



Coordinating Committee for
International Staff Unions and Associations

Geneva, 17 October 2023

Dear President of the General Assembly,

Dear Secretary-General,

On behalf of the United Nations Common System Staff Unions and Associations of the CCISUA Federation, we would like to express our deep concern with the current situation in Gaza.

At the time of writing, we mourn the lives of at least **fourteen of our colleagues** killed, in an indiscriminate and pervasive bombing campaign. While recognizing the necessity for all of us to be on the frontline to help those in need, there is nothing that can justify the loss of these lives.

Other colleagues and their families remain trapped in Gaza with no access to power, water or food, facing impossible demands, while courageously risking their lives to care for the civilian population.

We call on you and member states to do more to stop the escalation of this conflict, ensure better protection of civilians and the humanitarian community, and to pursue accountability for the killing of UN staff.

We note that according to Article 8(2)(b)(iii) and (e)(iii) of the 1998 ICC Statute, “[i]ntentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict” constitutes a war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts.

Similarly, we note that the protection of humanitarian personnel in both international and non-international armed conflict is a general obligation under international customary law. This is reflected in Article 71(2) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 as well as Rule 31 of the ICRC- Customary IHL Study.

We also consider that an independent review of the obligations of member states to protect national and international UN staff is warranted.

We close this message sharing our collective grief for all lives lost in this war.

Respectfully,

Nathalie Meynet
President CCISUA