

**UN Human Rights Office Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**Ramallah**

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**Gaza: Israel continues to kill entire displaced families in area it designated as “safe”**

The Israeli military continues to target tents of displaced Palestinians in Al Mawasi in western Khan Younis, killing entire families, while at the same time ordering Palestinians from other parts of Gaza to move to “known shelters” (in Al Mawasi) even though the area remains unsafe and there is little or no infrastructure to house or support them.

Since the ceasefire ended on 18 March 2025, the Israeli military has intensified its operations in Rafah and Khan Younis, forcing civilians into ever-shrinking spaces. Between 18 March and 16 June, the Israeli military issued 21 such displacement orders to Palestinians in Rafah, most parts of Khan Younis, and in some parts of southern Middle Gaza.

Al Mawasi, located in western Khan Younis, covers approximately 8.9 square kilometers. It is almost completely empty lacking basic infrastructure, such as shelter, water and sewage systems, solid waste removal, latrines, and medical facilities. Despite this, the Israeli military had unilaterally designated the area as a “humanitarian zone” and refers to it in displacement orders as an area of “known shelters”. The Shelter Cluster, working under the UN Humanitarian Country Team, and its partners have repeatedly called for Israel to facilitate the access and entry of supplies to Gaza that are urgently required for the construction of shelters to meet the needs of the increasing number of civilians who are being forcibly displaced.

Israel is obliged under international humanitarian law to ensure adequate and safe shelter for internally displaced people, as well as access to food, water, and medical care, until they can return to their homes. Regrettably, in the 21 months since the first orders instructing civilians to relocate, Israel has not made any efforts to comply with its obligations as the occupying power to provide proper accommodation to those relocating or to ensure that these removals are done in satisfactory conditions of health, hygiene, safety and nutrition.

Since the end of the ceasefire on 18 March 2025, Al Mawasi has been full of displaced Palestinians. Following that, the increasing issuance of displacement orders has seen its population dramatically increase. According to OCHA, it has more than tripled, increasing from 115,000 on 13 March 2025 to 425,000 as of 19 June. Nearly all are living in makeshift tents assembled with very basic materials.

Before the war, Gaza was already one of the most densely populated areas on Earth, with around 5,500 people per square kilometer. Today in Al Mawasi, there are more than 47,700 people per square kilometer.

Despite instructing civilians to relocate to Al Mawasi, the Israeli military has continued to conduct intense military attacks on the area, notwithstanding the extremely high

concentration of civilians per square kilometer. Many of these appear to target directly makeshift tents with deadly consequences for those inhabiting them. Between 18 March and 16 June 2025, the UN Human Rights Office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory recorded 112 attacks killing 380 people, including at least 158 women and children.

Among the victims of these attacks, there were 64 cases where entire nuclear families (parents and their children) were killed.

Among a number of such reports are the following:

- On 31 March, the Israeli military struck tents near the Applied Science College in Al Mawasi. We have verified the killings of 3 Palestinians from the Al Akkar family: a 24-year-old woman, a 66-year-old woman and a 3-year-old boy.
- On 25 March, the Israeli military struck a tent of the Abu Ta'imah family near Al Aqsa University in Al-Ard Al-Tayyiba camp, Al Mawasi. We have verified that 5 Palestinians were killed: a 33-year-old man, his 29-year-old pregnant wife and their 3 children (a 4-year-old boy, a 6-year-old boy and a 7-year-old girl). The Israeli military made no claim regarding the target of the strike, reflecting the pattern of strikes where no military objective is identified, and all those killed must be presumed civilians unless the Israeli military proves otherwise.
- On 19 May, at around 9 pm, the Israeli military struck a tent of the Kasab family in the vicinity of the Fish Fresh Junction, Al Mawasi. The UN Human Rights office has verified that 7 Palestinians were killed – a 34-year-old woman and 6 of her children (4 girls aged 5, 7, 10 and 13, and 2 boys aged 11 months and 11 years).

The Israeli military has not publicly provided justification for any of the 112 attacks on tents recorded by our office. During the same period, the Israeli army did not issue any statements indicating it had targeted members of Palestinian armed groups or any military objectives in specific locations in Al Mawasi. Exceptionally, on 30 May, the Israeli military claimed to have killed “Khalil Abd al-Nasser Muhammad Khatib, a cell commander in Hamas' Al Mawasi battalion” without specifying the location where he was killed. However, despite having information about three incidents that took place in the Al Mawasi area on 30 May, we have not been able to verify that Khalil Khatib was among those killed. Furthermore, the office could not identify any legitimate military objectives in the vicinity where these attacks took place.

Such attacks, resulting in the killing of hundreds of Palestinians, raise serious concerns about the intentional targeting of civilians in violation of international humanitarian law. They also starkly demonstrate that nowhere is safe in Gaza, including the Israeli-designated so-called “humanitarian zones”.

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