

KUWAIT CITY (Xinhua) – Kuwait's newly appointed Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Sabah al-Salem Al Sabah completed the formation of his new government on Wednesday, official news agency KUNA reported. Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah approved members of the new cabinet nominated by the prime minister, which consists of 13 ministers, according to KUNA. Abdullah Ali al-Yahya was appointed foreign minister, while Fahad Yusuf al-Sabah was named as deputy prime minister, minister of defense, and acting minister of interior. Sheikh Mishal became Kuwait's 17th ruler on Dec. 20, 2023, succeeding his half-brother, Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah, who had passed away at the age of 86.

*The most incapable of people is he who is unable to acquire friends, and more incapable still is he who loses the friends he has already acquired.*

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

# UNRWA Warns of Bleak Post-War Future for Gazans



More than 60 percent of buildings in Gaza are estimated to have been damaged by the Zionist regime's bombardment, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees says.

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The head of the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, warned Wednesday of the bleak future facing Gazans after the Zionist regime's onslaught on the besieged territory.

Following his fourth visit to the Palestinian territory since the war erupted on October 7, the UNRWA chief said many residents are no longer able to see "the future in the Gaza Strip".

"You have hundreds of thousands of people

living now in the street, living in these plastic makeshift (tents), sleeping on the concrete," Lazzarini told journalists in Al-Quds.

The majority of Gaza's 2.4 million residents have been forced from their homes, while Lazzarini said more than 60 percent of buildings are estimated to be damaged.

The most extensive Israeli bombardment has hit the north, where AFP journalists have witnessed scores of residential blocks reduced to rubble.

"The north for us is a pocket of humanitarian catastrophe," the UNRWA chief said.

"Would you even encourage anyone to go to the north when we know the north is infested by UXOs -- unexploded ordnance -- and rubble, and non-functioning services?" he asked.

Fighting has ravaged Gaza since October 7. At least 24,448 Palestinians, more than 70 percent of them women, young children and adolescents, have been killed in Israeli bombardments and ground assaults, according to the Gaza health ministry's latest figures.

While the Zionist regime expects the war to rage on for months, half a million children aged six to 14 are estimated to have no access to education.

"My fear is that we have now a generation of lost kids," said Lazzarini, describing children who are living in "brutal" conditions and are deeply traumatized.

"This should concern all of us if we are talking about future peace and security and cohabitation. The more we wait... the more we take risks for the future," he said.

"When we talk about rebuilding Gaza, it's not anymore like before, where we had to rehabilitate some shelter and that was still doable," the UNRWA chief said, referring to previous rounds of fighting which lasted days or weeks.

"I don't see any country investing significantly in the absence of a solid, proper political project and roadmap," he said.

"And for this, you need countries to trust in this roadmap."

## Report: Mental Health System in Israel in Critical Condition



A woman is seen holding a placard as a group of activists protest the Zionist regime's attacks on the Gaza Strip and call for a ceasefire in Tel Aviv on January 13, 2024.

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime is facing a wave of severe psychological traumas amidst the mental health system's inability to meet the demands for assistance, according to Israeli psychiatric experts.

A report published by the Jerusalem Post has shed light on the inadequacy of the mental health system in Israel over the years. Evidence of the neglect of the system can be seen in the long waiting periods, especially in remote areas, leaving many who require mental health care without proper support they need.

Since 7 October, the occupying regime's public health system has been overwhelmed with distress calls, which are expected to continue to increase significantly.

"Psychiatry experts have recently predicted that one in three people who have been affected directly or indi-

rectly by the war—including families and friends of the kidnapped, injured victims, or those who have lost loved ones—might develop post-trauma disorders in the coming months. ERAN's distress hotlines are already dealing with over 100,000 calls, unprecedented since the centre's inception," the Jerusalem Post reported.

Clalit Health Services reported a 25 percent increase in the use of psychiatric medications, a 52 percent increase in anxiety-related cases, and a 45 percent increase in post-traumatic diagnoses, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Eli Cohen, CEO of Clalit, said that as the largest healthcare maintenance organization (HMO) in Israel, serving over 50 percent of the regime's population, most displaced individuals due to the situation in the north and south have become our patients.

## Iraqi PM: Baghdad Has Outlined Plans for Pullout of U.S.-Led Forces

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani says the Baghdad government has outlined plans aimed at ending the presence of U.S.-led foreign military forces in the Arab country.

Sudani made the remarks during a meeting with Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Jens Stoltenberg on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in the Swiss city of Davos on Wednesday.

He went on to say that "Iraq is still open to cooperation with the coalition member states in the fields of supply of military equipment and training within the framework of bilateral relations."

Stoltenberg, for his part, commended the Iraqi government's efforts and measures to expand the capabilities of security forces, especially as to prosecution of the remaining members of terror groups and restoration of security and

stability. He also expressed NATO's eagerness for increased joint cooperation with Baghdad in various security spheres.

