



Oral Statement

Based on QADER's report on

**"The Use of Starvation as a Weapon of Genocide and Forced Displacement -
Systematic Impacts on Persons with Disabilities in Gaza"**

Presented during the CRPD Committee' session on

**"The Situation of Persons with Disabilities Affected by Conflict in Gaza and the West
Bank"**

(33rd Session, Geneva – 15 August 2025)

Distinguished Chair of the Committee, Distinguished Members, Distinguished Participants,

We address you today after nearly two years of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, nineteen years of blockade and collective punishment imposed on more than two million people, and eight military offensives—the latest being the comprehensive and unprecedented assault in modern history since 7 October. What is unfolding is not a war, but a systematic colonial aggression targeting civilians, including women, children, and persons with disabilities; destroying homes, schools, hospitals, universities, and critical infrastructure; and seeking the erasure of Gaza.

Our **second analytical report**, submitted to the Committee, examines ***“The Use of Starvation as a Systematic Weapon of Genocide and Forced Displacement, and Its Systematic Impacts on Persons with Disabilities in Gaza.”*** Drawing on detailed evidence and first-hand testimonies from the scene of the crimes, the report presents the catastrophic reality experienced by victims. This submission builds on our first analytical report presented during the Committee’s initial session, which provided a comprehensive response to the List of Issues and addressed in detail the responsibilities of the State of Palestine under its international obligations.

More than 60 thousand people have been killed, over 150 thousand injured, and thousands remain trapped under the rubble. Entire families have been erased from the civil registry. Over 98% of Gaza’s population has been repeatedly displaced, deprived of clean water, food, and healthcare. Starving individuals collapse in the streets, walking long distances in search of a small amount of flour—only to be deliberately targeted and killed.

United Nations agencies, foremost among them UNRWA, have been prevented from providing humanitarian assistance, leading to their operational collapse. They have been replaced by a private entity operating only four distribution points—resembling death camps—compared to the 400 points previously run by UNRWA, staffed by thousands of employees and supported by a database covering the entire Strip. This has rendered humanitarian aid **inaccessible** to persons with disabilities and has turned food into a military tool within a systematic policy of ***“engineering chaos and starvation”*** in the context of the ongoing genocide.

According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), catastrophic famine is affecting half of Gaza’s population, and the worst-case scenario is now unfolding. The United Nations has stated: ***“We no longer have words to describe the horror of what is happening. Words have run out.”*** Data from the World Food Program confirms that the total amount of aid that has entered Gaza since March 2025 does not exceed what used to enter in **a single day** during the ceasefire. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has described the situation as: ***“What is coming in does not amount to a teaspoon of aid.”***

Persons with disabilities are facing a silent genocide: without food, without water, without medicine, without prosthetic limbs or wheelchairs, without electricity, without evacuation routes or shelter, and without a voice to hear their cries. They are left beneath the rubble or exposed in

the open—immobile and unable to escape—where disability intersects with starvation, siege, and international abandonment, forming a deadly triad of **silent death**.

Mr. Chair,

The testimonies of our field researchers in Gaza—who are living through and documenting the ongoing genocide and systematic starvation—reveal the magnitude of the tragedy: they gather testimonies under bombardment, their children without food, their families without shelter.

Despite having submitted analytical reports to your Committee and to the Special Rapporteur since the beginning of the aggression, **we have received no response or concrete action**. The reliance on general data, during a time of genocide and starvation, has led to **the exclusion of a disability-inclusive approach** in reports by United Nations bodies and agencies, including the International Commission of Inquiry. This has resulted in a lack of evidence-based analytical classification and the marginalization of partnerships with Palestinian organizations representing persons with disabilities.

This ongoing failure to implement the mandate has weakened accountability mechanisms, reinforced impunity, and denied victims with disabilities—despite their compounded suffering, their inalienable right to justice.

Honorable Committee,

The international responsibilities in this humanitarian catastrophe are clear: **Article 11** of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Optional Protocol, **Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019)** on the protection of persons with disabilities in conflict, and **Security Council Resolution 2735 (2024)** calling for a ceasefire and unconditional humanitarian access—including life-saving needs for persons with disabilities, which have not been met since the onset of the aggression.

Furthermore, measures issued by the **International Court of Justice** obligate the unrestricted entry of humanitarian aid and the unhindered access of international investigative committees to Gaza, as well as full cooperation with the United Nations.

The responsibility of your Committee, alongside the Special Rapporteur, under your respective mandates, is weighty and direct: to work in **close cooperation** with Palestinian organizations representing persons with disabilities, United Nations bodies and agencies, and the International Commission of Inquiry, to ensure the **inclusion of disability** in all monitoring, documentation, advocacy, and accountability efforts; to secure justice for victims; and to address their compounded suffering under starvation and genocide.

The exclusion of a disability-inclusive approach from United Nations efforts reflects a shortcoming by your Committee and the Special Rapporteur, weakening accountability and undermining trust.

Correcting this course is an ethical and legal imperative to restore the victims' confidence in your work.

Honorable Committee,

We refer to our comprehensive report for full details on the equation of genocide and its primary tool, systematic starvation, supported by documented evidence, live testimonies, legal analysis, and containing specific, actionable findings and recommendations.

We hereby reaffirm our readiness for effective and institutionalized partnership with your Committee and the Special Rapporteur, in accordance with the mandate and provisions of the Convention, to move from the silence surrounding genocide and starvation toward pathways of justice.

In this regard, we present to your Honorable Committee our most urgent demands:

1. Activate Article 6 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and announce the initiation of a formal investigation into violations and crimes committed against persons with disabilities in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
2. Launch urgent field visits to the Gaza Strip to assess the catastrophic conditions of persons with disabilities.
3. Strengthen cooperation with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI) to ensure the inclusion of disability in its international reports.
4. Enhance engagement with United Nations agencies to guarantee disability inclusion in monitoring, protection, relief, and accountability efforts.
5. Submit comprehensive briefings to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly regarding the situation of persons with disabilities in Gaza.
6. Establish effective and institutionalized partnerships with Palestinian organizations representing persons with disabilities in the State of Palestine.
7. Adopt the "QADER" Guideline for disability-inclusive monitoring and accountability indicators, linking it to a roadmap for justice.
8. Call upon the United Nations Secretary-General, pursuant to Articles 11 and 40 of the Convention and under the mandate granted to the Special Rapporteur by the Human Rights Council resolution of 13 July 2023, to convene an international conference of States Parties to take urgent measures to protect and assist persons with disabilities in the face of systematic starvation and genocide in Gaza.

In conclusion,

Faced with the ongoing genocide, systematic starvation, and dehydration of civilians—primarily persons with disabilities who endure compounded suffering—there remains no option for the United Nations system, with all its mechanisms and bodies, foremost among them your Honorable Committee and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, but **to take immediate and serious action** and fully assume the responsibilities entrusted to it.

Failure to do so will consign the UN to the historical record as a witness to collective failure and ethical and legal negligence that has allowed these crimes to continue.

Thank you.