

# ISRAEL'S UNLAWFUL SHUT DOWN OF PALESTINIAN NGOS



## ACHRS STATEMENT |

***Israeli armed forces entered the premises of 7 Palestinian organizations from the civil society and proceeded with forced closures and confiscations. This follows a declaration by Israel's defense minister Benny Gantz stating that Israeli law now classified these organizations as terrorists. ACHRS expresses its solidarity with the targeted NGOs and calls for an immediate and unequivocal reaction from the International Community.***

On 18 August, the Israeli army confirmed the closure of 7 Palestinian civil organizations after the designation of some of these groups as terrorist associations had passed into law.

Organizations were raided by the armed forces and materials were confiscated. The organizations targeted by these arbitrary raids were: Al Haq, Addameer, the Bisan Center for Research and Development, Defense for Children International- Palestine, the Union of Palestinian women's committees, the Union of agricultural work committee, and the Union of Health Workers Committees.

These attacks on the Palestinian civil society were strongly disapproved by most of the western powers. The United Nations Human Rights office stated that "Despite offers to do so, Israeli authorities have not presented any credible evidence to justify these declarations ». Besides, foreign ministries of western countries including France and Denmark have stated that they will continue working with the targeted NGOs since they were no verified proof that they were involved in any terrorist activities.

ACHRS strongly approves of this line of conduct but still deplores the lack of stronger condemnation of Israel's unlawful actions.

This is a clear breach of freedom of association and freedom of expression. These forced closures and confiscations are symptoms of the occupation Palestinians are forced to live under. ACHRS denounces yet another operation by Israeli forces aimed at preventing their abuses on Palestinians to be documented and shared.

Tahkeem Aylan the director of AL Haq spoke to Middle East Eye and mentioned that ever since his organization started sending reports of Israel's abuses towards Palestinians to the International Criminal Court the attacks against them have intensified.

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ACHRS points out that this highlights Israel's commitment to silencing Palestinians and preventing them from standing up for themselves and organizing any type of resistance against the occupier.

In this case, there was no threat or violence from the NGOs and the Israeli armed forces nevertheless entered their premises. ACHRS denounces disproportionate use of force against a population without means of defense or response.

ACHRS emphasizes that the work of these NGOs had no proven link to terrorism and therefore reiterates its full support to the Palestinian NGOs arbitrarily raided by Israeli forces and expresses deep concern that fake accusations of terrorism can justify such a blatant violation of Palestinian rights to association, representation, and human rights defense.

ACHRS expresses its deep solidarity with the human rights defenders wrongly accused of terrorism whilst using their voices to advocate for justice.