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UNITED NATIONS, June 30 (KUNA) -- Amnesty International on Friday accused Israel of war crimes in Gaza and the Palestinian militias of violation of fundamental principles of international law by kidnapping Corporal Gilad Shalit and killing settler Eliyahu Asheri, urging the international community to act.

"Deliberate attacks by Israeli forces against civilian property and infrastructure in the Gaza Strip violate international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes," Amnesty International said in a statement distributed here.

Israel "must now take urgent measures to remedy the long-term damage it has caused and immediately restore the supply -- at its own cost -- of electricity and water to the Palestinian population in the affected areas," the organization said.

"As the occupying power, Israel is bound under international law to protect and safeguard the basic human rights of the Palestinian population," it added.

The extensive damage caused by Israeli artillery and air strikes against these facilities in recent days is estimated at several millions of US dollars and will require months of work to repair.

"Unless alternative emergency measures are promptly put in place to restore electricity and water supply, the consequences could be dire for the health of the Palestinian population," it warned.

The organization also said that the hostage-taking of Corporal Gilad Shalit and the killing of Eliyahu Asheri, the 18 year old settler, by Palestinian militias "violate fundamental principles of international law," calling at the same time for the immediate release of Corporal Shalit "unharmred." "Both sides to this current stand-off should refrain from taking actions which violate international law and take steps to provide redress for the abuses they have committed," it said, urging the international community to act, as it has an obligation to do so under the Geneva Convention. (end) sj.

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