

# The Dire Humanitarian Situation in Gaza Needs Urgent Action

written by Ezba Walayat | October 30, 2023



After Israel's extensive destruction of houses, schools, and hospitals, forcing over a million people to flee their homes, aid organizations are warning of a catastrophic shortage of medical supplies. The steadily increasing number of civilian casualties, the complete devastation of neighborhoods, and the Israeli military's unrelenting bombardment of Gaza are extremely concerning. According to the Ministry of Public Works and Dwelling in Gaza, since the start of hostilities, at least 43% of all dwelling units in the Gaza have been either destroyed or damaged. According to the United Nations, over 1.4 million of the 2.2 million Palestinians who live in the Gaza have been forced to flee their homes. Since the beginning of Israeli attacks, Palestinians do not have access to food and water, about half a million people have been denied access to food rations because their food distribution centers have been closed, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

According to Gaza's Ministry of Health, after three weeks of continuous bombing, the death toll in the Gaza Strip has risen to almost 7000, with at least 3000 of those deaths being children. In a statement, the UN representative for Palestine affirmed that "3,000 children have been killed by Israel since the attacks it launched on Oct. 7, almost 1,600 Palestinians are still buried under the rubble." Additionally, it is unfortunate that Israel is targeting humanitarian workers; the Israeli bombing of Gaza resulted in the deaths of at least 35 UNRWA employees. The Secretary-General of the United Nations stated, "Middle East situation is growing more dire by the hour. The region is in danger of spiraling out of control due to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. In addition, he urged all sides to protect civilians during military operations, honor

and preserve hospitals, and recognize the inviolability of UN buildings that currently house over 600,000 Palestinians. These demands were made in accordance with international humanitarian law.”



The intense bombing that the people of Gaza are currently experiencing is not only wreaking physical havoc but also denying their right of living and access of basic necessities like electricity, water, food, and life-saving medical care. In this conflict, the international community and the Arab countries need to play their role and insist that international humanitarian law must be followed, especially with regard to protection of civilians, provision of humanitarian aid and paving the way for a lasting ceasefire.