

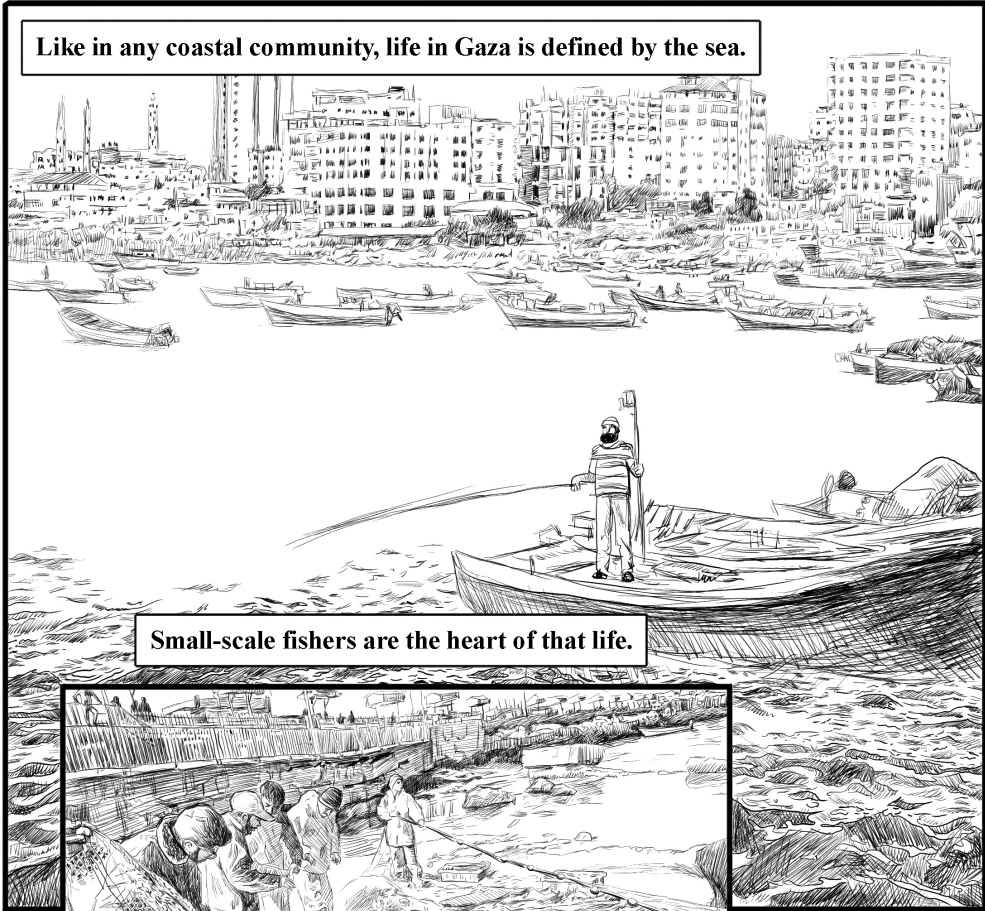


# **Palestine and the Right to Food**

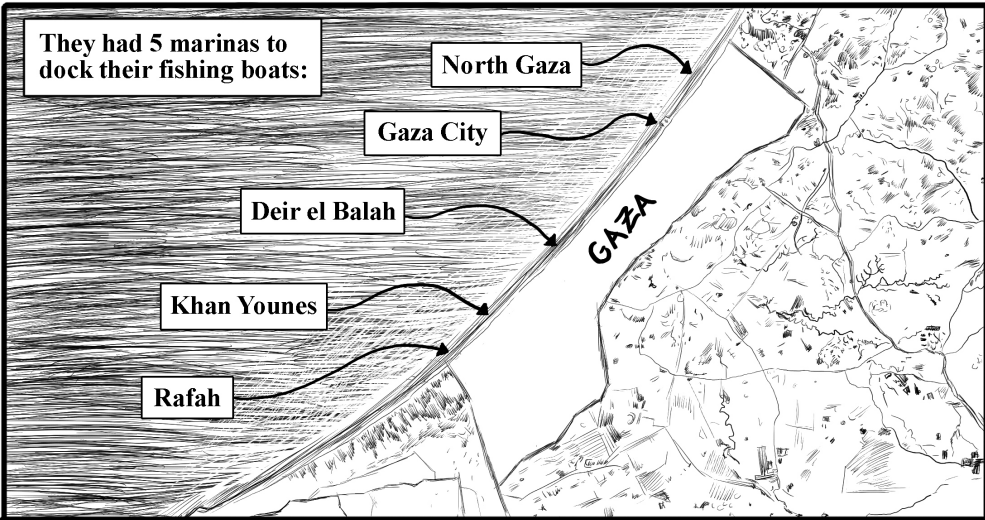
**The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Michael Fakhri has published his report “Starvation and the right to food, with an emphasis on the Palestinian people’s food sovereignty” (A/79/171) and includes the following three graphic reports illustrated by Omar Khouri:**

