



Press Release

On the 167 day of the frenzy genocidal war against the Palestinian people

March 21, 2024

“Palestinians in Gaza are enduring horrifying levels of hunger and suffering ... This is the highest number of people facing catastrophic hunger ever recorded ...anywhere, anytime”¹

UN Secretary General António Guterres

UN human rights chief Volker Türk insisted that **“hunger, starvation and famine”** were the result of Israel’s **“extensive restrictions on the entry and distribution of humanitarian aid and commercial goods”²**

100% of the population in Gaza is at severe levels of acute food insecurity. That’s the first time an entire population has been so classified.³

As of Wednesday, March 20, the death toll reached 31,819 Palestinian martyrs, with 73,934 injured and nearly 8,500 missing. There are 700,000 internally displaced persons taking refuge in only 20% of the Gaza Strip. In the Occupied West Bank, there have been 436 martyrs and more than 4,670 injured.

The Israeli genocidal war took many forms, one of which is preventing the entry of necessary medical supplies, especially for chronic diseases. **The health condition of 1000 to 1500 kidney failure patients in the Gaza Strip is rapidly worsening due to the lack of medical services, medication, and other necessities.**

Palestinian unemployment rate set to soar to 57% during first quarter of 2024.⁴

Another life-threatening issue for Gazans today is the presence of remaining explosive materials hidden under the rubble, on the streets, and everywhere else. Mine action partners are currently conducting assessments of the explosive threat and educating Gazans on how to avoid it. According to OCHA **“Larger-scale assessments are urgently required, but response efforts have been hampered by restrictions on the import of humanitarian mine action supplies and authorization requirements for the deployment of specialized personnel.”⁵**

¹ - <https://tinyurl.com/s68fbpbz>

² - <https://tinyurl.com/3cxhune7>

³ - <https://tinyurl.com/2z5kdxt4>

⁴ - <https://tinyurl.com/5n8cy7nw>

⁵ - <https://tinyurl.com/3c97tjh7>





EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said at the opening of a conference on humanitarian aid for Gaza in Brussels. **"In Gaza we are no longer on the brink of famine, we are in a state of famine, affecting thousands of people," "This is unacceptable. Starvation is used as a weapon of war. Israel is provoking famine."**⁶

Malnutrition is a devastating threat to lives across Gaza, as evidenced by the UN published report on March 15, 2024. Where **"one in three children under two in the Northern Gaza Strip suffer from acute malnutrition... Malnutrition among the children is spreading fast and reaching devastating and unprecedented levels..... at least 23 children in Northern Gaza Strip have reportedly died from malnutrition and dehydration in recent weeks, adding to a mounting toll of children killed in the strip in this current conflict- about 13450.....Nutrition screening conducted by UNICEF and partners in the north in February found that 4.5 per cent of the children in shelters and health centers suffer from severe wasting, the most life threatening from the malnutrition"**⁷

According to the Euro Med Human Right Watch **"The Israeli army has systematically targeted dozens of programmers, information technology experts, and workers in computer engineering, in addition to destroying the headquarters of their companies, as part of the ongoing crime of genocide in the Gaza Strip since 7 October 2023."**⁸

According to the UNRWA report 91, **"Middle Areas and Khan Younis, where screenings conducted for the first time in Khan Younis, in the central Gaza Strip, revealed that 28 per cent of children under the age of two were acutely malnourished and more than 10 per cent severely wasted. Malnourished children in Gaza are also at high risk of medical complications and death if they do not receive urgent therapeutic food and appropriate treatment which are currently unavailable in Gaza"**⁹

"Only 2 percent of the food needed has entered Gaza since the blockade was imposed, the starvation policy is being used as a weapon of war against civilians in Gaza."¹⁰ OXFAM

The number of Palestinians abducted and jailed in the last 167 days has reached 7,670 in Israeli prisons and detention camps. The head of Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners, Qaddoura Fares, stated that the Israeli occupation prisons administration has intensified its repressive measures against Palestinian prisoners since the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan. This includes severe beatings, insults, degradation of dignity, and confiscation of the Qur'an from their rooms as a retaliatory policy, which has adversely affected the prisoners' health. Fares emphasized that **one**

