

# UN: Israel Destroying Gaza's Food System, Weaponizing Food

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – United Nations human rights experts have warned that “every single person” in the war-torn Gaza Strip is facing hunger amid the Zionist regime’s war and blockade against the besieged enclave, calling for sustained delivery of aid to prevent starvation.

“Currently every single person in Gaza is hungry, a quarter of the population are starving and struggling to find food and drinkable water, and famine is imminent. Pregnant women are not receiving adequate nutrition and healthcare, putting their lives at risk,” the UN experts said on Wednesday.

“In addition, all children under five – 335,000 – are at high risk of severe malnutrition as the risk of famine conditions continues to increase, a whole generation is now in danger of suffering from stunting,” they added.

The UN experts went on to say that the Zionist regime is destroying Gaza’s food system and using food as a weapon against Palestinians, noting that “It is unprecedented to make an entire civilian



UN human rights experts say the Zionist regime is “destroying Gazas food system and using food as a weapon” for more than 100 days during its aggression in the Gaza Strip.

population go hungry this completely and quickly.”

Gazans now make up 80 percent of all people facing famine or catastrophic hunger worldwide, marking an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the blockaded territory, they stated.

The UN experts further noted that they have raised the alarm over the risk of genocide several times, urging all governments to comply with their duty to prevent genocide.

“Not only is Israel killing and causing irreparable harm against Palestinian civilians with its indiscriminate bombardments, it is also knowingly and intentionally imposing a high rate of disease, prolonged malnutrition, dehydration, and starvation by destroying civilian infrastructure,” they said. “Aid needs to be delivered to Gazans immediately and without any hindrance to prevent starvation,” the experts stressed.

They also emphasized that their

alarm for the unfolding genocide does not only refer to the ongoing bombardment of Gaza but also concerns the slow suffering and death caused by Israel’s long-standing occupation and blockade.

The experts concluded by saying that the only way to achieve peace, safety, and stability is through an immediate ceasefire and the cessation of the Israeli occupation.

The Israeli regime waged the war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas carried out the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli regime’s atrocities against Palestinians.

Since the start of the aggression, Israel has killed more than 24,280 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

The Tel Aviv regime has also imposed a “complete siege” on the territory, cutting off fuel, electricity, food, and water to the more than two million Palestinians living there.

## All Resistance... (Continued From Page One)

On Tuesday, Iran launched simultaneous drone and missile attacks into two bases of Jaish al-Adl.

The strike came after Iran launched missile attacks on spy headquarters and terrorist targets in Syria, and in Iraq’s autonomous Kurdistan region.

The minister also touched on Iran’s attack into Iraq’s Kurdistan region, saying they were retaliation for recent anti-Iran attacks staged by Israel’s Mossad.

The Iranian minister said Tehran has shared intelligence with Iraq about Mossad activities in Iraq’s Kurdistan, adding that Israel is an enemy of both Iraq and Iran.

He cited a 2023 security pact between Iran and Iraq, saying it obliges Iraqi officials not to allow Iran’s security to be threatened from their soil.

The top Iranian diplomat said Iran respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan and Iraq but would strongly react to any attack on its national security.

“We respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan and Iraq, but we do not allow our national security to be compromised, and we have no compunction about terrorist parties inside Pakistan and Israeli movements in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.”

He said the attacks were aimed at protecting the security of Iran, its neighbors, and also the wider region.

“What we did was aimed at boosting the security of Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, and the region. We consider the security of Iraq and Pakistan to be that of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” he said.

## U.S. ... (Continued From Page One)

“We’re not political in any way,” said the second organizer. “This group really grows out of this immense frustration and sadness at seeing the war continue for so long — the massive death and destruction unfolding in Gaza over the last 100 days,” said an organizer who also wanted to remain anonymous.

Following a report on Feds United for Peace’s planned action last week, House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Republican, tweeted: “Any government worker who walks off the job to protest U.S. support for our ally Israel is ignoring their responsibility and abusing the trust of taxpayers.”

“They deserve to be fired,” he wrote, adding he would “work to ensure that each federal agency initiates appropriate disciplinary proceedings against any person who walks out on their job.”