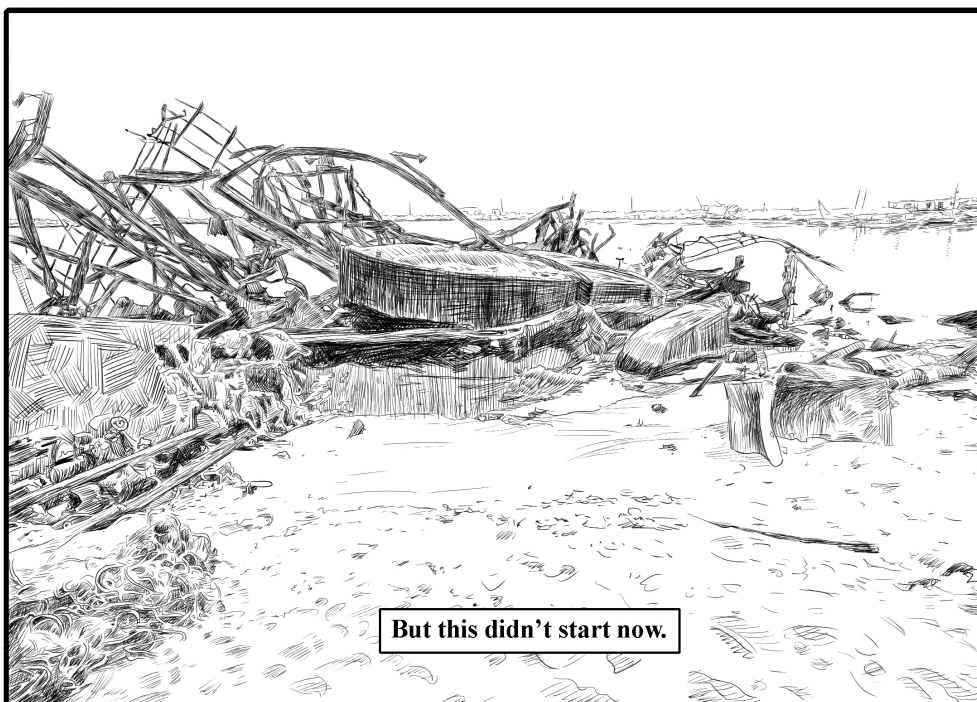
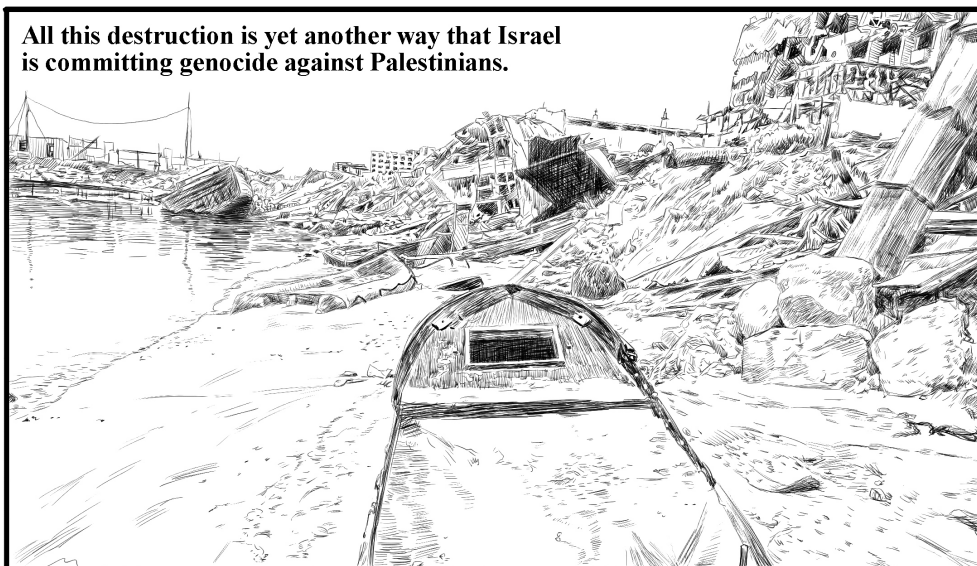
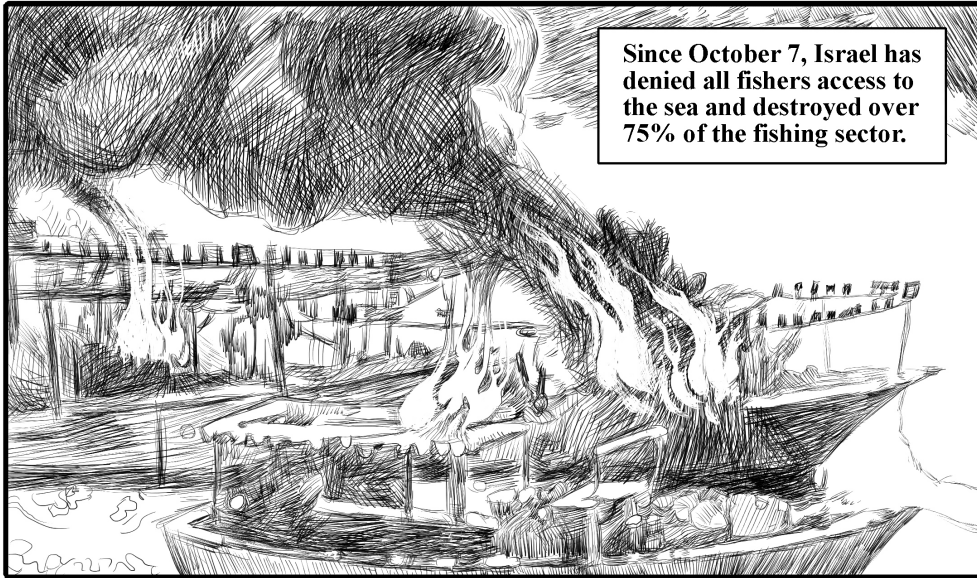
- 1. Gaza Fishers**
- 2. Dignity Despite Suffering**
- 3. Palestinian People’s Food Sovereignty**

