

For immediate release

## Violence in Gaza: HI demands protection for most vulnerable

Montreal, June 8, 2018 – Another day of demonstrations has rocked Gaza, resulting in more than 500 new injuries, according to first estimates. Since demonstrations began last March on the border between Gaza and Israel, at least 128 people have been killed, and more than 13,900 people injured, half of whom required hospitalization.

Present in Gaza since 1996, Humanity & Inclusion has mobilized its local, 40-person emergency team to help injured people who are discharged early from overcrowded hospitals. These rehabilitation teams will case manage more than 1,500 casualties in the coming months. They benefit from access to medical equipment that HI pre-positioned in Gaza.

Among the people injured, 3,778 have live ammunition gunshot injuries, 1,191 are children, and 2,604 had lower limb injuries, according to the World Health Organisation's data through June 3. "The patients we visit at home have suffered massive tibial destruction, torn tissue and pulverised bone that are comparable to war injuries," says Bruno Leclercq, Head of HI's operations in Palestine. Recovery is long and requires months or years of surgery, physical therapy and rehabilitation.

HI is alarmed by the increasingly precarious situation experienced by the most vulnerable people—women, children, older people and people with disabilities. These individuals are suffering the direct consequences of recurring conflicts, travel restrictions and run-down medical facilities. Problems accessing healthcare, medicine, drinking water and electricity—available for less than two hours a day—weigh more heavily on the most vulnerable families when the situation takes a turn for the worse.

"Restricted access to specialized services outside Gaza can lead to a deterioration in the health of many patients, with a high risk of decline or amputation in the weeks and months ahead," explains Leclercq. In recent months, out of 40 requests for medical evacuation from Gaza, only a handful have been granted.

For years, a blockade has stifled Gaza's economy, leaving the Palestinian population largely dependent on humanitarian aid. Three years ago, HI and a coalition of humanitarian organizations published a report on the incomplete reconstruction of Gaza and called on the international community to live up to its promises. The most vulnerable families are no longer able to cope with these additional medical, financial and psychological pressures. With these new episodes of violence, Humanity & Inclusion is urging all parties and the international community to ensure the effective protection of civilians, medical staff and humanitarian workers. The organization has also stressed that the parties are accountable for violations of international humanitarian law, and invites them to work towards a lasting political solution.

### About HI

#### / Media contacts

**HI CANADA**  
Gabriel Perriau  
Communications &  
Digital Marketing Officer  
514 908-2813 # 229  
[g.perriau@hi.org](mailto:g.perriau@hi.org)

**HI US**  
Mica Bevington  
Media Relations  
301 891 2138  
[m.bevington@hi.org](mailto:m.bevington@hi.org)

**Michele Lunsford**  
Digital Marketing &  
Communications Officer  
301 891 2138  
[m.lunsford@hi.org](mailto:m.lunsford@hi.org)



## Press release

HI, previously known as Handicap International, is an independent international association that has been working for 35 years in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster. Working alongside people with disabilities and vulnerable people, HI acts and speaks out to meet their basic needs and improve their living conditions. HI is one of the six founding associations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), winner of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize and winner of the 2011 Conrad N. Hilton Award.

### / Media contacts

#### HI CANADA

Gabriel Perriau  
Communications &  
Digital Marketing Officer  
514 908-2813 # 229  
[g.perriau@hi.org](mailto:g.perriau@hi.org)

#### HI US

Mica Bevington  
Media Relations  
301 891 2138  
[m.bevington@hi.org](mailto:m.bevington@hi.org)

Michele Lunsford  
Digital Marketing &  
Communications Officer  
301 891 2138  
[m.lunsford@hi.org](mailto:m.lunsford@hi.org)