

UN Report Accuses Israel of War Crimes

Contributed by Egypt News
Tuesday, 29 September 2009

A scathing United Nations report accuses Israel of war crimes in its military offensive into Gaza, according to nbcbayarea.com

The report claims that the Israeli Defense Forces "failed to take feasible precautions required by international law to avoid or minimize loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects." The U.N. report also said Israel fired on hospitals using high-explosive artillery shells, and failed to provide effective warnings to civilians or U.N. workers before attacks.

Palestinian officials praised the report, in which a U.N. group accused Israel of committing "actions amounting to war crimes, possibly crimes against humanity" during its military incursion into Gaza from last December 27 to January 18.

The group, called the U.N. Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, is headed by South African judge Richard Goldstone.

"The lack of accountability for war crimes and possible crimes against humanity has reached a crisis point," Goldstone said Tuesday. "This is the time of action."

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Aharon Leshno-Yaar called the report shameful.

"This report is based on carefully picked incidents, cherry picked for political effect," Leshno Yaar said. "The authors of this fact-finding report had little thought about finding facts."

Representatives from several nations, such as Russia, Cuba and Egypt, also applauded the report. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Michael Posner said some of the recommendations in the report were "deeply flawed" and called for Israel and Palestinian authorities to be allowed to finish conducting their own investigations before passing judgment.

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