# I. Gaza Fishers



Before October 2023, Gaza's fishing community was made up of 4,500 regular workers, approximately 1,500 seasonal workers, 1,050 motor boats, and 900 row boats.

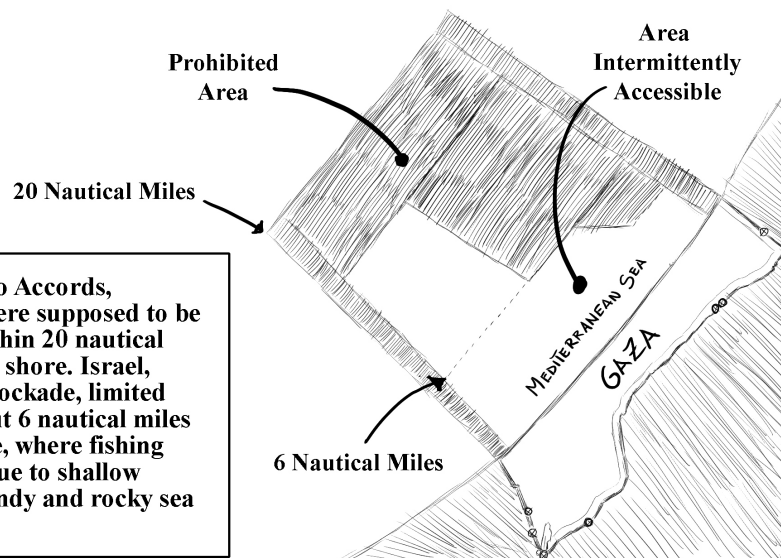




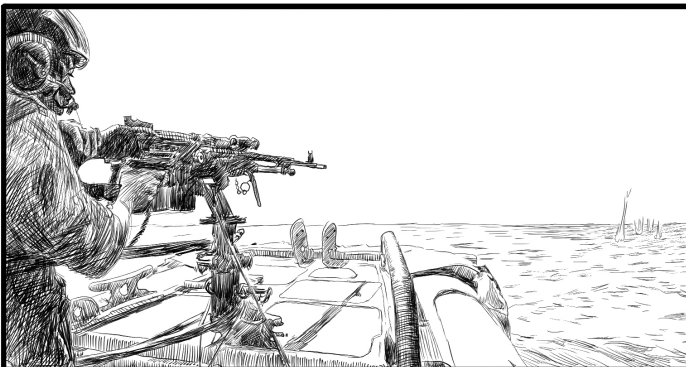
Israel has been increasingly restricting the flow of people and goods in Gaza since 1991 as part of its occupation strategy.



In 2007, Israel imposed a more permanent and acute blockade in Gaza, closing all sea and air routes, and severely restricting the movement of people and goods by land.

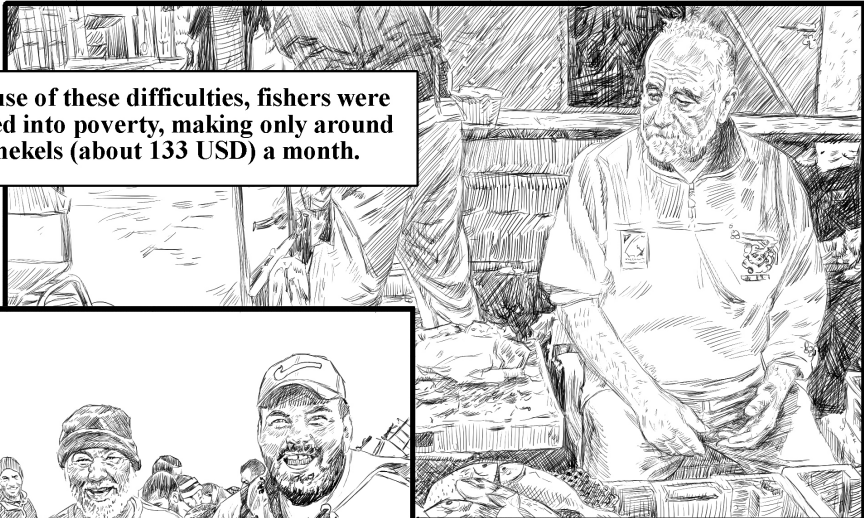


Under the Oslo Accords, Palestinians were supposed to be able to fish within 20 nautical miles from the shore. Israel, through the blockade, limited fishers to about 6 nautical miles from the shore, where fishing was not easy due to shallow waters with sandy and rocky sea floors.



