



[Image: UN OHCHR]

INVITATION The Transfer and Use of Explosive Weapons in the Gaza War

Thursday 15 February 2024
9:00-10:30 ET/15:00-16:30 CET

Register [here](#)

A grim milestone in the Gaza-Israel war recently reached a reported 28,000 deaths - most of these casualties are women and children. The UN Secretary-General [described](#) the scale of civilian killings as “heartbreaking and utterly unacceptable” – yet the crisis continues to escalate. The preventable human tragedy unfolding in Gaza reveals the devastating toll civilians face in conflicts around the world, particularly when explosive weapons are used in populated areas with [catastrophic impacts](#) on civilians and civilian infrastructure due to their blast and fragmentation effects, and amidst a rapidly worsening humanitarian crisis.

Just over a year on from the endorsement of the [Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#), by 83 states in Dublin, Ireland in November 2022, realizing the Declaration’s goals of better [protecting civilians](#) in armed conflict and strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) has never been more important. The International Network on Explosive Weapons ([INEW](#)) and the [Control Arms](#) Coalition will jointly host an online panel discussion on the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The event will examine the civilian harm from the extensive use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) and the consequences of arms transfers and how they relate to applicable legal and normative frameworks, as well as political commitments by States endorsing the Declaration.

The panel will be moderated by Wendy MacClinchy (Center for Civilians in Conflict/INEW), with opening remarks from INEW and Control Arms (Shirine Jurdi). A panel of experts and practitioners from the region will then lead a discussion, featuring Wafa Ali (Norwegian People’s Aid) and a representative of Save the Children, exploring the specific patterns of harm caused by explosive weapons in populated areas, particularly in Gaza, highlighting the immediate and long-term consequences on civilians. Federico Dessi (Humanity & Inclusion) will provide context to help understand the legal and political obligations related to the crisis within the existing normative regime, including both International Humanitarian Law (IHL), as well as the 2022 EWIPA Political Declaration, developed in recognition of the humanitarian harm caused using EWIPA. Speakers will highlight the need to build on the legal framework aimed at strengthening the protection of civilians from the humanitarian

consequences of EWIPA, including [opportunities](#) for endorsing States of the EWIPA Political Declaration to take action aligned to their commitments.

The second panel will focus on arms transfers fueling the conflict and the legal obligations surrounding them. John Ramming Chappell (Center for Civilians in Conflict/INEW) will provide an overview of arms transferred and currently used in the conflict, with a focus on explosive [weapons from the United States](#), as well as the broader role of arms transfers in sustaining the conflict dynamics, with an emphasis on an apparent lack of conditions for transfers, and how this can be understood within customary international law responsibilities (i.e. outside of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) framework). Cesar Jaramillo (Project Ploughshares/Control Arms) will highlight legal obligations under the ATT related to arms transfers and the implications of these obligations on responsible arms trade. A moderated discussion will follow. The event will be held in English. For questions, contact klodding@civiliansinconflict.org. Register [here](#).