

AUSTRALIANS FOR PALESTINE

PO Box 2099
Hawthorn VIC 3122
Melbourne - Australia
Tel: 03 9818 5080
Fax: 03 9818 5009

info@australiansforpalestine.com
www.australiansforpalestine.com

MEDIA RELEASE 18 4 December 2009

Prepared by MS/AFP

AG asked to investigate war crimes charges against Olmert

Providing a Voice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release No 18 – 4 December 2009

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is currently visiting Australia and may face war crimes charges over his role in Israel's offensive in Gaza earlier this year.

Melbourne advocacy group Australians for Palestine has written to the Attorney General Robert McClelland asking him to investigate the charges of grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention and Division 268 of the Criminal Code Act 1995.

The letter details just some of the allegations that have been made against Mr Olmert in relation to the criminal offensive launched on a people already suffering severe deprivations and collective imprisonment due to the punitive sanctions that Israel imposed 18 months before the attack began on 27 December 2008.

In just three weeks, Israel's army, under Mr Olmert's command, had unleashed an inferno on the whole population that resulted in some 1400 deaths – most of them civilians - leaving some 5,500 seriously injured, more than 50,000 people homeless, and vital infrastructure necessary for civil society to survive, completely decimated.

The letter refers to the UN-sponsored Goldstone report that has documented 10 particular instances of Israeli forces wilfully attacking civilians for which there was no justifiable military objective and in which they must have been aware of the civilian status of those attacked.

Throughout the offensive, Australians for Palestine had noted Mr Olmert's public announcements and found them indicative of a leader who had no intention of ending the operation quickly, despite the largest death toll of Palestinians – more than 200 – in a single day when the offensive first began.

Australians for Palestine has urged the Attorney General to meet Australia's obligations as one of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions and to hold Mr Olmert accountable for war crimes. "Without accountability", the letter says, "there will be no serious prospect for peace in the Middle East."

For a copy of the letter see our website <http://australiansforpalestine.com>

For further information contact:

- Michael Shaik 0431 573 368

END