They were also regularly shot at and arrested by Israeli forces simply for fishing in Palestinian territorial waters.





**Because of these difficulties, fishers were pushed into poverty, making only around 500 shekels (about 133 USD) a month.**



**Before the blockade, they could live a middle-class life making approximately 1,400 shekels (about 373 US Dollars) a month.**

**Now, with no fishing allowed at all, they starve.**



**The life of fishers tells you a lot about a place.**

**In Gaza, it is telling us that the starvation of the Palestinian people isn't a sudden and unpredictable consequence of the latest aggressions by the Occupation Forces but a gradual and deliberate strategy that was set in motion many years ago.**

\* This graphic report is based on firsthand testimony by Zakharia Fadel Hasan Baker, an Activist and Specialist in Gaza's Fishing Sector.

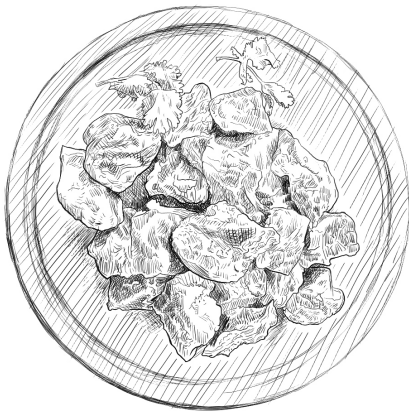
## II. Dignity Despite Suffering

This is a unique moment within the history of the Palestinian people's century-long struggle for liberation and self-determination. Today, the Palestinian people's food sovereignty continues even during starvation. People in Gaza are still expressing their dignity through how they cook and eat, in how they continue to celebrate holidays even when surrounded by suffering. The Special Rapporteur received an account from Um Ahmad in Gaza wherein she described how she continued to cook summaqiyya, a quintessential Gazan festive dish dating back to the 11th century CE, with indigenous sumac berries (after which the dish is named). To feed people during Eid el Adha, she had to improvise without access to most of the usual ingredients. People like Um Ahmad, who carry and create recipes like this, hold knowledge about a people's ongoing relationship to the land, territory and history. This knowledge comes from the struggle of cooking and feeding one's family and community, regenerating life itself. This knowledge is critical for the realization of people's right to food.

In this graphic report, the Special Rapporteur shares the stark difference between two ingredient lists from two recipes for summaqiyya before and after this war in Gaza.

The ingredients that are currently available in Gaza markets are acquired at exorbitant prices. These recipes, like many recipes, are embedded in knowledge about the Palestinian people's ongoing relationship with their land, territory and history.\* Collecting and sharing recipes is so much more than developing a cooking guide since it is a practice that preserves local knowledge, and changes as more people cook. Cooking, along with the collecting and sharing recipes, is also a practice of being steadfast and adaptable in moments of profound pain and suffering while expressing one's sense of dignity, reciprocity, care and self-determination.

### ***Summaqiyya*** Ingredient list before the war



***500 grams boneless beef or lamb***



***200 grams chard***

### ***Summaqiyya*** Ingredient list during the war

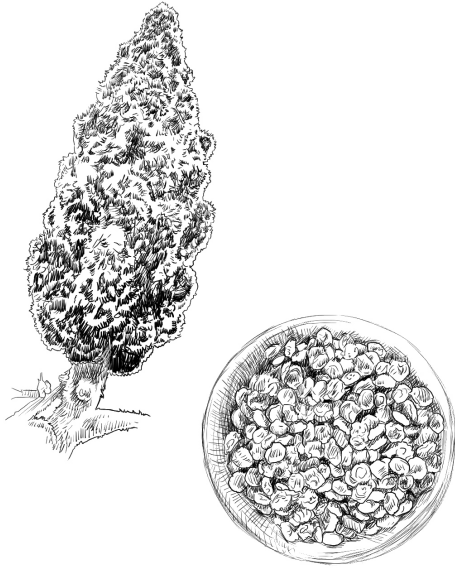
***No meat***



***Forage wild chard or common mallow***

\* Laila Haddad and Maggie Schmitt, *The Gaza Kitchen* (Washington D.C., Just World Books, 2021).

