

## Gaza situation update: 12 February 2024

- According to the latest UN OCHA Update<sup>1</sup>, as of 12 February 2024 the following statistics are updated:
  - Casualties: according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, at least 28,340 Palestinians have been killed and 67,984 Palestinians injured, including at least 12,300 children.
  - Internal displacement: As of 5 February, UNRWA estimates that the majority of the 75% of Gaza's 2.3 million people that are displaced are now situated in Rafah. UNRWA estimates that nearly 1.5 million people are in Rafah, six times the population in comparison with before 7 October.<sup>2</sup> On 10 February, the Israeli military reportedly destroyed the western perimeter wall of a school in Khan Younis hosting some 700 IDPs and forced them to evacuate.<sup>3</sup>
  - Humanitarian aid: Between 1 January and 12 February, humanitarian partners planned (i) 77 missions to deliver aid and undertake assessments to areas to the north of Wadi Gaza: 12 were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, 3 were partially facilitated, 14 were impeded and 39 were denied access; and (ii) 189 missions to areas to the south of Wadi Gaza: 107 were facilitated, two were partially facilitated, 18 were initially facilitated but then impeded, and 48 were denied access. On 8 February Commissioner-General of UNRWA Philippe Lazzarini noted that the last time UNRWA was allowed to deliver food north of Wadi Gaza was on 23 January: "Since the beginning of the year, half of our aid mission requests to the north were denied. The UN has identified deep pockets of starvation and hunger in northern Gaza where people are believed to be on the verge of famine. At least 300,000 people living in the area depend on our assistance for their survival."<sup>4</sup>
  - Shelter and food: Roughly 100,000 families need shelter support, including winterized tents, and just under 1 million people are estimated to need essential non-food items.
  - Hospitals: On 10 February, four displaced people in Nasser Hospital were allegedly shot and killed in the hospital's courtyard, and two Palestinians were reportedly shot and killed in front of the gate of Nasser Hospital. Meanwhile other fatalities have been lying on the ground around the hospital, for several days, unreachable due to continued attacks in the hospital's vicinity.
  - West Bank: On 7 February, during an Israeli military operation in Nur Shams refugee camp, two residential buildings sustained severe damage and were rendered uninhabitable, resulting in the displacement of five families comprising 30 people, including eight children. On 10 February a 17-year-old Palestinian child was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers on 11 February 2024, a 16-year-old Palestinian child was shot, injured and arrested by Israeli forces.
- Several European states have halted arms licences for sales to Israel, on the basis of the same substantive criteria as the Strategic Export Licencing Criteria in the UK:
  - On 5 February Belgium's Walloon regional government suspended two licenses for ammunition exports to Israel following the ICJ's provisional rulings as well as the "unacceptable deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip".<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> UNOCHA, *Flash Update #116*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-116>.

<sup>2</sup> UNRWA, *UNRWA Situation Report #76 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-76-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>.

<sup>3</sup> See also; UNRWA, *UNRWA Situation Report #76 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-76-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>.

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://twitter.com/UNLazzarini/status/1755586807876485227>.

<sup>5</sup> Middle East Monitor, *Belgium's Walloon government suspends ammunition exports to Israel over Gaza war, ICJ rulings*, 6 February 2024, available at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240206-belgiums-walloon-government-suspends-ammunition-exports-to-israel-over-gaza-war-icj-rulings/>.

- On 6 February Spanish Foreign Minister, José Manuel Albares revealed that Spain halted exports of arms to Israel on 7 October 2023.<sup>6</sup>
- On 12 February a Dutch appeals court ordered the government to halt the delivery of parts for F-35 fighter jets used by Israel in its bombardment of the Gaza Strip citing that there is a “clear risk” that the parts that the Netherlands is exporting are being used in serious violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>7</sup>
- Rafah: In recent days the UN<sup>8</sup>, EU<sup>9</sup>, US<sup>10</sup>, Australia<sup>11</sup>, Germany<sup>12</sup> and international organisations<sup>13</sup> have all made statements expressing grave concerns about the legality of Israeli attacks on Rafah and the fate of civilians sheltering there. Overnight on 11-12 February at least 37 Palestinians were killed in strikes on Rafah. Two mosques and several houses were hit with strikes hitting near Kuwait Hospital.<sup>14</sup> At least 67 Palestinians were killed in Israeli air and sea attacks on Rafah early on 12 February.<sup>15</sup> Some reports are of up to 100 deaths.<sup>16</sup> On 12 February 2024, Amnesty International released that they had gathered evidence of probable war crimes committed on Rafah in December 2023 and January 2024.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Middle East Monitor, *Spain suspends arms exports to Israel; reiterates need for Palestine statehood*, 7 February 2024, available at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240207-spain-suspends-arms-exports-to-israel-reiterates-need-for-palestine-statehood/>.

