

Gaza situation update: 5 March 2024

- According to the latest UN OCHA Updates¹, as of 4 March 2024 the following statistics are updated:
 - Casualties: according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, at least 30,631 Palestinians have been killed and 72,043 Palestinians injured.
 - Internal displacement: As of 28 February, according to UNRWA, at least 404 IDPs have been killed, and 1,385 others have been injured, in more than 330 incidents affecting UNRWA premises and shelters hosting IDPs.
 - Food: as of 3 March, 15 children have died of malnutrition and dehydration at Kamal Adwan Hospital and fear has been expressed for the lives of 6 other infants suffering from acute malnutrition. According to UN FAO, the entire food supply chain in Gaza has been severely disrupted with 97 per cent of ground water reportedly unfit for human consumption, about 27 per cent of greenhouses destroyed, more than 40 per cent of croplands and dozens of home barns, broiler farms and sheep farms damaged, more than 600 agricultural wells damaged, and the fishing sector grounded to a halt.
 - Schools: 92% of all school buildings in Gaza are being used as shelters for IDPs and/or have sustained varying levels of damage. At least 55% of schools in Gaza will either need full reconstruction or major rehabilitation work to be functional again, and 45% of school buildings that have been used by IDPs as shelters have been either directly hit or damaged.
 - Power and fuel: analysis of satellite images reveals that cities in the Gaza Strip have experienced an enormous decrease in electricity, with nighttime light reduced by 84 per cent, and Gaza city witnessing the largest reduction at 91 per cent.
 - Hospitals: 155 health facilities have been damaged, and 32 hospitals and 53 health centres rendered non-functional due to attacks or shortages of essentials. 126 ambulances have been damaged and rendered unusable; and 269 medical staff have been detained by Israeli forces. Kamal Adwan Hospital, the primary hospital serving children and offering maternal health services in northern Gaza, has been rendered out of service due to the lack of electricity and fuel. On 2 March, the Israeli army stated that it had carried out a “precision strike” in the area of the Al Emirati field hospital in Rafah, killing 11 people and injuring some 50 others, which the Director-General of the WHO described as “outrageous and unspeakable”. The PRCS reported that Israeli forces are maintaining the siege of Al Amal Hospital in Khan Younis for the 42nd day as a result of which there is a severe shortage of supplies. Al Awda Hospital in Jabalya has resumed partial operations.
 - West Bank: Since 7 October, 413 Palestinians have been killed, including 107 children, and 4,623 Palestinians have been injured, including 710 children. On 29 February, the Israeli authorities demolished 18 structures in the Jericho area, five of which were residential, due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, resulting in the displacement of 7 people, including 3 children. On 2 March another forced demolition resulted in the displacement of 4 households comprising 17 people including 9 children. Since 7 October 2023, 616 people, including 294 children, have been displaced in Area C and East Jerusalem after their homes were demolished due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible to obtain. Since 7 October 2023, OCHA has recorded 615 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians that

¹ UNOCHA, *Flash Update #132*, 5 March 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-132>; UNOCHA, *Flash Update #131*, 4 March 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-131>; and UNOCHA, *Humanitarian needs and response update | 27 February – 4 March 2024*, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-needs-and-response-update-27-february-4-march-2024>. See also UNOCHA, *Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #129*, 29 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-129>

resulted in Palestinian casualties (54 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (491 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (70 incidents).

- Netanyahu's office has published his plan for post-war Gaza, outlining indefinite Israeli military control and buffer zones.² The document also confirmed Israel's intention to destroy the governmental infrastructure of Hamas as well as its military capabilities, and permanently shut down UNRWA.³
- There have been reports of Israel building a militarised corridor through Gaza called 'Highway 749' where buildings have been demolished to create the reported 'buffer zone'.⁴
- Despite international pressure⁵, Israel continues to threaten a full ground offensive into Rafah.⁶ In addition to the many warnings that have already been issued, including from the US, on 19 February 2024, all EU member states except Hungary warned that an attack on Rafah would be "catastrophic" and "unconscionable".⁷
- On 4 March the Commissioner General of UNRWA addressed the UN General Assembly warning despite the "horrors" already seen, an assault on Rafah is imminent and the worst may yet be to come. He outlined the critical impact on civilians that defunding has already had and warned that on the current "disastrous" course, the "entire humanitarian response in Gaza will crumble".⁸
- There have been multiple reports of killings by Israeli forces during food aid distributions:
 - On 29 February, 118 people were killed and more than 760 injured when Israeli forces opened fire on Palestinians during a food aid distribution.⁹ The UN Secretary General condemned the incident,¹⁰ the Security Council expressed deep concern¹¹, and the UN Human Rights Office in strongly deploring the incident noted that "[t]he shooting by

²New York Times, *Netanyahu Issues First Plan for Postwar Gaza*, 23 February 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/23/world/middleeast/netanyahu-postwar-plan-gaza-palestinians-reject.html>. See also Al Jazeera, *Palestinian Authority says Israeli post-war Gaza plan 'destined to fail'*, 23 February 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/23/palestinian-authority-says-israeli-post-war-gaza-plan-destined-to-fail>. See also <https://x.com/EpshtainItay/status/1761077270741967037?s=20>

³ Haaretz, *Netanyahu Unveils Israel's Plan for Postwar Gaza: Full Demilitarization and Closing UNRWA*, 23 February 2024, available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-02-23/ty-article/.premium/netanyahu-unveils-israels-plan-for-postwar-gaza-full-demilitarization-and-closing-unrwa/0000018d-d348-df79-a5cd-f37edde10000>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/TheCradleMedia/status/1762884684806004769?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/EpshtainItay/status/1762941636923834715?s=20>

⁵ New York Times, *Warnings Over Israel's Rafah Threat Come From All Corners*, 17 February 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/15/world/middleeast/rafah-israel-offensive.html>

⁶ BBC, *Israel indicates March deadline for Gaza ground offensive in Rafah*, 19 February 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68334510>. See also Financial Times, *US warns Israel against ground offensive into Rafah in draft UN resolution*, 20 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/19c20550-adb1-4f23-8bc1-bfd97b56e439>

⁷ The Times of Israel, *26 EU countries warn Israel against 'catastrophic' Rafah offensive*, 19 February 2024, available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/26-eu-countries-warn-israel-against-catastrophic-rafah-offensive/>. VOA News, *IDF Shows Rafah Evacuation Plan; UN Agonizes Over Gaza Aid Operations*, 26 February 2024, available at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/israeli-military-presents-rafah-offensive-plan-as-un-warns-of-disaster-for-gaza-aid-operations/7502585.html>

⁸ UNRWA, *STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF UNRWA TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY*, 4 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-commissioner-general-unrwa-general-assembly>

⁹ Al Jazeera, *Flour massacre: How Gaza food killings unfolded, and Israel's story changed*, 1 March 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/1/flour-massacre-how-gaza-food-killings-unfolded-and-israels-story-changed>. BBC, *UN chief urges probe into Gaza aid convoy tragedy*, 1 March 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68443883>. See also, Associated Press, *Gaza doctor says gunfire accounted for 80% of the wounds at his hospital from aid convoy bloodshed*, 2 March 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-news-03-01-2024-86ab114fc0036d0b4fa5a69ed21964c6>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/antonioGuterres/status/1763391376350212248>. See also UNOCHA, *Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General – on Gaza*, 20 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/statement-attributable-spokesperson-secretary-general-gaza>

¹¹ UN Security Council, *Security Council Press Statement on Incident Surrounding Humanitarian Assistance Convoy in Gaza Strip*, 2 March 2024, available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15608.doc.htm>

*Israeli Forces killing and injuring people seeking aid raise serious concerns of violations of international law.*¹² Israel has made contradictory statements in respect of what happened,¹³ but doctors reported gunfire accounting for patients' wounds.¹⁴ Several world leaders have called for an urgent investigation.¹⁵

- There have been several other reports of further attacks on Palestinians waiting for food aid trucks.¹⁶
- There have been further sniper attacks on civilians.¹⁷
- The New York Times reported on an as-yet unpublished investigation by UNRWA accusing Israel of abusing hundreds of Gazans captured during the war.¹⁸
- Starvation and the continued blocking of aid:
 - 15 children have now died of malnutrition or dehydration.¹⁹ UNICEF condemned the “*tragic and horrific*” deaths of children from malnutrition and dehydration as “*man-made, predictable and entirely preventable*”; saying that nearly 16% of children under 2 years in north Gaza are acutely malnourished, and 90% of children under the age of 2 and 95% of pregnant and breastfeeding women face severe food poverty, noting that the “*explosion of child deaths*” they had warned was imminent is now here.²⁰ A new

¹² UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *UN Human Rights Office strongly deplores killing of at least 112 Palestinians during food aid distribution in Gaza City*, 1 March 2024, available at: https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/un-human-rights-office-opt-un-human-rights-office-strongly-deplores-killing-least-112-palestinians-during-food-aid-distribution-gaza-city-enar?utm_source=rw-subscriptions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=country_updates_180&gl=1*v05ohg*_ga*NzAwNDkxMjI3LjE3MDc3NDc1MzU.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTcwOTU2NDQxNS43LjEuMTcwOTU2NTA4MC42MC4wLjA.

¹³ <https://twitter.com/QudsNen/status/1764071418734538812?s=20> ;
<https://twitter.com/EylonALevy/status/1764244687743824180?s=20>;
<https://twitter.com/AvivaKlompas/status/1763273195723923651?s=20>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/AP/status/1763600123194380711?s=20>

¹⁵ France24, *Israel faces mounting pressure for inquiry into Gaza aid deaths*, US to air drop supplies, 1 March 2024, available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20240301-%F0%9F%94%B4-live-macron-expresses-strongest-condemnation-of-gaza-aid-delivery-deaths>

¹⁶ Al Jazeera, ‘*Massacre*’: *Dozens killed by Israeli fire in Gaza while collecting food aid*, 29 February 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/29/dozens-killed-injured-by-israeli-fire-in-gaza-while-collecting-food-aid>. See also UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *UN Human Rights Office strongly deplores killing of at least 112 Palestinians during food aid distribution in Gaza City*, 1 March 2024, available at: https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/un-human-rights-office-opt-un-human-rights-office-strongly-deplores-killing-least-112-palestinians-during-food-aid-distribution-gaza-city-enar?utm_source=rw-subscriptions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=country_updates_180&gl=1*v05ohg*_ga*NzAwNDkxMjI3LjE3MDc3NDc1MzU.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTcwOTU2NDQxNS43LjEuMTcwOTU2NTA4MC42MC4wLjA. See also <https://twitter.com/AJEnglish/status/1764333180809592837?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/RamAbdu/status/1763871459892473895?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/stairwayto3dom/status/1762450632466649261?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/RamAbdu/status/1746555582880866331>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/NourNaim88/status/1763598661634728045?s=20>

¹⁸ New York Times, *U.N. Aid Agency Researchers Allege Abuse of Gazans in Israeli Detention*, 3 March 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/03/world/middleeast/unrwa-gaza-detention-israel.html>. See also <https://twitter.com/AJArabic/status/1762442453741666388?s=20>

¹⁹ UNOCHA, *Flash Update #131*, 4 March 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-131>; BBC, *Children starving to death in northern Gaza – WHO*, 5 March 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68471572>. See also statement of head of the WHO at <https://twitter.com/DrTedros/status/1764652624492515832>. See also <https://twitter.com/AbujomaaGaza/status/1764557568628707657?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/AnasAlSharif0/status/1764548697663197222?s=20>

²⁰ UN News, *Gaza: ‘Babies slowly perishing under the world’s gaze,’ UNICEF warns*, 3 March 2024, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147182>. See also UNICEF, *Statement by Adele Khodr, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa*, 3 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/statement-adele-khodr-unicef-regional-director-middle-east-and-north-africa-0>. See also, UNICEF, *Children’s lives threatened by rising malnutrition in the Gaza Strip*, 19 February 2024, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/childrens-lives-threatened-rising-malnutrition-gaza-strip>. See also <https://twitter.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1762405011990946074?s=20> and <https://twitter.com/KufiyyaPS/status/1762850047652196390?s=20>

report by the Global Nutrition Cluster showed a steep rise in malnutrition among children and pregnant and breastfeeding women.²¹

- The deputy executive director of the WFP told the UN Security Council that more than 500,000, or 1 in 4 people, were at risk of famine, with one in every six children below the age of two considered acutely malnourished.²² He warned that famine is imminent in northern Gaza. The WFP was forced to pause its food aid deliveries to northern Gaza.²³
- Amnesty International²⁴ and Human Rights Watch²⁵ criticised Israel for failing to comply with the ICJ's ruling on provisional measures by continuing to obstruct the provision of basic services and the admission of aid into Gaza, reiterating that these are "*acts of collective punishment that amount to war crimes and include the use of starvation of civilians as a weapon of war.*" They cite UNOCHA statistics that show that the daily average number of trucks entering Gaza dropped by more than a third following the ICJ ruling.²⁶
- Aid organisations have sharply criticized air drops of aid by the US and others, stating that what is needed is for the crossings to be opened and aid allowed into Gaza.²⁷ Jan Egeland, the head of the NRC, stated that Israel has denied entry to tens of thousands of trucks carrying aid.²⁸
- Since 7 October, Israel has stopped issuing visas for international staff of humanitarian organisations which is now critically hampering efforts to get food and other vital supplies into Gaza.²⁹
- Hospitals also continue to be directly attacked by Israeli forces, and evacuation convoys detained.³⁰
 - On 20 February 2024, two MSF staff family members were killed by Israeli forces fired on a house sheltering MSF staff and a clearly marked MSF building.³¹ On 15 February, Israeli forces attacked Nasser hospital in Khan Younis, killing and injuring people, and leaving the hospital with no electricity or running water and cut off from aid.³²

²¹ WHO, *Children's lives threatened by rising malnutrition in the Gaza Strip*, 19 February 2024, available at:

<https://www.who.int/news/item/19-02-2024-children-s-lives-threatened-by-rising-malnutrition-in-the-gaza-strip>

²² WFP, *WFP Deputy Chief warns Security Council of imminent famine in northern Gaza unless conditions change*, 28

February 2024, available at: <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-deputy-chief-warns-security-council-imminent-famine-northern-gaza-unless-conditions-change>

²³ WFP, *UN Food Agency pauses deliveries to the North of Gaza*, 20 February 2024, available at:

<https://www.wfp.org/news/un-food-agency-pauses-deliveries-north-gaza>

²⁴ Amnesty International, *Israel defying ICJ ruling to prevent genocide by failing to allow adequate humanitarian aid to reach Gaza*, 26 February 2024, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/israel-defying-icj-ruling-to-prevent-genocide-by-failing-to-allow-adequate-humanitarian-aid-to-reach-gaza/>

²⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Israel Not Complying with World Court Order in Genocide Case*, 26 February 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/26/israel-not-complying-world-court-order-genocide-case>

²⁶ UNOCHA, *Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported impact | Day 140*, 23 February 2024, available at:

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-140>

²⁷ The Washington Post, available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/02/us-air-drop-gaza-aid/> and UN

News, *Gaza: Frustration mounts as UN convoy is blocked outside stricken hospital*, 27 February 2024, available at:

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146977>

²⁸ Channel4, *Israel 'denying aid to starving children' says head of Norwegian Refugee Council*, 28 February 2024, available

at: <https://www.channel4.com/news/israel-denying-aid-to-starving-children-says-head-of-norwegian-refugee-council>

https://twitter.com/NRC_Egeland/status/1762872931711852902?s=20 and

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2024/02/27/amanpour-gaza-humanitarian-crisis-jan-egeland.cnn>. See also