**Summaqiyya**  
Ingredient list before the war



*½ cup sumac berries*



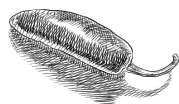
*4 large onions*



*1 head of garlic*



*5 green peppers*



*1 hot green chili pepper*

**Summaqiyya**  
Ingredient list during the war



*Use dried sumac sparingly*

*No onions*

*No garlic*

*No green peppers*

*No hot green chili pepper*

## **Summaqiyya**

Ingredient list before the war



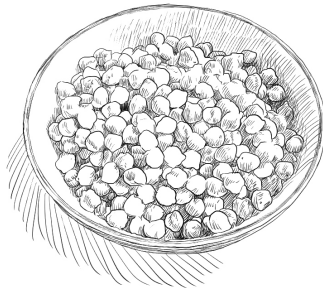
**1 tablespoon dill seeds**



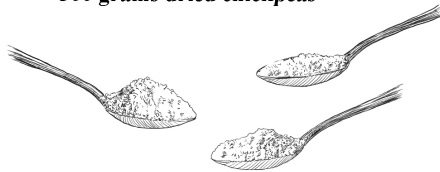
**1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds**



**¼ cup red tahini**



**300 grams dried chickpeas**



**2-3 tablespoons flour**



**Olive oil**



## **Summaqiyya**

Ingredient list during the war

**No dill seeds**

**No Coriander seeds**



**No red tahini.**  
**Use white tahini if you have it.**



**Canned chickpeas,**  
**depending on the number of cans you have**



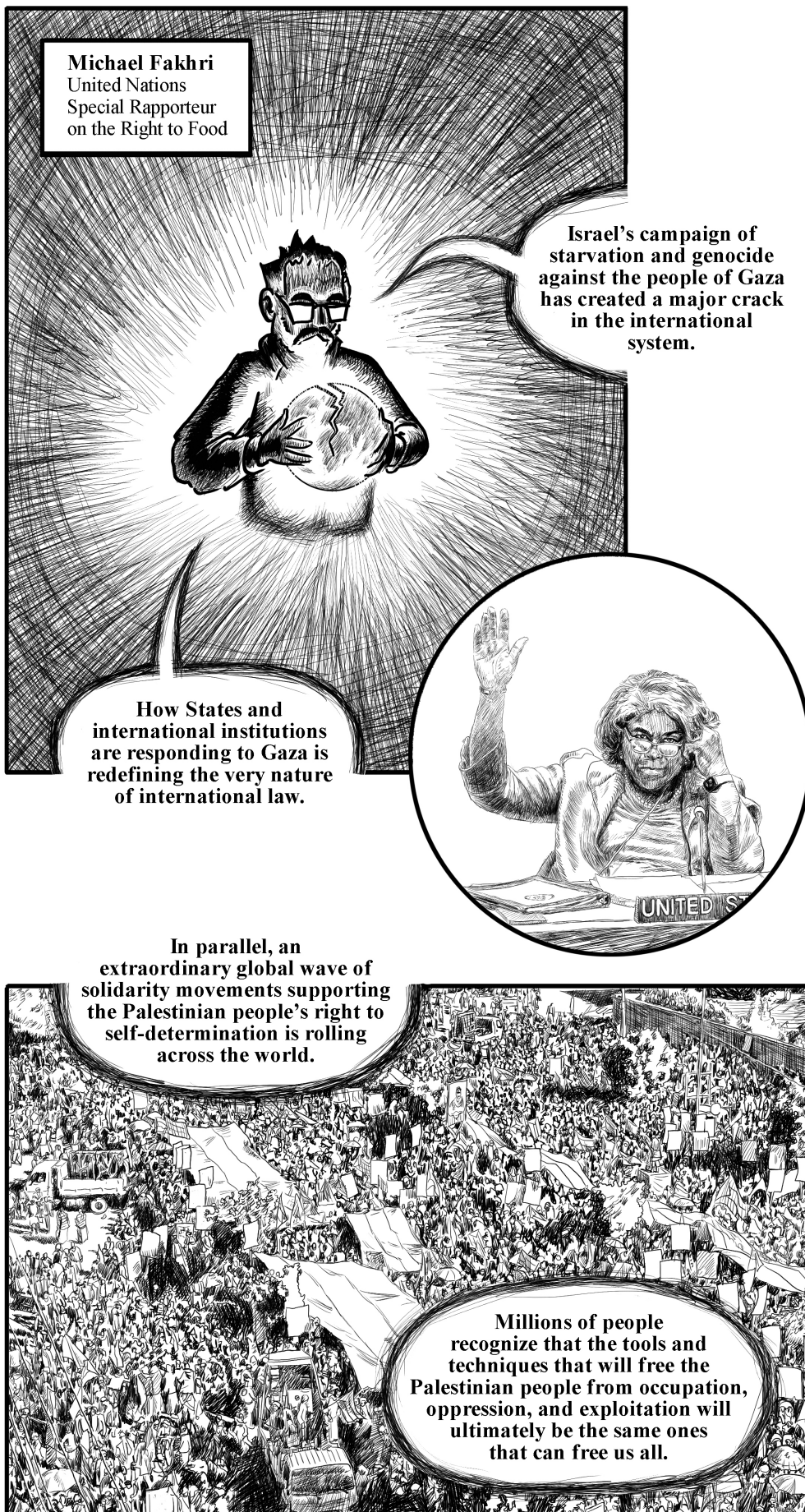
**Use flour sparingly**



**Use cooking oil sparingly**



### III. Palestinian People's Food Sovereignty





By fighting Israel's starvation campaign against the Palestinians, people are in effect also fighting for their own freedom from hunger.

