant disregard for civilians' right to life and protection cannot be accepted.

Child Rights Advocacy Network (CRAN) and the co-signatory Civil Society Organisations express their dismay at the killing, maiming and abduction of children, as well as attacks on schools and on essential civilian infrastructure such as hospitals, water and electricity and the denial - until recently - of humanitarian support to children and civilians in the war that is still raging in Gaza and Israel.

Thirty-four years since the adoption of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and seventy-four years since the [Fourth Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War](#), recent images from Israel and Gaza demonstrate in the most brutal way that children remain the truly innocent victims on every side and in any case.

The bombing of the Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza on 17/10/2023, where [hundreds of people](#), mainly children, were being treated or had taken refuge, the military-armed attacks on schools and places of worship, capturing of children, their forced participation in armed groups and forced displacement together with other illegal practices of regular and irregular military groups are undoubtedly violating children's rights and the international law of war. Such a flagrant violation of the established rights of children stands against everything the international community and the representatives of states have agreed in international treaties, depriving children of their future.

We hereby appeal to the **international community for immediate intervention** to bring about an **immediate ceasefire** and to **ensure peace** in the region.

We also call on all parties involved in the conflict to act to fulfill their obligations to protect children and other civilians, **regardless of their race, gender, nationality, religion, or political opinion** (Article 3 of the 4th Geneva Convention), and in particular to ensure that:

- The **wounded and sick are cared for**
- The **civilian population, in particular children and pregnant and nursing women, are protected, provided with medical care, adequate food, water and shelter**

In addition, it is noted that:

- Blocking access to water, food, electricity, fuel, medicine, and other items necessary for the survival of civilians **is prohibited by international humanitarian law**
- Attacking essential civilian infrastructure constitutes **a war crime**

- The **immediate dispatch of humanitarian aid** based on the recommendations and needs identified by the UN bodies is urgent
- The **maintenance and expansion of humanitarian channels for the protection of children and civilians, with the active involvement and assistance of the EU, is imperative.**

Civil Society Organisations – CRAN members and other cosignatories CSOs:

1. *ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth*
2. *Better Days Greece*
3. *Changemakers Lab*
4. *ELIX – Conservation Volunteers Greece*
5. *Greek Council for Refugees*
6. *Network for Children’s Rights*
7. *Schedia (Raft) -Center for Artistic and Pedagogical Training*
8. *SolidarityNow*
9. *Safe Passage International AMKE*
10. *Samos Volunteers*
11. *Defence for Children International Greece (DCI Greece)*
12. *World Without Wars and Violence*
13. *HumanRights360*
14. *Yoga and Sport with Refugees*
15. *Greek Forum of Migrants*
16. *Equal Rights Beyond Borders*
17. *Action for Women*
18. *Symbiosis-Council of Europe School of Political Studies in Greece*
19. *Hellenic League for Human Rights*
20. *Dråpen I havet / Σταγόνα*
21. *Irida Women's Center*

22. *Diotima - Center for Gender Rights and Equality*

23. *Jesuit Refugee Service Greece (JRS)*

24. *Association of Greek Conscientious Objectors*