



58th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council,

ITEM 4: General Debate - Human rights issues that require urgent attention of the Human Rights Council

20 March 2025

Joint Oral statement delivered by: Caritas Internationalis

Mr. President,

Caritas and New Humanity strongly condemn the resumption of airstrikes on Gaza, on March 18, resulting in the tragic loss of more than 400 people¹, further displacement and widespread terror among the civilian population.

This is the largest violation of the fragile temporary ceasefire agreed in January and constitutes grave breach of international law.

The situation is further exacerbated by a full blockade of humanitarian aid and the continued closure of the Rafah crossing since March 2, which increase the risk of mass starvation in Gaza.

We continue to witness unacceptable disrespect for international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the conduct of hostilities, and total disregard for human life and dignity.

The resumption of airstrikes is deeply concerning and we call on the responsibility of this Council to ensure that all concerned parties comply fully with their obligations under international law to prevent further loss of life and ensure the protection of all civilians and humanitarian workers.

The international community must strongly condemn these attacks and all available diplomatic channels must be used to bring an end to the violence, ensure each phase of the ceasefire is fully implemented and allow critical aid to be delivered to all those in need.

Mr. President

We call for an immediate ceasefire and for full, safe, unimpeded access to humanitarian aid;

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-military-conducts-strikes-hamas-targets-gaza-army-says-2025-03-18/>

We also urge all parties to honour their obligations under international humanitarian law and to take all necessary measures to fulfill their duty to protect civilian lives and to refrain from targeting civil objects and populated areas.