

**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC
LAWYERS CALLS ON THE UNITED NATIONS TO
TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF GAZA**

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) representing lawyers and jurists in over 100 countries and with consultative status with the United Nations, ECOSOC and UNICEF has on December 29, 2008 condemned the Israeli aggression against the people of the Gaza Strip. The IADL has called for the international community to stop any further aggression, and take action to hold Israel accountable for its war crimes.

It has been a week since the air assault has begun and a ground invasion is threatened. The United Nations has thus far failed to pass a binding resolution to end the hostilities. The United States has shown its complicity in Israel's aggression by its refusal to endorse an immediate cease fire. The United States has thus ensured that the Security Council will not be able to pass the necessary resolutions and is intentionally allowing for the continued aggression against the people of Gaza with untold death and destruction.

Israel's bombing violates the Geneva Conventions in at least the following ways: (1) it constitutes collective punishment of the entire 1.5 million people in Gaza for the acts of a few militants; (2) it targets civilians in one of the most densely populated areas of the world; and (3) it is a disproportionate response as evidenced by the hundreds of Gazans who have been killed; when Israel started bombing Gaza, no one had been killed by the rockets in more than a year. Moreover, Israel's sealing off of the Gazan border has caused severe shortages of food, medicine and fuel, and made it impossible for doctors and ambulances to reach the injured.

IADL therefore calls upon the General Assembly to act pursuant to Resolution 377 to pass a uniting for peace resolution. IADL further calls on the General Assembly to create a special tribunal under Article 22 of the Charter to investigate and punish Israeli war crimes and those complicit with these crimes. IADL further urges the Human Rights Council to send a high level fact finding mission to Gaza to investigate the extent of the humanitarian crisis which exists in Gaza.

If the above referenced actions are not taken, international law and the credibility of the UN will be greatly damaged.

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Jitendra Sharma, President

Jeanne Mirer, Secretary General