

Mr. Volker Turk
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

With respect, I hereby convey to Your Excellency my serious concerns regarding the recent military attacks by the Zionist regime on media, health facilities and residential areas in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which are a clear example of a violation of the fundamental principles of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as follows:

On June 19, 2025, the Zionist regime's armed forces deliberately targeted the News building of the Broadcasting Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tehran by firing missiles at it. This attack destroyed part of the country's media facilities, disrupted the functioning of information, and in some cases killed and injured media personnel who were not directly involved in military operations at the time of the attack. In other attacks, the regime has also carried out indiscriminate attacks on health centers, the Red Crescent building, and residential areas.

According to well-known principles of the international human rights law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, this action violates the Zionist regime's obligations to respect and guarantee fundamental human rights, including the right to life (Article 6), the right to security of individuals (Article 9), and freedom of expression and access to information (Article 19). Attacking media facilities, especially in the absence of any credible evidence of military use, is a serious violation of obligations under international human rights instruments and a dangerous attempt to silence the voice of the media and prevent citizens from freely accessing public information.

Also, considering the current state of armed conflict between Iran and the Zionist regime and based on the principles of international humanitarian law as embodied in the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the First Additional Protocol of 1977, this attack violates the fundamental rules of this legal system, including the principle of distinction between military and civilian targets and the principle of proportionality in the use of force. Media, health and civilian facilities are subject to

special protection against attack as long as they do not directly and effectively participate in military operations. Targeting them without providing any legal and factual reason for their lack of civilian status is not only illegal, but can also be considered a war crime within the framework of Article 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Given the importance of the issue and the special responsibility of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in monitoring and responding to serious human rights violations, it is hereby requested that the above-mentioned issue be placed under an independent and official investigation. It is appropriate that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in addition to officially registering this violation, prepare the ground for its referral to the relevant mechanisms of the Human Rights Council and call on the relevant country and thematic Special Rapporteurs to conduct a field investigation into the human and legal dimensions of this incident. Also, please make an official request to the Zionist regime to hold it accountable for this attack and its devastating effects on civilian lives and media freedom.

The violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the Zionist regime's attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran are presented as follows:

Part One: Violations of Human Rights

1. The Right to Life

The right to life is the most important and inviolable human right, enshrined in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as a fundamental inherent right. This right guarantees that no one shall be arbitrarily or unlawfully deprived of life. This principle is the basis of any human rights order and the foundation of human values. The killing of hundreds of people in recent attacks, without regard to the principle of separation, indicates a serious violation of the right to life as a result of the attacks by the Zionist regime.

The attacks on News building of the Broadcasting Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is a gathering place for civilians, media workers, and journalists; the Kermanshah Hospital, which is a place to care for the sick and injured in crisis situations; and the Red Crescent building in Tehran, which is a vital center for providing relief to the injured, represent a severe violation of this right. These attacks have resulted in civilian deaths and injuries and demonstrate a blatant disregard for the protection of human life.

On the other hand, these behaviors are contrary to the international obligations of states, which are responsible for protecting the lives of those under their jurisdiction. Damaging civilian sites that play no role in military activities, in addition to destroying vital infrastructure, undermines public trust in the legal system and severely undermines the psychological security of society.

2. The right to physical and mental security

The right to physical and mental security includes not only the protection of life but also the protection of the mental health of individuals. The repeated threat of bombing people's homes and the creation of an atmosphere of mental terror have caused anxiety, chronic fear and widespread mental disorders. This situation can have long-term consequences on the mental health of society, which are very difficult to rebuild.

The use of psychological pressure and repeated threats against civilians constitutes psychological torture and inhuman treatment, which is prohibited under Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 7 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention against Torture. In particular, targeting civilian areas without regard to psychological consequences is strongly condemned from a human rights perspective.

Attacks on medical and aid facilities not only threaten the physical health of individuals, but also directly damage their mental health, as the sick and injured lose access to essential care and their families are exposed to anxiety and despair.

3. The right to health care

The right to access health care is a fundamental principle of economic, social and cultural rights, explicitly stated in Article 12 of the Covenant. This right is of particular importance in times of crisis and war, as the sick and injured require immediate and continuous care.

The Zionist regime's attacks on Kermanshah Hospital and the Red Crescent building in Tehran have resulted in the destruction or temporary closure of these vital centers, which has limited the access to health care for the affected population and has effectively increased the loss of life and prolonged the suffering of patients.

In addition to physical damage, these attacks disrupt the delivery of aid, demoralize medical staff and patients and increase pressure on the country's health infrastructure. Governments are obligated under international law to maintain these services even in times of conflict, and any attack on them is a clear violation of human rights.

