

# UN Human Rights Office Says IDF's Deadly Nuseirat Raid May Amount to War Crime

Israeli forces killed at least 274 Palestinians in the refugee camp on Saturday while conducting an operation to save four hostages.

By [Julia Conley](#)

Global Research, June 12, 2024

[Common Dreams](#) 11 June 2024

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [United Nations](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the Translate Website button below the author's name (only available in desktop version).

To receive Global Research's Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Click the share button above to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

[Give Truth a Chance. Secure Your Access to Unchained News, Donate to Global Research.](#)

\*\*\*

*Citing the "principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution" that international humanitarian law demands military forces obey, the United Nations' top human rights office on Tuesday said the raid conducted at Nuseirat refugee camp in [Gaza](#) by the [Israel](#) Defense Forces over the weekend may amount to a war crime.*

The IDF conducted the operation at the camp in the central Gaza Strip in order to free four Israeli hostages who were kidnapped by Hamas on October 7, and Jeremy Laurence, spokesperson for the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) [told reporters](#) their release was "clearly very good news."

But the OHCHR, Laurence said, is "profoundly shocked at the impact on civilians of the Israeli forces' operation," which killed at least 274 Palestinians, including 64 children and 57 women, [according to](#) the [Palestine](#) Red Crescent Society.

"The manner in which the raid was conducted in such a densely populated area seriously calls into question whether the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution—as set out under the laws of war—were respected by the Israeli forces," said Laurence in a statement.

Actions by both the IDF and Hamas, he added, "may amount to war crimes."

As it has since beginning its bombardment of Gaza in October in retaliation for a Hamas-led attack on southern Israel, the IDF blamed the civilian casualties on Saturday on the militant

group, saying the hundreds of deaths were the result of Hamas operating in the densely populated Nuseirat camp.

But while Laurence said the OHCHR was “deeply distressed” by Hamas’ capture of hostages and its operating in densely populated areas, Rutgers Law School professor Adil Haque concurred with the office that Israel is obligated to protect civilian lives in Gaza regardless of Hamas’ conduct.

“The fact that your adversary is breaking international humanitarian law does not change your obligations,” Haque [told](#) *The Washington Post*. “The foreseeable harm to civilians was disproportionate to the legitimate aim of rescuing the four hostages.”

Eyewitnesses and aid groups have said the attack began in broad daylight and [started](#) after IDF soldiers entered the camp in a humanitarian aid truck. The operation was carried out with jets, drones, and tanks and included strikes in the vicinity of a maternity clinic that has been converted to a hospital to help care for people wounded in Israeli attacks since October.

Paramedic Abdel Hamid Ghorab told the *Post* he witnessed “random and continuous bombing in the vicinity of the hospital with unprecedented intensity.”

“All they cared about was carrying out the operation, even if it was at the expense of all these lives,” said Ghorab.

Israeli lawyer Michael Sfard told the *Post* that the 274 casualties “is enough to raise questions about whether the use of fire was indiscriminate,” which would be a violation of international humanitarian law.

“Was the air power used on a prospected military objective, or was it a random, indiscriminate use of bombardment in a very densely populated area?” he asked.

As the OHCHR made its statement, Writers Against the War on Gaza condemned *The New York Times*’ publication of “a whitewashed puff piece on the Nuseirat refugee camp massacre,” authored by former IDF soldier Ronen Bergman, which they said was aimed at dehumanizing Palestinian civilians while including no context about potential war crimes by the IDF.



**The New York War Crimes**  
@nywarcrimes

We will also note, again, that imagery is critical to dehumanization. 274 Palestinians murdered and the cover image of this article is two smiling Israelis.



**The New York War Crimes** @nywarcrimes · Jun 10

Propaganda lives through imagery just as much as language.

The @nytimes front page today: smiling Israeli hostage (referenced by name), accompanied by triumphant soldiers. Headline devoted to rescue "mission," while 300 murdered Palestinians are relegated to a footnote.



[Click here to read the tweet on X](#)

“The framing of this article, typical of *New York Times* coverage of the massacre, foregrounds four (alive) Israelis over hundreds of dead Palestinians, and presents the IDF as swashbuckling heroes,” the group wrote on the X account of its project, The New York War Crimes. “This prefigures the reader to accept the justification for IDF butchery.”

From *Common Dreams*: Our work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0). Feel free to republish and share widely.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share button above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

*Julia Conley is a staff writer for Common Dreams.*

*Featured image: Palestinians survey the debris after Israeli warplanes attacked the Nuseirat camp [Ashraf Amra/Anadolu]*

The original source of this article is [Common Dreams](#)

Copyright © [Julia Conley](#), [Common Dreams](#), 2024

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Julia Conley](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)