Iraq adopted the law to expel foreign forces after Washington's assassination of top Iraqi and Iranian anti-terror commanders four years ago.

A Sunday statement from the Iraqi parliament said Deputy Speaker Mohsen al-Mandalawi had stated the previous day that the bill adopted in January

2020, which requires the government to end the presence of all U.S.-led foreign military forces in the Arab country, is "a fundamental and irreversible piece of legislation" and will not change because it enjoys popular support.

Mandalawi called on the Iraqi government to implement the legislation and to expand the capabilities of Iraqi security forces instead of relying on foreign troops to fight terror groups.

## ABC Staff Call for Strike After Pro-Palestinian Journalist Sacked

SYDNEY (Dispatches) – ABC journalists in the broadcaster's Sydney offices have threatened to strike unless management addresses concerns over the unlawful dismissal of radio host Antoinette Lattouf, Anadolu news agency reported.

The award-winning journalist and author, who is of Lebanese heritage, was sacked by ABC last month for sharing on Instagram a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on the besieged Gaza Strip.

The rights watchdog released a report on how starvation was being used as "a weapon of war" by the Zionist regime in Gaza. ABC also published a news item on the report.

On Tuesday, the Sydney Morning Herald revealed a leaked chain of WhatsApp messages from a group called Lawyers for Israel who had lobbied for Lattouf to be sacked.

"The ABC sacked broadcaster Antoinette Lattouf after a high-level and coordinated

letter-writing campaign from pro-Israel lobbyists that directly targeted the corporation's chair, Ita Buttrose, and managing director David Anderson," the news daily said.

The report reveals that the Israeli lobby "repeatedly wrote to the ABC demanding Lattouf be sacked, and threatened legal action if she was not."

On Tuesday, about 80 ABC staff members demanded a meeting with Anderson, who is currently on leave.

They threatened to stage a walkout if their concerns were not addressed.

Lattouf has legally challenged her termination, saying she was sacked on the grounds of "political opinion or a reason that included political opinion" and later expanded the claim to include race, due to her Lebanese heritage.

While ABC has denied Anderson was behind Lattouf's sacking, the broadcaster has

told a court that the journalist was removed "because she ignored a direction from managers and shared a controversial social media post from Human Rights Watch."

Lattouf demands a clear public apology, financial compensation and the offer of a proportionate position.

Hearings are scheduled to begin later this week.

In a statement to the Sydney Morning Herald, Lattouf's lawyer, Josh Bornstein, said that after "October 7 and the ensuing conflict in the Middle East, it has become common knowledge in the media industry that Arab and Muslim journalists are being subjected to intimidation, censorship and expulsion."

Elaine Pearson, Asia director at HRW, criticized ABC's move to terminate Lattouf.

"Journalists should be encouraged to amplify human rights reporting, not penalized for doing so," Pearson said on X.

## Official: At Least \$15bn Needed for Gaza Housing

DAVOS, Switzerland (Dispatches) – At least \$15 billion will be needed to rebuild houses in Gaza, the head of the Palestine Investment Fund said on Wednesday, underlining the scale of devastation caused by the Zionist regime's onslaught.

Chairman Mohammed Mustafa said international reports indicated 350,000 housing units had been completely or partially damaged in Gaza. Assuming 150,000 of these would need to be rebuilt at an average cost of \$100,000 per unit, "that's \$15 billion for housing units", he said.

"We still didn't talk about infrastructure, we didn't talk about the hospitals that were damaged, the grids..." he said at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

The figure points to reconstruction costs that will dwarf previous bills for rebuilding Gaza after earlier conflicts, with the war not yet over more than three months since it began.

Following a 2014 war by the Zionist regime, which lasted seven weeks and killed 2,100 Palestinians, Qatar spent over \$1 billion on housing and relief projects in Gaza.

The occupying regime has laid waste to much of the territory in a campaign which health authorities in Gaza say has killed 24,448 people since Oct. 7.

Figures released by the media

office in Gaza show more than 360,000 housing units have sustained severe or partial damage, and more than 70,000 have been completely destroyed.

Mustafa said the Palestinian leadership would, in the short-term, continue to focus on humanitarian aid including food and water but eventually the focus would shift to reconstruction.

The war has driven most of Gaza's 2.3 million people from their homes, some of them several times, and caused a humanitarian crisis, with food, fuel and medical supplies running low.

"If the war in Gaza continues, more people are likely to die of hunger or famine than war," Mustafa said.

The first steps should be to bring food, medicine, water and electricity back to the besieged enclave, he added.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Tuesday Arab countries were not keen to get involved in the rebuilding of Gaza if the enclave will be "leveled" again in a few years.

Mustafa said the reconstruction effort would be huge and the financial needs significant. He also said money would not solve Gaza's problem, adding that it needed a political solution.