Most of the world's population suffer under food systems that harm or kill them through slower forms of violence than in Gaza today.



Corporate-led industrial food systems ravage the environment, degrade biodiversity, and emit approximately one third of the world's greenhouse gases.



These food systems are precariously designed to produce profits by delivering edible commodities, instead of food that is good for people's mental, political and physical health.



People want to transform these systems to become based on care and reciprocity.



And how can this be achieved?

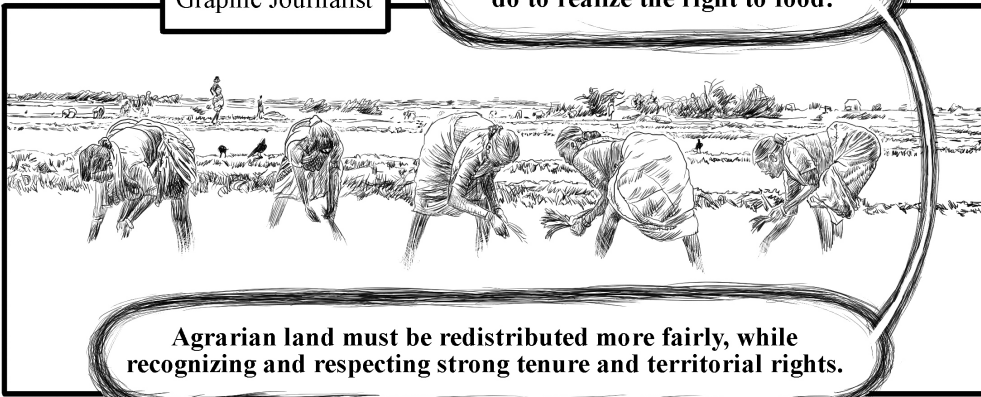
The challenge with transformation does not lie in a scarcity of solutions.



Omar Khouri  
Graphic Journalist



We already know what States must do to realize the right to food:



Agrarian land must be redistributed more fairly, while recognizing and respecting strong tenure and territorial rights.



Labor laws should be enacted and enforced to ensure dignity in the workplace.



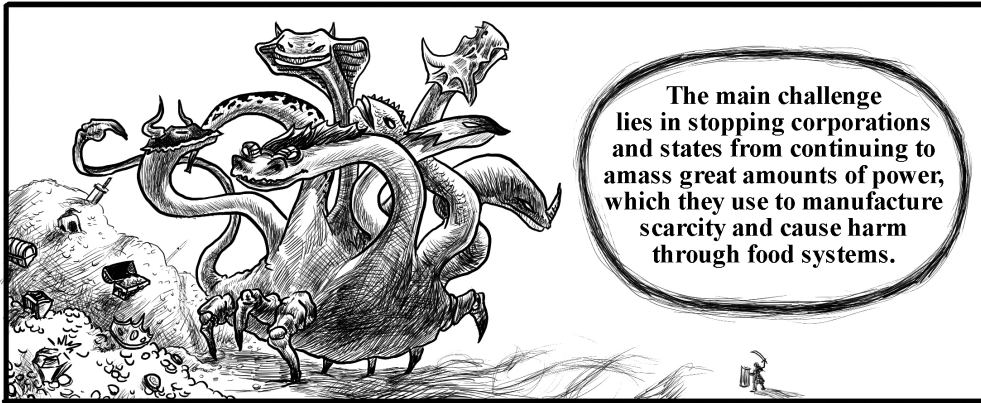
Territorial markets should be supported so that local communities and regions are better connected and less vulnerable to global markets.

Solidarity economic enterprises should be supported because they prioritize social purpose over profits.