<sup>7</sup> Reuters, *Dutch court orders halt to export of F-35 jet parts to Israel*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/dutch-court-orders-halt-export-f-35-jet-parts-israel-2024-02-12/>.

<sup>8</sup> UN, *Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General*, 9 February 2024, “We are extremely worried about the fate of civilians in Rafah,” available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2024/db240209.doc.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> The Guardian, *Middle East crisis live: EU foreign policy chief ‘extraordinarily concerned’ about Israel’s planned Rafah offensive*, 12 February 2024, available at: [https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2024/feb/12/middle-east-crisis-live-updates-israel-gaza-hostages-freed-rafah-strikes-latest-news?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw&page=with%3Ablock-65c9d71c8f08dea6cfed5604#block-65c9d71c8f08dea6cfed5604](https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2024/feb/12/middle-east-crisis-live-updates-israel-gaza-hostages-freed-rafah-strikes-latest-news?CMP=share_btn_tw&page=with%3Ablock-65c9d71c8f08dea6cfed5604#block-65c9d71c8f08dea6cfed5604).

<sup>10</sup> Sky News, *Joe Biden warns Israel against Rafah offensive without ‘credible plan’ for civilians, as Benjamin Netanyahu remains defiant*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/joe-biden-warns-israel-against-rafah-offensive-without-credible-plan-for-civilians-as-benjamin-netanyahu-remains-defiant-13069728>. See also The Guardian, *Biden joins international calls for Israel to halt planned Rafah offensive*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/12/foreign-secretaries-and-diplomats-try-to-persuade-netanyahu-to-call-off-rafah-offensive>

<sup>11</sup> The Guardian, *Australia warns Israel’s plans for Rafah ground offensive could have ‘devastating consequences’*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2024/feb/12/middle-east-crisis-live-updates-israel-gaza-hostages-freed-rafah-strikes-latest-news?page=with:block-65c9fecb8f086f2438b7c791#block-65c9fecb8f086f2438b7c791>

<sup>12</sup> Sky News, *Baerbock warns again of dangers of Israel attacking Rafah ahead of visit*, 13 February 2024, available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/middle-east-latest-us-calls-israels-military-response-in-gaza-over-the-top-in-sharpest-criticism-of-war-12978800>

<sup>13</sup> For example Medecins Sans Frontieres, available at: <https://twitter.com/MSF/status/1756951702316400659> and the WHO, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2024/feb/12/middle-east-crisis-live-updates-israel-gaza-hostages-freed-rafah-strikes-latest-news?page=with:block-65c9d5f98f086f2438b7c64c#block-65c9d5f98f086f2438b7c64c>

<sup>14</sup> UN, *Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General*, 9 February 2024, “We are extremely worried about the fate of civilians in Rafah,” available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2024/db240209.doc.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> Al Jazeera, *Israel’s war on Gaza live: Rafah bombarded as Israel plans ground assault*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://aje.io/icbndn>. See also The Guardian, *Rafah’s 1 million refugees fear Israeli onslaught after night of bombardment*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/12/rafahs-1m-refugees-fear-israeli-onslaught-after-night-of-bombardment>

<sup>16</sup> CNN, *sraeli airstrikes kill more than 100 in Rafah as international alarm mounts over anticipated ground offensive*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/12/middleeast/israel-airstrikes-rafah-ground-offensive-looms-intl-hnk/index.html>

<sup>17</sup> Amnesty, *Israel/OPT: fresh evidence of probable war crimes in Israeli attacks on Rafah*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/israelopt-fresh-evidence-probable-war-crimes-israeli-attacks-rafah>.