⁶ - <https://tinyurl.com/5x8kzxbj>

⁷ - <https://tinyurl.com/3c97tjh7>

⁸ - <https://tinyurl.com/2tx24737>

⁹ - <https://tinyurl.com/2fwwrpe>

¹⁰ - <https://tinyurl.com/bdd7btja>





of the most targeted prisoners subjected to these degrading measures is the commander Marwan Barghouthi, who has been isolated and physically assaulted, along with captive Thabet Mardawi. He highlighted that these measures pose a threat to their lives.

As part of its provocative policy and continuous attempts to reinforce the temporal division in preparation for the spatial division of Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Israeli occupation forces have installed iron barriers at three gates of the mosque. This is to impose further restrictions on the entry of worshippers and deprive them of their freedom of worship in the complex. **We would like to emphasize that Jewish extremists are sparing no effort to incite a religious war that could engulf the world and destroy everything in its path.**

Another Israeli attempt to stifle the voice of truth, as it bans the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) from operating in the occupied East Jerusalem and the 1948 territories. We strongly condemn this move and consider it another way for Israel to commit its daily crimes in the occupied East Jerusalem (OEJ) away from the scrutiny of cameras. We call for all concerned human rights institutions, including the International Federation of Journalists, to denounce and condemn this crime.

In the first Friday prayer of the holy month of Ramadan, the occupation force blocked the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) teams from entering the courtyard of Al-Aqsa Mosque to provide medical services to the worshippers, in a grave violation of international law and international humanitarian law.

Philippe Lazzarini the UNRWA commissioner wrote on his X account **“On the day new data is out on famine in GAZA, the Israeli Authorities deny my entry to Gaza.”** Another Israeli attempt to obstruct the UN body work on the strip and entrench the starvation.

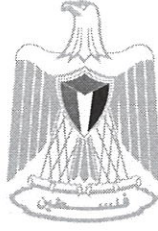
After nearly two months of suspending financial support upon the Israel claim that 12 UNRWA staff members were involved in the attack last October with no evidence, some western countries have resumed their funding for UNRWA. According to The Telegraph Newspaper **“Israel has refused to cooperate with a United Nations investigation into the country’s claim that members of the UN Palestinian refugee agency were involved in the Oct 7 attacks.... However, UN investigators have yet to receive any evidence from the Israelis, according to three sources with knowledge of the probe, despite this week spending “several days” in the country on a fact-finding mission.”**¹¹

The Israeli war on UNRWA has taken many forms in the last six months. In addition to the wide campaign to delegitimize the UN body, last Wednesday the Israeli air force attacked one of its food distribution centers. From the statement issued by UNRWA I quote **“Today’s attack on one of the very few remaining UNRWA distribution centers in the Gaza Strip comes as food supplies are running out, hunger is widespread and, in some areas, turning into famine. Every day, we**

¹¹ - <https://tinyurl.com/bdfd6rx5>



**Embassy of the State of Palestine
to the Federal Republic of Nigeria**



سفارة دولة فلسطين
لدى جمهورية نيجيريا الاتحادية

share the coordinates of all our facilities across the Gaza Strip with parties to the conflict. The Israeli Army received the coordinates including of this facility yesterday”¹².

As of March 13, 165 UNRWA team members have been killed, more than 150 of its facilities have been hit, some totally destroyed, and more than 400 people have been killed while seeking shelter and refuge under the UN flag. UNRWA staff have reportedly been mistreated and humiliated while in Israeli detention centers.

Abdullah M. Abu Shawesh

Ambassador of the Embassy of the State of Palestine

X – Twitter: @AM_Shawesh

Acronyms

UNSG United Nation Secretary General

ICJ International Court of Justice.

OPT Occupied Palestinian Territories.

IOF Israeli Occupation Force.

OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OWB Occupied West Bank.

EU European Union

UNRWA The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

¹² - <https://tinyurl.com/y4sbwjc9>