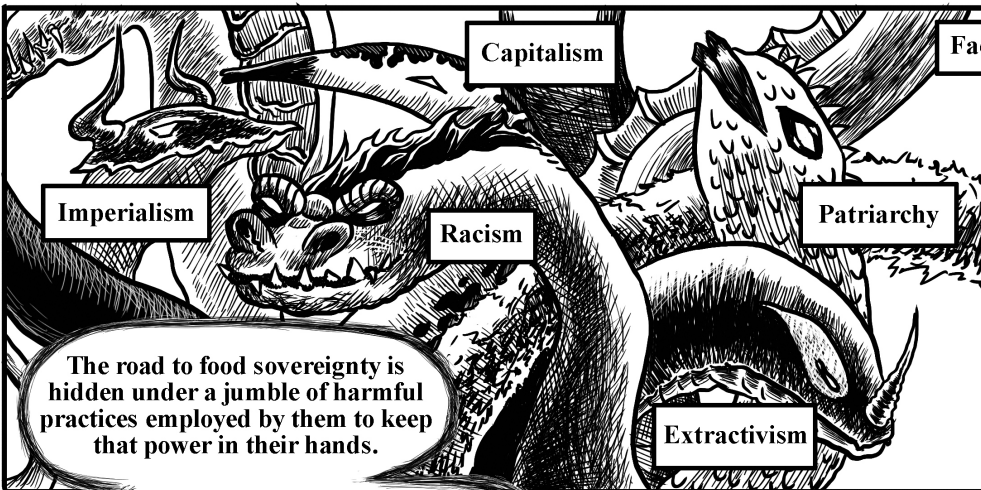
Solutions abound...

So what are the challenges then?

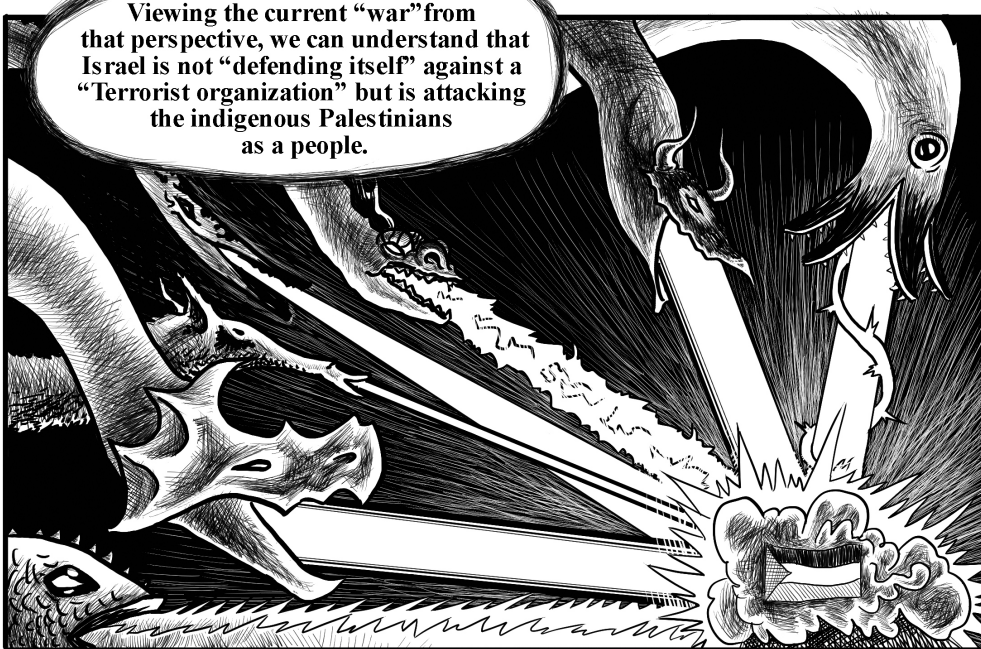




The main challenge lies in stopping corporations and states from continuing to amass great amounts of power, which they use to manufacture scarcity and cause harm through food systems.