4. The right to freedom of expression and access to information

The right to freedom of expression and access to information, guaranteed in Article 19 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, is essential for maintaining transparency, political participation and crisis management. As the main source of public and media information, the IRIB News building plays an important role in informing the public about security conditions, relief efforts and the general situation in the country.

The attack on this building and the disruption of the information process deprives the public of vital and accurate information and exacerbates the atmosphere of insecurity, rumour-mongering and confusion. This action not only violates the right to freedom of expression, but also indirectly harms the public and psychological security of society. The attack also creates fear and anxiety among journalists and media workers and disrupts the free activity of the media.

5. Prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

Article 7 of the ICCPR and the Convention against Torture prohibits all forms of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Repeated threats to bomb residential areas and inflict psychological terror on people, constitute psychological torture and inhuman treatment that seriously undermines mental health and human dignity.

This form of intimidation, constant psychological pressure and widespread fear has a destructive effect on society, leading to a decline in public trust and creating social divisions. These acts are contrary to all human rights principles and international norms and must be prosecuted and condemned.

6. The right to safe housing

The right to safe housing, according to Article 11 of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, means having safe, stable and adequate shelter in which individuals enjoy physical and psychological security.

Widespread attacks on residential homes have caused widespread destruction of living spaces, homelessness, displacement and the loss of basic security for individuals. In addition to personal damage, this destruction has very deep social and economic consequences. Also, threatening people with bombing their homes when these individuals have no other suitable place to settle, in addition to violating the right to safe housing, causes psychological harm to these individuals and can be considered as elements of torture and other inhumane treatment.

These actions also disrupt the social, cultural and economic fabric of society and, from a human rights perspective, are a clear violation of the obligations of governments to maintain security and human dignity.

Part Two: Violations of Humanitarian Law (Laws of War)

1. The Principle of Distinction

The principle of distinction is a fundamental pillar of humanitarian law, clearly stated in Article 48 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. It is based on the principle that parties to a conflict are obliged to distinguish strictly between military and civilian persons and objects in all their military actions. It is designed to protect civilians and civilian objects and to ensure that military operations are directed solely at legitimate military objectives. Attacks on persons or objects not directly involved in military operations are unlawful and may be prosecuted as war crimes.

The attack on IRIB News Building, which serves as a vital civilian center for public information and is staffed primarily by civilian personnel, is a clear violation of the principle of distinction. Similarly, Kermanshah Hospital and Tehran Red Crescent Building, which are recognized as relief and medical centers and whose activities are entirely civilian, have been targeted as military targets. These attacks demonstrate a lack of distinction between military and civilian targets and a failure to observe the principle of distinction, which is contrary to the humanitarian law obligations of the parties to the conflict and has resulted in unnecessary and widespread civilian casualties and harm.

2. Principle of Proportionality

The principle of proportionality, reflected in Article 51(5)(b) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, requires that collateral damage to civilians and civilian objects in the course of a military attack should not disproportionately exceed the anticipated military advantage. This principle is designed to prevent unnecessary harm to civilians and ensures that any military action must be accompanied by humanitarian considerations and respect for moral restraints. Parties to the conflict must make a fair and accurate assessment of the consequences of their attacks and seek to minimize civilian harm.

The attacks on Kermanshah Hospital and Tehran Red Crescent Building, vital centers for saving lives and providing medical services, are not considered legitimate military objectives. The bombing of the IRIB News building, which has a direct impact on the lives of civilians and staff, is also unjustifiable under this principle. On the other hand, the threat and bombing of residential buildings where civilians live results in extensive human and material damage that is not comparable to any military advantage and is a clear violation of the principle of proportionality.

3. The principle of precautionary measures

The principle of precautionary measures is set out in detail in Article 57 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and emphasizes that parties to a conflict must, in planning and carrying out military attacks, take all feasible measures to minimize harm to civilians and civilian objects. This principle encompasses a number of measures, including careful examination of military objectives, selection of methods of attack with the least collateral damage, giving civilians sufficient warning before an attack, and finally taking measures to protect their lives and property. These requirements are intended to prevent unnecessary damage and to preserve human dignity.

In attacks on residential buildings in Tehran and other areas, the repeated threat of bombing people's homes without providing adequate warning or the possibility of evacuation is a clear violation of the principle of precautionary measures. This demonstrates a complete disregard for the rights and security of civilians and a violation of international obligations. Also, the failure to take adequate protective measures in the attacks on Kermanshah Hospital and the Red Crescent building has led to unnecessary casualties and irreparable harm to the affected individuals.

