Statement by the Delegation of the State of Palestine to the OPCW
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Since Saturday, throughout occupied Palestine, 788 Palestinians have been killed by Israel, the occupying Power, including more than 140 children, 105 women, and 4,000 injured. More than 180,000 Palestinians have been displaced. Whole families have been wiped off the population registry in Gaza—from grandparents to grandchildren, they have been decimated. Israeli officials have issued genocidal and hateful calls for ethnic cleansing publicly and unashamedly. Yesterday, the Israeli Minister of Defense stated: “I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals and we are acting accordingly.”
Human animals. This is the kind of racist, dehumanizing rhetoric the Palestinian people have faced for 75 years. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has vowed to turn Gaza into a “deserted island”—explicit incitement to the crime of genocide. After shutting down all exits to the open-air prison that is Gaza, Israel cut off food, water, fuel, gas and electricity from the civilian population, a base cruel despicable crime of collective punishment. It then proceeded to pulverize residential areas including refugee camps, apartment buildings, hospitals, schools, and historical monuments. Let us remind you what Gaza is: an occupied besieged enclave of Palestinian land. Occupied for 56 years, besieged for 16 years. 2.2 million People live there, 50% of them children, 70% of them refugees who were ethnically cleansed from their native lands by Israeli forces in 1948. These are the so-called “human animals” that Israel is talking about. Bombing Gaza amounts to bombing mainly children and refugees. Think about that and let it give you pause. Is this what you call self-defense?