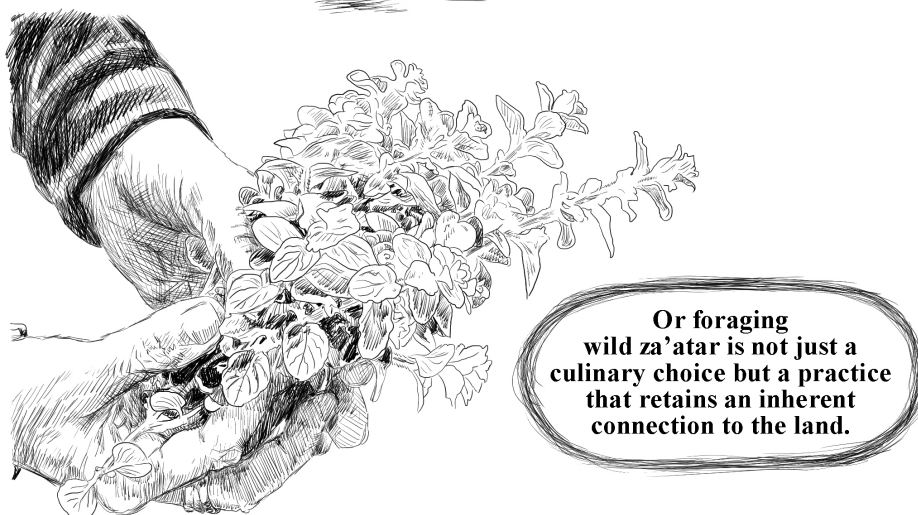
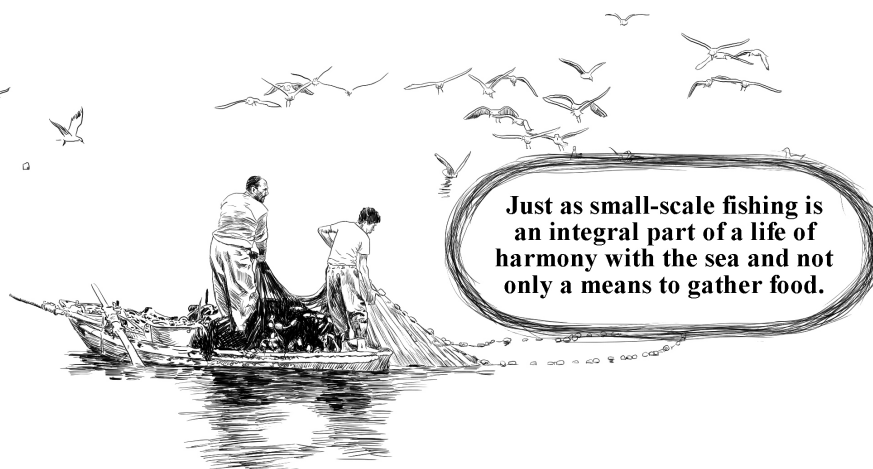
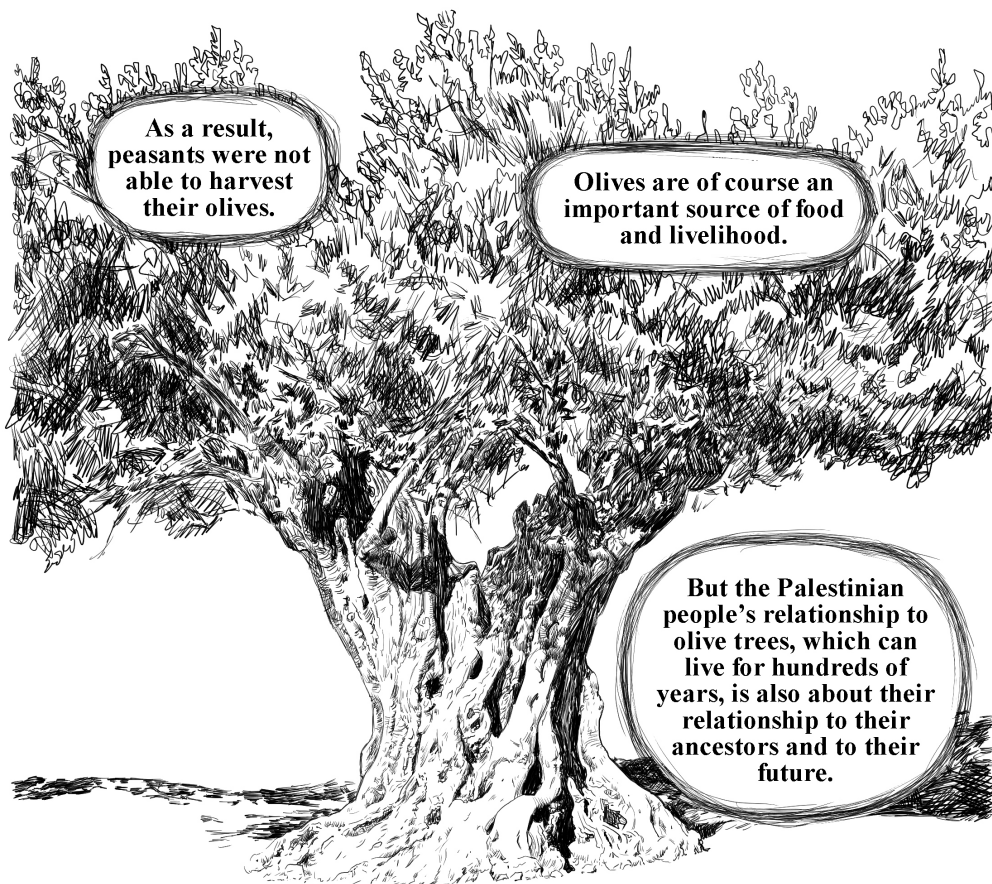
The road to food sovereignty is hidden under a jumble of harmful practices employed by them to keep that power in their hands.



Viewing the current "war" from that perspective, we can understand that Israel is not "defending itself" against a "Terrorist organization" but is attacking the indigenous Palestinians as a people.

This past year, Israeli settlers and armed forces inflicted record rates of violence against peasants and pastoralists in the Occupied West Bank.





Food sovereignty means the Palestinian people, as a people, have the right to their lands, territories and resources to compensate for a long history of illegal and unjust dispossession.

The power of food sovereignty does not derive from the political form of a State or a national authority.

It arises from people's long-standing relationship with the land, with the rivers and the sea, and their capacity to feed their own communities, in opposition to the prevailing, yet cracking, international system in place today.



Once this cracking system crumbles, what might we build from the salvage?