## Red... (Continued From Page One)

to avoid the area for fear of retaliation, Wright noted, adding: “It’s still too early to make many conclusions on the impact on vessel movements. As most container traffic was already avoiding the Red Sea, the impact will be minimal. But, for bulk carriers, we expect to see a larger drop than seen over the last three weeks.”

Simon Heaney, senior manager at Container Research of UK-based maritime research and consulting services provider, Drewry, said: “There is only limited scope for more Cape of Good Hope diversions as most container ships that were using Suez have been rerouted.”

Pointing to the steep hike in spot market freight rates as an immediate outcome of the attacks, Heaney said Drewry’s World Container Index on Shanghai to Rotterdam subset jumped by 164 per cent from \$1,667/40ft container on 21 December to \$4,406/40ft on 11 January.

The figure saw a similar trend for Shanghai to Genoa, he added.

“The cost of hiring container ships has also increased, but much less severely, so far, as more vessels are required to cover the extra mileage from Cape diversions,” Heaney said.

On the impact of the diversion on the world economy, he said the freighter rates are not expected to get near to their levels during the pandemic period.

“The cost implication of the Red Sea attacks on commercial ships depends on the duration of the attacks,” Heaney said.

The delays and ship diversions will cause ships to cluster at ports, leading to port congestion and worsening equipment shortages and gaps in sailings, he stressed.

“These effects may significantly impact global supply chains, taking weeks or months to recover. Carriers must adjust schedules, networks and potentially introduce additional vessels to insure weekly service frequency,” he added.

Heaney highlighted that if Suez has to be avoided all year around, the container ship capacity will drop 9 percent globally.

“In the worst-case scenario, whereby Suez has to be avoided for the entirety of 2024, assuming a 30 percent increase in trade distance for the roughly 30 percent of container ship capacity that previously transited Suez, that would reduce effective capacity by some 9 per cent globally.”

He noted that this situation is not expected to completely shutter the supply and demand on a global level.

## FM... (Continued From Page 2)

“We believe that any action to destabilize the region is rooted in Israel and its genocide in Gaza,” he emphasized.

In the early hours of Tuesday, Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) launched missile strikes on an Israeli spy base in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and a gathering of anti-Iran terrorist groups, especially Daesh, in northwestern Syria.

Amir-Abdollahian said the attacks were “in line with combating terrorism and legitimate self-defense.”

“We have no reservations when it comes to securing our national interest with any other country,” he added.

Separately, Amir-Abdollahian slammed U.S. plots for the post-war Gaza Strip, saying only Palestinians can decide their future.

No one has the right to impose anything on the Palestinian people, he said during a meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati in Davos.

He also stressed that Lebanon plays an important role in regional issues.

Lebanon’s stability and security affect the stability and security of the entire region, Amir-Abdollahian maintained, pledging Iran’s unwavering support for the Arab country’s stability and security.

The chief Iranian diplomat also praised the Lebanese government, nation and resistance movement for supporting the Palestinian people in Gaza.

“Regrettably, under the U.S. support for the Zionist regime, the war against Gaza lingers on and we witness the continuation of the killing of Palestinian citizens, women and children, and the genocide of Palestinians by the Zionist regime.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amir-Abdollahian underlined that the Islamic Republic places a premium on the development of relations and joint cooperation with Lebanon in various bilateral, regional and international fields.

Mikati, for his part, underscored the necessity of putting an end to the Israeli regime’s war on Gaza, describing the situation in Palestine and the region as “worrying.”

The two sides also discussed the latest developments in Palestine, Lebanon and the situation in the Red Sea, stressing the continuation of joint consultations in order to put an end to the crimes of the Zionist regime against the Palestinians, opening humanitarian aid corridors to Gaza and helping to establish peace and stability in the region.

# NYT: Israel Needs ‘Years’ to Break Up Gaza Tunnels

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s military has been “astounded” by the size and quality of the tunnels Hamas has built under Gaza, according to an article published in the New York Times on Tuesday.

The tunnel network was originally estimated to include 250 miles (400 km) of underground passages and bunkers. The occupying regime’s forces have since revised these estimates to 350-450 miles (560-725 km) or

more. Two officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said there were close to 5,700 separate shafts leading into the tunnels under Gaza. None of the numbers could be independently verified, however.

