

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP  
Senator the Hon Penny Wong  
The Hon Richard Marles MP

By email:

A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au  
Attorney@ag.gov.au  
Foreign.Minister@dfat.gov.au  
Richard.Marles.MP@aph.gov.au

16 February 2024

Dear Prime Minister, Attorney-General and Ministers,

**Australian Government must do all in its power to prevent genocide against Palestinian people by Israel**

We write with an urgent call to your government to take further steps to influence Israel to avoid catastrophic harm caused by its imminent military operation in Rafah.

As a party to the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, Australia must employ all reasonable measures to prevent genocide wherever it may occur. While we welcome the joint statement issued by Australia, New Zealand and Canada on 14 February 2024, recognising the imminent risk of such an operation, Australia's legal obligation demands further action.

The International Court of Justice on 26 January 2024 recognised the plausibility that Israel's actions, to that date, may constitute genocide and made interim orders to prevent irreparable harm to Palestinians in Gaza. The actions of the Government of Israel and its defence forces since those orders have further amplified the risk of genocide. The culmination of those actions is the planned incursion into Rafah, where humanitarian reports indicate some 1.5 million Palestinians are now sheltering.

This warrants immediate, decisive action by all parties to the Genocide Convention. We urge your government to:

- immediately cease all military exports or other military assistance to the Israeli Government, including terminating all contracts with the Israeli Defense Force and related contractors;
- immediately restore aid to humanitarian agencies operating in Gaza, including UNRWA, and support the international community's efforts to ensure the effective delivery of aid;
- robustly investigate anyone in Australia who may be responsible for international crimes, including those participating in military activities in Gaza, and unequivocally support international accountability mechanisms with jurisdiction over the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the UN Independent Commission of Inquiry, the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

While necessary, neither diplomatic pressure, nor decisions by international legal bodies, have been sufficient to halt Israel's indiscriminate assault on the population in Gaza. Australian citizens and permanent residents are among the populations in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In addition to supporting multilateral efforts to seek peace and ensure full accountability for all parties responsible for international crimes and violations of human rights law, Australia can do more. Australia's continuing obligation to avoid any acts facilitating the risk of genocide requires particular scrutiny when it involves a State with which Australia has a close relationship. Australian weapons and military funding must not be used to contribute to a possible genocide.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss immediate action Australia must take.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Reiger', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Caitlin Reiger**  
Chief Executive Officer