
UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ANNOUNCES MEMBERS OF AN INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE TO MONITOR INVESTIGATIONS INTO GAZA CONFLICT

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GENEVA – The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, announced today the membership of a committee of three independent experts mandated by the Human Rights Council to monitor Israeli and Palestinian investigations into the serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law reported by the United Nations Fact Finding Mission, led by Justice Richard Goldstone.

The committee was established by Human Rights Council resolution [13/9](#), following up on United Nations General Assembly resolutions 64/10 and 64/254, which called for investigations.

The committee is mandated to “monitor and assess any domestic, legal or other proceedings undertaken by both the Government of Israel and the Palestinian side ... including the independence, effectiveness, genuineness of these investigations and their conformity with international standards.”

The three experts who have agreed to form the committee are Professor Christian Tomuschat (Chair), Justice Mary McGowan Davis and Mr. Param Cumaraswamy.*

“The committee will focus on the need to ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian and international human rights laws during the Gaza conflict, in order to prevent impunity, assure justice, deter further violations and promote peace,” Ms. Pillay said. “These three experts are eminently suited to fulfill the committee’s mandate, and I would like to take this opportunity to call on all relevant parties to fully cooperate with the committee.”

The committee of independent experts will meet shortly to define its plan of action and establish contacts with all relevant parties linked to its future activities.

(*) Professor Christian Tomuschat is Professor Emeritus at Humboldt University Berlin. Prior to taking the chair of international law in Berlin, he worked for 22 years at the Law Faculty of the University of Bonn as the director of the Institute of International Law. A renowned international jurist and an expert on international human rights and international humanitarian law, Professor Tomuschat has also served as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, president of the International Law Commission, Chairperson of the Guatemalan Historical Clarification Commission, member of the International Commission of Jurists, and judge of the Inter-American Development Bank and the African Development Bank. He is the author of numerous books and articles on human rights and humanitarian law.

Judge Mary McGowan Davis served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and as a federal prosecutor during the course of a 24-year career in the criminal justice sector in New York City. She also has extensive experience in the fields of international human rights law and transitional justice. Justice Davis has been involved in mentoring and training of lawyers and judges in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mongolia, and Rwanda. She visited Cambodia and Sierra Leone on missions relating to the establishment of war crimes tribunals in those countries. She has also served as a consultant to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Association for the International Commission of Jurists and the International Judicial Academy, and serves on the Managerial Board of the International Association of Women Judges.

Mr. Param Cumaraswamy, a renowned jurist and human rights expert, served from 1994 to 2003 as the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on the independence of judges and lawyers. He is a Barrister at Law from the United Kingdom and practices law in Malaysia, and is a former President of the Bar Association of Malaysia. He is an active member of several organizations including the Law Association of Asia and the Pacific, the International Commission of Jurists and the Advisory Council of the American Bar Association Centre of Human Rights. Mr Cumaraswamy is the author of numerous articles on human rights, humanitarian law, the rule of law and judicial independence.

Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict:
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>

Conclusions and recommendations – Report of the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict:
http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48_ADVANCE2.pdf

Learn more about the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/HighCommissioner.aspx>

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