It could take “years” to disable the tunnels, one Israeli official told the Times. They need to be mapped, checked for Israeli captives, and “made irreparable”, he said, acknowl-

edging that the recent attempts to destroy the tunnels by flooding them with seawater “have failed”.

The Israeli military has underestimated the “extent and importance” of the tunnels to Hamas, which the Times described as an “intelligence failure”.

The regime’s military has not disclosed the number of soldiers killed and wounded in tunnel warfare. Officially,

almost 190 soldiers have been killed and 240 or so seriously wounded in the fighting since the start of the ground campaign in Gaza.

One soldier, who spoke with the Times on condition of anonymity, said that he had taken part in destroying about 50 tunnels in Beit Hanoun, in the northeast of Gaza. All of them were rigged with bombs and other explosives, wired to be activated remotely.

# Germany Considers Delivery of Tank Ammunition to Israel

BERLIN (Dispatches) – Germany’s government is considering the delivery of tank ammunition to the Zionist regime amid genocidal war against Gaza, the German magazine Der Spiegel has reported, as Western governments keep on backing the occupying regime for its ongoing massacre.

The regime requested Germany in November to approve the delivery of around 10,000 rounds of 120-millimeter precision ammunition manufactured by Rheinmetall, the report said.

The departments involved

have already fundamentally agreed behind the scenes to fulfill a request from the Zionist regime.

The Israeli ambassador to Germany, Ron Prosor thanked the German government for its unrelenting support it has shown.

“Since October 7, Germany has unmistakably stood by Israel and expressed its unreserved support,” Prosor told Der Spiegel. “Israel thanks Germany for this,” he added.

The German Chancellor Olaf

Scholz emphasized that arms deliveries were also possible.

According to the report, in order to promptly address the request, there is consideration being given to releasing ammunition from the stocks of the German army as the industry is unable to provide the desired precision ammunition immediately.

In November apart from Germany, Israel had also asked other partners for military aid because of its heavy use of am-

munition against the Gazans.

U.S. President Joe Biden approved the delivery of 14,000 rounds of tank ammunition for almost \$106 million at the beginning of December, after he bypassed Congress.

The Western-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza has been escalating because of the continuous support of Western governments, as they have been persistently arming Israel and supporting the regime with large amounts of funds.

# Court Rules Lithuania Must Compensate Saudi Man Held at CIA ‘Black Site’

RIYADH (Middle East Eye) – A court has ordered Lithuania to pay €100,000 (\$108,660) to a Guantanamo detainee who was subjected to inhumane treatment at a CIA “black site” on its territory in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

Mustafa al-Hawsawi, a Saudi Arabian national, would have faced “an extremely harsh detention regime” at the prison facility in Lithuania, where practices included solitary confinement, continuous use of leg shackles and exposure to noise and light, the European Court of Human Rights found.

Lithuanian authorities, the court ruled, would have been aware of the ill treatment Hawsawi would face at the prison - codenamed Site Violet - and violated his rights by cooperating with the CIA, including by allowing his transfer to another CIA site.

In addition to compensating Hawsawi, who

remains in Guantanamo, Lithuania was ordered to thoroughly investigate his case, which the court said it had failed to do for years.

The judgment is the latest in a string of European Court rulings against countries involved in the CIA’s secret detention program, including Italy, Poland, Romania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Chris Esdaile, a legal adviser at Redress, an organization which brings legal cases on behalf of survivors of torture and which is representing Hawsawi, said despite the serious human rights abuses committed through the program and the court’s decisions, much work remains.

“The limited investigations that have been undertaken into the abuses have largely failed to ensure the accountability of individual perpetrators, or those in senior political leadership who turned a blind eye in the U.S. and Europe,”

Esdaile said.

Hawsawi was captured in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, in March 2003 alongside alleged 9/11 ringleader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and handed over to the CIA. He was then held in several CIA secret prisons where he was interrogated and tortured.

According to a U.S. Senate report into the CIA torture program, at one detention facility in Afghanistan, Hawsawi was subjected to rectal examinations conducted with such “excessive force” that he was left with severe injuries and ongoing health issues.

The report noted that Hawsawi was among detainees subjected to other CIA “enhanced interrogation techniques, despite doubts and questions surrounding their knowledge of terrorist threats and the location of senior Al-Qaeda leadership”.