4. Protection of medical and relief facilities

The protection of medical facilities, hospitals and relief organizations is a fundamental principle of humanitarian law, as reflected in Article 18 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols. These facilities must be protected

in all circumstances from any attack or military use, unless they are clearly being misused for military purposes. The purpose of this rule is to ensure the continuation of medical, relief and humanitarian activities in wartime in order to reduce injuries and suffering caused by the conflict.

The attack on Kermanshah Hospital and the Red Crescent building in Tehran, despite the role these facilities play in saving patients' lives and providing medical services, is a gross violation of this principle. These attacks have led to the temporary or permanent closure of these facilities and disrupted vital services to the sick and injured. In addition to the loss of life and material damage, this action has increased the vulnerability of the affected population, reduced the country's relief and health capacity, and exacerbated humanitarian crises.

5. Prohibition of threat and violence against civilians

According to Article 51(2) of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions, threats, intimidation and acts of violence against civilians are expressly prohibited. This rule has been established to maintain the security and peace of mind of society and to prevent unnecessary harm.

In the recent attacks by the Zionist regime on Iran, the repeated threats of bombing residential buildings, in addition to creating an atmosphere of widespread terror and severe psychological distress, are considered a form of psychological violence that has severely threatened the mental health and security of civilians. This method of threatening and exerting psychological pressure is contrary to human rights and humanitarian principles and can be considered as illegal behavior and a war crime.

In addition to having long-term and destructive effects on the mental health of individuals, this behavior also leads to the destruction of society's trust in maintaining security and peace and severely disrupts the post-crisis reconstruction process.

6. Prohibition of Indiscriminate Attacks

Article 51(4) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions prohibits indiscriminate attacks, that is, attacks that fail to distinguish between military and civilian targets or that cause unacceptable and widespread collateral damage to civilians.

The widespread bombing of residential areas and the constant threat of destruction of civilian homes are clear examples of this type of attack. Such actions not only cause widespread loss of life and damage to civilian property, but are also clear violations of the fundamental principles of humanitarian law and international humanitarian regulations.

Such indiscriminate attacks directly and seriously threaten the safety and lives of civilians and have widespread humanitarian and social consequences that take years to recover from.

7. Criminal liability for violations of humanitarian law

Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines intentional or indiscriminate attacks against civilians, the bombing of medical facilities, and widespread threats as war crimes. According to this article, those who commit these violations, including military commanders and direct executors, can be subject to international criminal prosecution.

This criminal liability demonstrates the importance of strict compliance with the rules of humanitarian law and paves the way for ensuring justice for victims and preventing the repetition of violations. It also demonstrates the moral and legal obligation of the parties to the conflict to protect the rights of civilians and adhere to international law.

In the recent attacks by the Zionist regime on Iran, numerous cases of violations of humanitarian law can be counted that can be prosecuted as war crimes,

including attacks on hospitals, aid centers, and civilian homes, which are in violation of international obligations and whose leaders must be held accountable.

8. Protection of journalists and the media

According to Article 79 of the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, as well as the interpretations of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by human rights institutions, civilian journalists present in conflict zones are entitled to full protection as civilians, provided that they do not directly participate in hostilities.

The direct attack on the IRIB News building, where journalists, cameramen, editors, technical and editorial staff were working, in addition to violating the principle of separation, is a clear violation of international obligations to protect the media and journalists. Such an action has not only endangered the lives of journalists, but also prevented the free activity of the media in providing timely and documented information about current developments and has imposed an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship on the media environment.

International organizations such as the Committee to Protect Journalists and Reporters without Borders have repeatedly emphasized the prohibition of attacks on journalists and the need to ensure their safety in armed conflicts. Such attacks not only violate the individual rights of journalists, but also threaten media freedom and society's right to know the truth.

In this context, the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while strongly condemning these aggressions and criminal acts, once again emphasizes Iran's inherent right to self-defense and expects from you, as the highest human rights official of the United Nations, to:

1. Condemn the attacks carried out by the Zionist regime on the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran in an explicit and open manner;

2. Utilize all the capacities of institutions, international human rights mechanisms and responsible countries to stop the Zionist regime's machine of war, killing and terror;

3. Pursue the legal and international responsibility of the perpetrators and supporters of these illegal actions, with seriousness and urgency.

Lack of responsibility on such crimes, at a time when the world is increasingly emphasizing the principle of accountability and combating impunity, will not only undermine the fundamental principles of human rights, but will also seriously harm the ideals, values, and lofty goals of the international community.

It is essential that all governments, international institutions, and in particular the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, take immediate, effective, and coordinated action against this unprecedented adventure that threatens global peace and security.

With respect and best wishes for Your Excellency's success in carrying out the important mission of defending human dignity.


Naser Seraj

The Secretary General of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran