

Gaza situation update: 25 March 2024

1. **UN OCHA Updates:** As of 22 March 2024 the following statistics are updated:
 - a. Palestinian casualties: According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, at least 31,988 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and 74,188 have been injured since 7 October 2023.
 - b. West Bank: Since 7 October, 434 Palestinians have been killed, including 421 by Israeli forces, nine by settlers and three by either Israeli forces or settlers, across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. These include 126 Palestinians killed since the start of 2024 (compared with 85 during the same period in 2023), the vast majority by Israeli forces. Some 5,000 Palestinians have been injured, including 725 children, since 7 October in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.¹
2. **Arms trade developments:** On 19 March 2024, the Canadian Parliament voted to suspend arms sales to Israel. The motion passed with an overwhelming majority of 204-117.² Foreign Minister Melanie Joly thereafter confirmed that “[s]ince January 8th, the government has not approved new arms export permits to Israel and this will continue until we can ensure full compliance with our export regime.”³ Canadian law, per §7.4 of the Export and Import Permits Act, stipulates that arms exports must cease “where there is a substantial risk that the items exported could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.”⁴ This provision is therefore substantially very similar to Criterion 2(c) of the U.K.’s Strategic Licensing Export Criteria.
3. On 19 March, Oxfam and Human Rights Watch made submissions to the US Government which detailed why “Israeli assurances to use US arms legally are not credible.” On 15 March, Israel had submitted assurances to the US State Department to stating that it is not arbitrarily blocking US humanitarian assistance and not violating international humanitarian law.⁵ In response, Oxfam and Human Rights Watch submitted evidence rebutting Israel’s assertions and separated their evidence into three categories: (i) violations of international humanitarian law; (ii) intentional deprivation of services critical to the survival of the population; (iii) arbitrary denial and restrictions of humanitarian aid. All evidence adduced had been directly collected by the submitting organisations.⁶
4. **Starvation:** On 25 March, the UN Secretary-General said “[t]he scale and speed of the death and destruction are on an entirely different level, and now, starvation is bearing down on Palestinians in Gaza.”⁷ On 18 March, the UN Relief Chief said “[f]amine is imminent in Gaza. More than 1 million people are at risk because they have been cut off from life-saving aid, markets have collapsed, and fields have been destroyed. The international community should hang its head in shame for failing to stop this... We know that once famine is declared it is way

¹ UN OCHA, “Flash Update #145,” 22 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-145>

² The Guardian, “Canada to halt arms sales to Israel after non-binding vote in house of commons,” 19 March 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/19/canada-halt-arms-sales-to-israel>

³ Reuters, “Canadian freeze on new arms export permits to Israel to stay,” 20 March 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/canadian-freeze-new-arms-export-permits-israel-stay-2024-03-20/>

⁴ Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights, “We’re suing the Canadian government over illegal arms exports to Israel,” 5 March 2024, available at: <https://claihr.ca/arms-exports-to-israel-challenge/>

⁵ Human Rights Watch, “Israeli assurances to use US arms legally are not credible,” 19 March 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/03/19/israeli-assurances-use-us-arms-legally-are-not-credible#:~:text=NSM%2D20%20establishes%20that%20foreign,not%20violating%20international%20humanitarian%20law.>

⁶ Human Rights Watch, “Israeli forces’ conduct in Gaza,” 19 March 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/03/19/israeli-forces-conduct-gaza>

⁷ UN News, “‘We must push for lasting peace in Gaza’, UN chief insists as starvation threat nears,” 25 March 2024, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147921>

too late.”⁸ The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification released findings on 18 March which said that “[t]he entire population in the Gaza Strip (2.23 million) is facing high levels of acute food insecurity. From mid-March to mid-July, in the most likely scenario and under the assumption of an escalation of the conflict including a ground offensive in Rafah, half of the population of the Gaza Strip (1.11 million people) is expected to face catastrophic conditions (IPC Phase 5), the most severe level in the IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale. This represents an increase of 530,000 people (92 percent) compared to the previous analysis.”⁹ UN OCHA noted this is the highest number of people ever recorded in this category by the IPC system.¹⁰

5. On 15 March, UNICEF published a press release entitled “Acute malnutrition has doubled in one month in the north of Gaza strip.” UNICEF found that:
 - a. “1 in 3 children under 2 years of age – in the Northern Gaza Strip suffer from acute malnutrition, a staggering escalation from 15.6 per cent in January. Malnutrition among children is spreading fast and reaching devastating and unprecedented levels in the Gaza Strip due to the wide-reaching impacts of the war and ongoing restrictions on aid delivery.”
 - b. “Nutrition screenings 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 form of malnutrition, which puts children at highest risk of medical complications and death unless they receive urgent therapeutic feeding and treatment, which is not available.”
6. On 12 March, the Ministry of Health reported that 27 people, including 23 children, had died of malnutrition and dehydration at hospitals in northern Gaza.¹¹ World Vision likewise confirmed that acute malnourishment is disproportionately affecting children.¹² The World Food Programme has warned that the crisis heightens the risk of long-term health impacts and is disproportionately affecting women and children, with 90 per cent of mothers and children not eating a diverse diet.¹³ Save the Children warned: “Children in Gaza cannot wait to eat. They are already dying from malnutrition and saving their lives is a matter of hours or days – not weeks.”
7. UN OCHA also found that “[o]n the night of 11 March, media outlets reported that a shooting incident at the Kuwait roundabout southeast of Gaza city resulted in at least nine fatalities and numerous injuries. The attack targeted individuals congregated to collect vital aid. The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) had documented 14 such incidents at two entrances of Gaza city between mid-January and the end of February, and at least 11 additional incidents were reported between 1 and 8 March, during which at least 28 Palestinians have been reportedly killed.” Likewise on 23 March, it was reported that Israeli forces opened fire on starving Palestinians who rushed towards an aid truck.¹⁴
8. On 7 March, UN OCHA reported that the Consumer Price Index for food in Gaza has risen by 105% since 7 October, significantly diminishing people’s purchasing power. UNRWA similarly

⁸ <https://twitter.com/UNReliefChief/status/1769746065991852212?s=20>

⁹ IPC, “Special Brief – the Gaza Strip,” 18 March 2024, available at:

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf

¹⁰ UN OCHA, “Flash Update #142,” 19 March 2024, available at: [https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-142#:~:text=The%20hunger%20crisis%20in%20the,\(ERC\)%2C%20Martin%20Griffiths.](https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-142#:~:text=The%20hunger%20crisis%20in%20the,(ERC)%2C%20Martin%20Griffiths.)

¹¹ UN OCHA, “Reported Impact – Day 157,” 12 March 2024, available at: https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Gaza_casualties_info-graphic_12_March_2024.pdf

¹² World Division, “World Vision says reports of Gazan children starving to death of is ‘grave concern’,” 8 March 2024, available at: <https://www.wvi.org/newsroom/global-hunger-crisis/world-vision-says-reports-gazan-children-starving-death-grave-concern>

¹³ <https://twitter.com/WFP/status/1766826678687318309?s=20>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/Rahmazinegypt/status/1771848297453384046?s=20>

said that basic commodities in northern governorates were now “25 times more expensive than they were before the war,” with a 25-kg sack of flour costing more than \$400.¹⁵

9. **Withholding of aid:** On 24 March, the head of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, said that Israel had informed the UN it would not approve any UNRWA food convoys to the north of Gaza. Mr. Lazzarini said “[t]his is outrageous and makes it intention to obstruct lifesaving assistance during a man-made famine. These restrictions must be lifted.”¹⁶
10. On 17 March, the World Food Programme (WFP) successfully delivered 18 trucks carrying food aid to Gaza city. This was only the ninth convoy WFP managed to take to northern Gaza in all of 2024. WFP said that “simply addressing the basic food needs will require at least 300 trucks to enter Gaza every day and distribute food, especially in the north.”¹⁷ WFP Deputy Executive Director Carl Saku said “WFP and our partners have food supplies ready, at the border and in the region, to feed all 2.2 million people across Gaza – but moving food into and within Gaza is like trying to navigate a maze, with obstacles at every turn.” WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain said “people in Gaza are starving to death right now... If we wait until famine has been declared, it’s too late.”
11. On 7 March, Lord Cameron wrote to Alicia Kearns MP on the subject of Israeli blockades of U.K. aid. He said “UK aid for Gaza has been routinely held up waiting for Israeli permissions... I am aware of some UK funded aid being stuck at the border for just under three weeks waiting for approval... [O]ne of the key reasons for distribution issues with Gaza is that Israel is preventing the necessary staff from getting visas.” Lord Cameron likewise confirmed that Israel had mandated that the Kerem Shalom crossing be closed on Saturdays.¹⁸ It is notable that on 13 February, Lord Cameron said that if Israel restricted aid to Gaza, “that would be a breach of international humanitarian law.”¹⁹
12. A report published by UN OCHA on 6 March found that “[i]n February, the UN and its humanitarian partners planned only 24 missions to areas north of Gaza, of which six (25%) were facilitated... a UN-coordinated food convoy was directly hit by Israeli naval fire on 5 February while waiting at a holding point as required by the Israeli military. The following day, UN staff reported harassment and intimidation by Israeli soldiers towards them and convoy members at an Israeli checkpoint.”²⁰
13. On 5 March, the WFP attempted to deliver food aid in a 14-truck convoy to northern Gaza, its first attempt since 20 February. It was turned back by Israeli forces at the Wadi Gaza checkpoint after a three-hour wait. The trucks, which were carrying 200 tons of food aid, were subsequently ransacked by a large crowd of desperate people.²¹

¹⁵ UN News, “‘We must push for lasting peace in Gaza’, UN chief insists as starvation threat nears,” 25 March 2024, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147921>

¹⁶ Reuters, “UNRWA says Israel will end its food convoy to northern Gaza,” 24 March 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/unrwa-says-israel-will-no-longer-approve-its-food-convoys-northern-gaza-2024-03-24/>

¹⁷ WFP, “Famine imminent in northern Gaza, new report warns,” 18 March 2024, available at: <https://www.wfp.org/news/famine-imminent-northern-gaza-new-report-warns>

¹⁸ https://twitter.com/aliciakearns/status/1770824294240600253?t=iU-AboA_4YkrKWPGfNwTWw&s=19

¹⁹ The Guardian, “Israel in breach of international law if it denies Gaza food and water, says UK Foreign Secretary,” 13 February 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/13/israel-in-breach-of-international-law-if-gaza-denied-food-and-water-says-cameron#:~:text=In%20Cameron's%20clearest%20warning%20to,breach%20of%20international%20humanitarian%20aw%E2%80%9D>.

²⁰ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Access Snapshot – Gaza Strip, End-February 2024,” 6 March 2024, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-access-snapshot-gaza-strip-end-february-2024>

²¹ UN OCHA, “Flash Update #134,” 7 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-134#:~:text=On%205%20March%2C%20a%2014,after%20a%20three%2Dhour%20wait>.

14. **Attacks on humanitarian facilities and personnel:** On 20 March, the Israeli army shelled a UNRWA warehouse that was being preparing to receive humanitarian aid in Jabalia refugee camp. At least two people working in the facility were killed.²²
15. On 13 March, Israeli forces attacked a UNRWA facility in Rafah which serves as a warehouse and a distribution centre. Six people were killed, including a UNRWA staff member, and 22 were injured. UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said: “Today’s attack on one of the very few remaining UNRWA distribution centres in the Gaza Strip comes as food supplies are running out, hunger is widespread and, in some areas, turning into famine. Every day, we 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.”²³ Al Jazeera reported that in the week leading up to 20 March, “more than 100 aid workers have been killed and dozens wounded.”²⁴
16. **Air drops:** The preceding few weeks have seen a host of countries air drop aid into Gaza.²⁵ For example, on 21 February, the U.K. made its first air drop of aid into Gaza. It did so despite the statement of the Minister for Armed Forces, James Heappey, on 8 January that the U.K. would not be dropping aid into Gaza as “air dropping is a very imprecise way of doing business.”²⁶
17. Air drops of humanitarian aid into Gaza have been roundly rejected by international organisations and civil society globally: they are ineffective and expensive, costing seven times more than ground-delivered aid, according to the World Food Programme.²⁷ The International Committee of the Red Cross has previously said that “delivering sudden and unsupervised types of food to people who are malnourished or even starving can pose serious risks to life.”²⁸ Former USAID director to the West Bank said “the airdrops are symbolic and designed in ways to appease the domestic base... The US has the ability to compel Israel to open up more aid and by not doing that we’re... potentially creating more chaos in Gaza.”²⁹ Scott Paul of Oxfam America wrote on X: “Instead of indiscriminate airdrops in Gaza, the US should cut the flow of weapons to Israel that are used in indiscriminate attacks.”³⁰
18. **Mistreatment of vulnerable groups:** Reports have emerged of the severe mistreatment of women captured by Israeli forces, which have included being stripped repeatedly to their underwear (apparently in the presence of female Israeli soldiers) who physically abused them in the process, kicking and spitting on them.³¹ The Jerusalem Post reported that US officials had queried why Israeli forces “systematically” sexually abuse Palestinian women.³²

²² https://twitter.com/saulstaniforth/status/1770346656770199588?s=48&t=ZseYV7_ocJfotilMxeJ4hQ

²³ UNRWA, “Israeli forces hit UNRWA centre used for food and lifesaving supplies,” 13 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/least-one-unrwa-staff-killed-when-israeli-forces-hit-unrwa-centre-used>

²⁴ Al Jazeera, “Israel’s war on Gaza updates: Israel ‘negative’ on Hamas truce proposal,” 20 March 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/3/20/israels-war-on-gaza-live-multiple-attacks-kill-dozens-of-palestinians>

²⁵ BBC, “Gaza aid airdrop: Why delivering food from the air is controversial,” 6 March 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68478831>

²⁶ Hansard, “Commons Chamber – debated on Monday 8 January 2024,” 8 January 2024, available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-01-08/debates/a07c1e17-0edd-4da6-8be4-178e5a6df432/CommonsChamber>

²⁷ BBC, “Gaza aid airdrop: Why delivering food from the air is controversial,” 6 March 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68478831>

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ Al Jazeera, “US airdrops food into Gaza in move criticised by aid groups,” 2 March 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/2/us-airdrops-food-to-gaza-in-move-criticised-by-aid-organisations>

³⁰ BBC, “Gaza aid airdrop: Why delivering food from the air is controversial,” 6 March 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68478831>

³¹ <https://twitter.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1772118375646593074?s=20>

³² The Jerusalem Post, “US official accused IDF of sexually abusing Palestinian women, general says,” 24 March 2024, available at: <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-793420>

19. Al Haq interviewed Raed Khamis Abu Arab, a blind man who was attacked and detained whilst sheltering in the Bureij camp. Arab said “I was beaten and insulted daily until the soldiers offered to give me [medical] treatment in exchange for giving them information... When I asked them for drops that would treat my high eye pressure, they only brought me paracetamol.”³³ On 11 March, Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children published a report on the impact of the hostilities on people with disabilities. They found that at least 5,000 people in Gaza have acquired disabilities in the last five months, and this group is among the vulnerable groups worst affected by hostilities.³⁴ The Atfaluna Society’s premises on Palestine square was also destroyed.³⁵
20. **Al Shifa raid:** Over the past eight days, there has been an ongoing military raid on Shifa Hospital and the surrounding area. The Israeli forces have claimed that this is because “ Hamas hijacked the Shifa Hospital and hides behind the sick and injured, waging war from inside Shifa Hospital.”³⁶ The Israeli forces have released footage which they claim shows a Palestinian gunman in a nearby building throwing grenades at them, before being shot.³⁷ The Israeli military also posted a video purporting to show them assembling a “Humanitarian Site in the Shifa Hospital.”³⁸
21. Clearly traumatised witnesses who have fled the area have been recorded speaking of their ordeals, and it is apparent that the raid has featured extremely disturbing conduct by Israeli forces, including:
- a. Killing of large numbers of men, including physicians who refuse to leave their patients.³⁹ Israeli forces have admitted to killing 170 people, and detaining and questioning more than 800.⁴⁰
 - b. Numerous accounts of people being blindfolded, tied up, and stripped naked before being interrogated.⁴¹ There are also reports of people being shot at even once Israeli forces were satisfied that they were not Hamas fighters and had released them.⁴²
 - c. Beating and shooting at teenage boys.⁴³
 - d. Separation of men from women and children.⁴⁴

³³ https://www.instagram.com/p/C4qB4e4NACF/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&img_index=1

³⁴ Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children, “Inclusive needs assessment,” 11 March 2024, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/inclusive-needs-assessment-situation-conflict-affected-persons-and-without-disabilities-gaza-strip-march-2024>

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7YqbJnReCc>; <https://x.com/NemoAnno/status/1765715171341660658?s=20>

³⁶ <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1772020495195451439>

³⁷ <https://x.com/Osint613/status/1772034560689143845?s=20>

³⁸ <https://twitter.com/DrMadsGilbert/status/1771872251266171382?s=20>

³⁹ https://twitter.com/Resist_05/status/1771688106019709134?s=20

⁴⁰ The New York Times, “Witnesses describe fear and deprivation at besieged hospital in Gaza,” 24 March 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/24/world/middleeast/al-shifa-hospital-gaza-israel.html>.

⁴¹ CNN, “Israeli military forced journalists and health workers to strip in Gaza hospital raid, eyewitnesses say,” 21 March 2024, available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/03/20/middleeast/al-shifa-gaza-israel-raid-intl/index.html>. See also NBC News, “Gazans describe being ‘blindfolded, tied up’ during Al Shifa Hospital raid,” 23 March 2024, available at:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/video/gazans-describe-being-blindfolded-tied-up-during-al-shifa-hospital-raid-207555654002>

⁴² For example, one social media user stated: “I got permission to share a de-identified story of an Al-Shifa physician who was recently detained by IDF. He was stripped, given a white jumpsuit to put on, interrogated and then when they were satisfied he was “NOT Hamas” they released him--- IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE in the dead of night. He and others who had been released were being jeered at and swung at by IDF soldiers. They were surrounded by tanks. He ran into the direction of the beach to get his bearings. He said he could see the ammunition spark and could hear the bullets going past his head because IDF snipers were shooting at them. He was able to get to a safe space where he found an abandoned mattress and slept for the night. Then in the day made it to house that was a day's walk away. This doctor is an elderly man.” https://x.com/el_sabawi/status/1771718373425999915?s=20

⁴³ <https://x.com/KufiyyaPS/status/1771978525383548981?s=20>

⁴⁴ The New York Times, “Witnesses describe fear and deprivation at besieged hospital in Gaza,” 24 March 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/24/world/middleeast/al-shifa-hospital-gaza-israel.html>

- e. Expelling local residents from their homes and burning their homes, often killing the male occupants.⁴⁵
22. In addition, on 18 March, Al Jazeera released footage which purported to show the Israeli military bulldozing the courtyard of Al-Shifa hospital.⁴⁶ Widespread accounts emerged of detention and killing of doctors and other medical staff, with truckloads of Palestinians dressed in white overalls used by the Israeli military geolocated to the courtyard of Shifa hospital.⁴⁷ Al Jazeera also reported that the Israeli military has blown up the entire specialist surgical building at Al Shifa and ordered everybody in the hospital to evacuate immediately.⁴⁸
23. Reports by survivors include the following quotes:
- “They took the men, killed them, and the martyrs were all around us... Just shooting, shooting, shooting, they killed us... somebody we get flour from, with 5 kids, 5 people with him, they dragged them away... I just hope they didn’t execute them... They killed us, they killed us! They took the young men around me, and a young girl was martyred, and my son’s wife was injured. They said they took them to the south, I don’t know where they took them, they took them, I just don’t know where. They took our beautiful children”⁴⁹ (elderly woman interviewed after fleeing)*
- “There are martyrs under the rubble. They’re burning houses, burning entire floors, destroying houses on peoples’ heads We barely made it out alive! I have children with me – Children – where do I run with them, where do I take them for safety?”⁵⁰*
- “They stormed the residential building where my family resides, and suddenly we found 50 armed soldiers in the middle of the living room. They ordered the men to strip naked and the women to follow them. They took us to the first floor, where they placed the men in a room next to us before taking them to al-Shifa Hospital. As for us women, they ordered us to go down and head towards the southern areas of the Strip.”⁵¹*
- “We are trapped where we are inside the department... A shell hit our building on the first floor... we cannot operate because there is no electricity or water.” (31-year old surgical resident, Dr. Amer Jedbeh)*
24. **Buffer zones and demolitions:** On 14 March, UN OCHA reported that “it will take years to clear nearly 23 million metric tons of debris generated by the destruction of residential units and other properties across the Gaza Strip.”⁵² On 11 March, the NGO Humanity & Inclusion warned of the lasting impact of the untold scale of destruction thus far: “Given Gaza’s urban environment – where buildings have collapsed, are in ruins or damaged – explosive remnants

⁴⁵ <https://x.com/AbujomaaGaza/status/1771980142975312039?s=20>. See also: EuroMed Monitor, “Israeli forces are brutally targeting civilians in Gaza City, burning homes near Shifa medical complex,” 22 March 2024, available at: <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6236/Israeli-forces-are-brutally-targeting-civilians-in-Gaza-City-burning-homes-near-Shifa-Medical-Complex>

⁴⁶ https://twitter.com/naksbilal/status/1769679583090004123?s=46&t=ZseYV7_ocJfotilMxeJ4hQ

⁴⁷ <https://x.com/NemoAnno/status/1770564439923671342?s=20>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcC4hBgRVRY>

⁴⁹ <https://twitter.com/NaksBilal/status/1771906279750943214?s=20>

⁵⁰ <https://twitter.com/NaksBilal/status/1771897668366635114?s=20>

⁵¹ EuroMed Monitor, “Israeli forces are brutally targeting civilians in Gaza City, burning homes near Shifa medical complex,” 22 March 2024, available at: <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6236/Israeli-forces-are-brutally-targeting-civilians-in-Gaza-City-burning-homes-near-Shifa-Medical-Complex>

⁵² UN OCHA, “Today’s top news: Occupied Palestinian Territory, Haiti. Mozambique,” 14 March 2024, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/news/todays-top-news-occupied-palestinian-territory-haiti-mozambique>

are not only a permanent danger, but will also have a long-term impact on Gazans' daily lives and their territory's socio-economic development."⁵³

25. Israeli soldiers continue to film themselves demolishing Palestinian property and disseminating the videos for entertainment. For example, An Israeli social media channel dedicated to tank enthusiasts shows Israeli tanks shelling a UN building and shooting at a school for entertainment.⁵⁴ On 20th March 2024, a video was posted on social media by a South African soldier fighting with the Israeli military in Khan Younis, showing him making a comedy video as a large controlled demolition takes place behind him. In the video, he says: "Hello, this is LFT, I'm coming to you live from Khan Younis, everything is OK, everything is fine..." before the building behind him explodes. He then pretends to be afraid in a comical fashion.⁵⁵ Other social media videos showed large-scale controlled demolitions for the buffer zones.⁵⁶

26. Israeli newspaper the Times of Israel released an article on the creation of the buffer zone, stating:⁵⁷

"Since receiving a green light from the government, the army has been working to clear a one-kilometer-wide (0.6-mile) strip of land running along the border, inside Gaza, for the buffer zone... Besides destroying dozens of kilometers of tunnels, creating the zone includes clearing away any vegetation, including farm fields, and razing homes or other buildings... The destruction is evident in Khuza'a, whose eastern edge practically kisses the border. Houses that sat only a few hundred meters (1,000 feet or more) from the fence before the war are now mostly reduced to rubble... The work is being done in conjunction with the military's legal division, which may one day have to defend the decision to expropriate a chunk of land from the Gaza Strip."

27. The Wall Street Journal reports that the buffer zone will reduce the size of the Gaza Strip by 16%.⁵⁸

28. Attacks on journalists: On 7 January, the Israeli military conducted a missile strike on a car carrying four Palestinian journalists outside of Khan Younis, in southern Gaza. Two members of an Al Jazeera crew were killed, along with their driver. On 19 March, the Washington Post published independent findings in which they had analysed drone footage of the strike and interviewed 14 eye witnesses. They found no lawful justification for the attack.⁵⁹ Since the escalation of hostilities on 7 October, ninety journalists and media workers have been killed in Gaza.

⁵³ France 24, "Unexploded bombs, a long-term threat to life in Gaza," 11 March 2024, available at:

<https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20240311-unexploded-bombs-long-term-threat-gaza-strip-israel-humanity-inclusion>

⁵⁴ <https://twitter.com/QudsNen/status/1771909509256024354?s=20>. See also this video which shows the directing of a tank shell at a mosque minaret: <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1771893721417609636?s=20>. See also a video interview given by an Israeli reservist in which he states "My unit was in charge of explosions. We blew up houses of terrorists, mosques, UN offices, I remember we got into some UN office that was in charge of helping families in Gaza that were affected by the war, and we destroyed it" available at:

<https://twitter.com/loffredojeremy/status/1770968693914169802?s=20>.

⁵⁵ <https://twitter.com/NourNaim88/status/1770303640047153281?s=20>

⁵⁶ <https://x.com/ytirawi/status/1767643678955208950?s=20>; <https://x.com/ytirawi/status/1769363723578142977?s=20>

⁵⁷ The Times of Israel, "On both sides of Gaza's border, the IDF is remaking security from the (under)ground up," 21 March 2024, available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/on-both-sides-of-gazas-border-the-idf-is-remaking-security-from-the-underground-up/>

⁵⁸ The Wall Street Journal, "How Israel's Proposed Buffer Zone Reshapes the Gaza Strip," 16 March 2024, available at: <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israel-gaza-hamas-war-buffer-zone-explained-2a7347af>

⁵⁹ The Washington Post, "Drone footage raises questions about Israeli justification for deadly strike on Gaza journalists," 19 March 2024, available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/19/gaza-journalists-killed-israel-al-jazeera-footage/>

29. **Torture and degrading treatment:** Extremely disturbing reports of torture and degrading treatment have continued to emerge. For example, a report by Middle East Eye stated: “Palestinian men detained by Israeli forces since the start of the war in Gaza have told Middle East Eye how they were physically tortured with dogs and electricity, subjected to mock executions, and held in humiliating and degrading conditions. In testimonies to MEE, one man, who was taken by Israeli forces from a school in Gaza where he had sought refuge with his family, described how he had been handcuffed, blindfolded, and detained in a metal cage for 42 days.”⁶⁰
30. **Imminent ground offensive in Rafah:** There has been deep international concern over Israel’s planned ground offensive in Rafah, Gaza’s southernmost tip, where more than 1.5 million people are sheltering, with nowhere left to go.⁶¹ Tedros Ghebreyesus, director general of the World Health Organisation, implored Israel “in the name of humanity” not to launch such an offensive.⁶² On 11 March, condemnation came from even Israel’s closest ally, with U.S. President Biden saying such an offensive would be a “red line” and that Israel “must pay more attention to the innocent lives being lost.”⁶³ Despite this, in a cabinet meeting on 17 March, Prime Minister Netanyahu vowed to press ahead. He said “on the diplomatic front, until now we have succeeded in allowing our forces to fight in an unprecedented manner for five full months. However, it is no secret that the international pressure is increasing... Those who say that the action in Rafah will not occur are those who also said that we would not enter Gaza, or act in Shifa or in Khan Younis, and that we would not resume the fighting after the pause [in hostilities in November].”⁶⁴
31. **Drone strikes on civilians:** Gazan civilians have reported indiscriminate drone strikes consistently throughout the war, and two recent developments have strongly corroborated these claims.
- a. First, a video which the Israeli forces claimed showed the elimination of a terrorist was exposed as depicting two civilians. The Israeli forces claimed that one of the people was holding a weapon, but it emerged that the item was a bicycle.⁶⁵ The Israeli forces have admitted that the item was a bicycle.
 - b. Al Jazeera obtained footage from an Israeli drone which showed a group of civilian men being attacked with a drone, which returns to keep firing once they are injured. This video matched earlier drone footage which the Israeli authorities had released, purporting to show “terrorists”.⁶⁶
32. **Airstrikes:** Overall, the situation in Gaza has dramatically deteriorated further, as airstrikes continued at the same intensity, killing families on a daily basis. Reports continue to emerge of not only large numbers of women and children being killed,⁶⁷ but associated superfluous

⁶⁰ <https://x.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1769181860058341426?s=20>

⁶¹ Al Jazeera, “Palestinians cling to life in Rafah as Israel threatens Gaza’s last refuge,” 24 February 2024, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2024/2/24/palestinians-cling-to-life-in-rafah-as-israel-threatens-gazas-last-refuge>

⁶² The Guardian, “Israeli PM vows to press ahead with assault on Rafah,” 17 March 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/17/benjamin-netanyahu-troops-rafah-israel-gaza>

⁶³ The Guardian, “Netanyahu says Biden ‘wrong’ after US president criticises approach to Gaza war,” 11 March 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/11/benjamin-netanyahu-joe-biden-wrong-israel-us-president-criticises-approach-to-gaza-war-ceasefire-palestine-hamas>

⁶⁴ The Guardian, “Israeli PM vows to press ahead with assault on Rafah,” 17 March 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/17/benjamin-netanyahu-troops-rafah-israel-gaza>

⁶⁵ <https://twitter.com/anadoluagency/status/1768018806956274012?s=20>

⁶⁶ <https://twitter.com/RamAbdu/status/1770895103785046489>; see also <https://twitter.com/obretix/status/1771571953226170697?s=20>

⁶⁷ For example, on 25 March 2024 alone, an airstrike in Deir Al Balah reportedly killed 18 Palestinians including 7 women and 9 children: <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1772042369870798852?s=20>; <https://twitter.com/AnasAlSharif0/status/1772038814950641684?s=20>. Another airstrike in Rafah destroyed the home of

suffering due to the siege, like vast numbers being treated without anaesthetic,⁶⁸ children being left to die with no morphine, and reports of a child dying slowly over four days because she was trapped under rubble.⁶⁹

the Kurdi family, killing civilians as shown in this video of a girl bidding farewell to her mother and brother:

<https://twitter.com/NourNaim88/status/1772016756665589878?s=20>.

⁶⁸ <https://theintercept.com/2024/03/23/intercepted-doctor-gaza-interview/>

⁶⁹ <https://twitter.com/AbujomaaGaza/status/1771827753844658517?s=20>