



The Executive Committee of the Centre for European Legal Studies on Macro-Crime (Macrocrimes) of the University of Ferrara is deeply concerned about the [decision adopted on 19 October 2021 by the Israeli Ministry of Defence](#), which designates six Palestinian civil society organizations as "terrorist", ostensibly for links with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), an organization classified as terrorist by the European Union, Canada and the United States.

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved – the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC), ADDAMEER - Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Bisan Center for Research and Development, Al-Haq, Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCI-P) and the Union Of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) – have a long history of engagement in promoting the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and respect for international humanitarian and human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Some of these NGOs are also active in documenting violations that could qualify as [international crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court](#). Some also enjoy [special consultative status with the United Nations](#) and have received important [international awards](#) for their relentless work in protecting and promoting human rights. They also have a long history of cooperation with various international agencies, including the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

The decision to designate these organizations as terrorist, adopted on the basis of the Israeli [Counter-Terrorism Law of 2016](#), has significant consequences under domestic law. The NGOs involved risk having their offices shut down and their assets seized; their staff could be arrested. The law also establishes that harsh criminal sanctions could be issued against anyone who "publishes words of praise, support or sympathy" for the organizations qualified as terrorist.

On the international level, the initiative of the Israeli Ministry of Defence clearly aims to discredit the work of these organizations and to discourage any form of assistance, financial or political support for their activities by States, international organizations and members of civil society.

In reiterating its firm condemnation of any form of terrorism and violence, the Executive Committee of the Center Macrocrimes stands in solidarity with the six NGOs involved; it calls upon the Italian Government and the international community as a whole to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Israeli Government immediately rescinds its decision, and guarantees to all Palestinian civil society organizations committed to the promotion and respect of international law in the OPT the opportunity to carry out their fundamental task, in line with the principles enshrined in the [United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders](#).