<https://twitter.com/GhassanAbuSitt1/status/1763627210991186387?s=20>

²⁹ The Guardian, *Humanitarian workers face deportation from Israel after freeze on visas*, 29 February 2024, available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/29/humanitarian-workers-face-deportation-from-israel-after-freeze-on-visas>

³⁰ UNOCHA, *New incident with medical evacuation at Al Amal hospital marks unacceptable security conditions for humanitarian aid delivery*, 27 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/new-incident-medical-evacuation-al-amal-hospital-marks-unacceptable-security-conditions-humanitarian-aid>

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/new-incident-medical-evacuation-al-amal-hospital-marks-unacceptable-security-conditions-humanitarian-aid>

³¹ MSF, *Gaza: MSF strongly condemns deadly Israeli attack on staff and family shelter*, 22 February 2024, available at:

<https://msf.org.uk/article/gaza-msf-strongly-condemns-deadly-israeli-attack-staff-and-family-shelter>

³² UN Office of the Secretary General, *HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NOON BRIEFING BY STÉPHANE DUJARRIC*,

- UNOCHA and WHO managed to transfer some patients but 130 were trapped behind, along with 15 healthcare workers, in the hospital which is no longer functioning.³³
- On 2 March 2024, shelling near the entrance of the Emirati Hospital in Rafah killed and injured several people including a member of an ambulance crew.³⁴ UN experts warned that Israel’s alleged undercover killings in Ibn Sina hospital in the occupied West Bank may amount to grave violations of IHL and international human rights law, including the war crime of perfidy.³⁵
 - On 22 February 2024, the Secretary General of MSF addressed the UN Security Council condemning the pattern of Israeli attacks on healthcare facilities.³⁶
 - According to the WHO, only 12 of Gaza’s 36 hospitals are “partially functioning”.³⁷ UNFPA has warned of the public health disaster, warning for example that at Al-Helal El-Eirati Maternity Hospital 77 babies share 20 incubators.³⁸
 - On 23 February 2024, UN experts released a statement warning that “*any transfer of weapons or ammunition to Israel that would be used in Gaza is likely to violate international humanitarian law and must cease immediately.*”³⁹

SPOKESMAN FOR SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES, 20 February 2024, available at: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/highlight/2024-02-20.html>. See also MSF, *Nasser Hospital shelled; MSF staff member detained and unaccounted for*, 15 February 2024, available at: <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/gaza-msf-condemns-israels-forced-evacuation-nasser-hospital>

³³ MSF, *MSF calls for the protection and safe evacuation of patients from Nasser hospital in Gaza*, 20 February 2024, available at: <https://www.msf.org/gaza-msf-calls-protection-and-safe-evacuation-patients-nasser-hospital>. See also BBC, *WHO says Gaza's Nasser hospital not functional after Israel raids*, 18 February 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68330579>

³⁴ MSF, *Several killed and injured after shelling near entrance of Emirati Hospital*, 2 March 2024, available at: <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/our-response-israel-gaza-war>

³⁵ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Israel’s alleged undercover killings in occupied West Bank hospital may amount to extrajudicial killings and war crimes: UN experts*, 9 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/02/israels-alleged-undercover-killings-occupied-west-bank-hospital-may-amount>

³⁶ MSF, *MSF to UN Security Council: The people of Gaza need an immediate and sustained ceasefire now*, 22 February 2024, available at: <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/msf-un-security-council-people-gaza-need-immediate-and-sustained-ceasefire-now>

³⁷ UN News, *No medicine, no hope: Doctors describe life under Israeli attack in Gaza*, 28 February 2024, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1147037>

³⁸ UNFPA, *Grief and Fear Mount in Rafah as People are Trapped with Nowhere Safe To Go*, 16 February 2024, available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/stories/grief-and-fear-mount-rafah-people-are-trapped-nowhere-safe-go>

³⁹ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Arms exports to Israel must stop immediately: UN experts*, 23 February 2024, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/02/arms-exports-israel-must-stop-immediately-un-experts>