- South Africa made an urgent request to the ICJ to consider whether Israel’s decision to extend its military operations in Rafah requires the court to use its power to prevent further imminent breach of the rights of Palestinians in Gaza.<sup>18</sup>
- On 9 February the UN Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, issued a statement noting the ICJ’s ruling on provisional measures and stating that “*violations of international humanitarian law can never justify the collective punishment of the people in Gaza*”.<sup>19</sup>
- On 12 February, Israel announced that the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory, Francesca Albanese, will no longer be allowed to enter Israel or the Palestinian territories after she raised concerns that Israel is in breach of the ICJ’s ruling on provisional measures.<sup>20</sup>
- On 10 February, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) announced that the bodies of two members of an ambulance crew had been discovered in their destroyed vehicle, which they attributed to Israeli shelling.<sup>21</sup> According to PRCS, 14 PRCS crew members have been killed since the start of the hostilities in the Gaza Strip. The crew had been dispatched on 29 January to rescue a six-year-old girl in Gaza city, Hind, the survivor of a strike on her vehicle which killed her five family members. The vehicle with the bodies of the family, including the child, was discovered following the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the area.<sup>22</sup>
- Further incidents of sniper shootings and targeted attacks were reported.<sup>23</sup>
- On 8 February, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, stated that the ‘buffer zone’ being created by the IDF within a kilometre of the Israel-Gaza fence does not appear consistent with the narrow ‘military operations’ exception in IHL for destruction of property and is a possible war crime.<sup>24</sup>
- Israeli officials and members of the IDF continue to make statements of intent relevant to the UK government’s assessment of Israel’s compliance with international law. On 9 February Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu directed the country’s military to plan for the “*evacuation of the population*” from Rafah (a supposed “safe zone”) after saying that the IDF would “*soon go into Rafah, Hamas’s last bastion*.”<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, *South Africa Makes Urgent Request To International Court Of Justice On Rafah Offensive*, 13 February 2024, available at: <https://www.thepresidency.gov.za/south-africa-makes-urgent-request-international-court-justice-rafah-offensive>

<sup>19</sup> UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on the situation in the Middle East and the ICJ provisional measures under Genocide Convention (case of South Africa v. Israel), *Statement on the situation in the Middle East and on the Order of the International Court of Justice of 26 January 2024*, 9 February 2024, available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/un-statement-special-adviser-on-the-prevention-of-genocide-9feb2024/>

<sup>20</sup> See <https://twitter.com/AmichaiStein1/status/1757018951836393558> and The Guardian, *Israel appears to be in breach of ICJ orders on Gaza*, senior UN official says, 10 February 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/10/israel-appears-to-be-in-breach-of-icj-orders-on-gaza-senior-un-official-says>.

<sup>21</sup> See: <https://twitter.com/PalestineRCS/status/1756223629912613294>.

<sup>22</sup> UNOCHA, *Flash Update #116*, 12 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-116>; See: [https://twitter.com/ICRC\\_ilot/status/1756355538160390300?s=20](https://twitter.com/ICRC_ilot/status/1756355538160390300?s=20).

<sup>23</sup> See: <https://twitter.com/QudsNen/status/1756654786957414809?s=20>. See also Al Jazeera, *Al Jazeera’s Ismail Abu Omar, Ahmad Matar wounded in Israeli strike on Gaza*, 13 February 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/13/journalists-including-al-jazeera-reporter-injured-in-israel-gaza-strike#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThey%20were%20directly%20targeted%20by,it%20said%20was%20%E2%80%9Cdeliberate%E2%80%9D>.

<sup>24</sup> UN, *Gaza ‘buffer zone’ possible war crime: UN human rights chief*, 8 February 2024, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146352>.

<sup>25</sup> CNN, *Netanyahu directs Israeli military to draw up plan to evacuate more than one million people from Rafah as offensive looms*, 9 February 2024, available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/09/middleeast/israel-rafah-evacuation-gaza-intl/index.html>. See: <https://twitter.com/EpshtainItay/status/1756012605708120415?s=20>