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## UN: Israel Committed War Crimes in Gaza

Israeli forces committed war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity during their assault on the Gaza Strip eight months ago, the head of a UN fact-finding rights mission said Tuesday.

Richard Goldstone told reporters that his four-member probe panel "concluded that actions amounting to war crimes and possibly in some respect crimes against humanity were committed by the Israel Defense Forces."

The report said Israel deliberately attacked civilians, failed to take precautions to minimize loss of civilian life and cited strong evidence Israeli forces committed "grave breaches" of the Geneva Convention.

The firing of white phosphorous shells and the use of high explosive artillery shells were listed as "violations of humanitarian law."

"There were numerous instances of deliberate attacks

on civilians and civilian objects in violation of the fundamental international humanitarian law principle of distinction, resulting in deaths and serious injuries," it added.

It said there was "strong evidence that Israeli forces committed grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention in Gaza, including willful killing, torture or inhumane treatment, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, or extensive destruction of property."

"The Israeli operations were carefully planned in all their phases as a deliberately disproportionate attack designed to punish, humiliate and terrorize a civilian population," it said.

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**Right: Head of the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, former South African judge Richard Goldstone.**



## Libyan UN General Assembly's President Calls for Peace in Middle East, World

Veteran Libyan diplomat Ali Treki took the helm of the U.N. General Assembly, calling for stepped up efforts to achieve Mideast peace, close the widening gap between rich and poor, and eliminate nuclear weapons.

In his address Tuesday to the opening of the assembly's 64th session, the former foreign minister and U.N. ambassador also called on all 192 member states to take part in the search for solutions to the global economic crisis, to address the roots of terrorism and keep working to reform the United Nations.

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**New General Assembly President at Opening Meeting of the 64th Session Ali Abdussalam Treki (center), President of the 64th session of the General Assembly, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (left) at the opening meeting of the 64th session of the General Assembly. Date: 15 September 2009**



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