



## PRESS RELEASE

### Escalation of violence in the Middle East: ASF calls for the respect for international law and the protection of civilians

**13 October 2023**

Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) expresses its deep concern and alarm at the unprecedented escalation of violence in the Middle East, where hundreds of civilian victims, including children, have tragically lost their lives since the 7 October 2023. ASF recalls that this escalation of violence is part of a history of serious human rights violations in the occupied territories, Israel's occupation and annexation policy and its failure to comply with international law, including international humanitarian law and United Nations treaties and resolutions on the right of peoples to self-determination.

ASF condemns the war crimes that are unquestionably being committed against civilian populations. None of these crimes must go unpunished as the International Criminal Court is competent to judge any war crimes committed by either side.

The forced displacement of more than 200,000 people and the call by the Israeli authorities to displace more than a million Gazans, the excessive and disproportionate use of force, the indiscriminate bombardment of the civilian population by Israeli forces, and the blockade hampering the distribution of humanitarian aid are creating a humanitarian crisis on an unprecedented scale.

ASF calls on international leaders to do their utmost to ensure the protection of civilians and to guarantee essential humanitarian aid by maintaining aid to the Palestinian population in Gaza and facilitating humanitarian corridors immediately.

#### Press contact

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