

**UN Human Rights in Occupied Palestinian Territory
Ramallah
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Palestinians in Gaza continue to be killed in hundreds against a looming threat of forcible transfer outside Gaza

The Israeli military continues to kill and gravely injure hundreds of Palestinians as they desperately seek the little shelter and food available, raising further concerns that Israel is inflicting on Palestinians conditions of life increasingly incompatible with their continued existence in Gaza.

The Israeli military has continued intense attacks on makeshift tents of Palestinians who have fled or lost their homes, many multiple times, killing and injuring them. Between 8 and 9 July, the UN Human Rights office in the occupied Palestinian territory recorded that at least 77 people were killed, among them at least 30 children and women, in 21 attacks on tents of displaced Palestinians, including 9 in Al Mawasi, Khan Younis.

As these tents generally shelter families in close quarters, any strike on them often results in the killing of entire families. It is difficult to see how such actions comply with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law: distinction, proportionality, and precautions in attack. In a recent example, on 8 July, an Israeli drone reportedly struck a tent of displaced Palestinians in Al Attar area, southwestern Khan Younis, killing 12 people – 10 of whom were from the same family. The victims included a couple and their 3 children.

Israeli attacks have also continued on residential buildings, many of which have been systematically destroyed, shrinking the options for shelter available to the population and driving further displacement.

Meanwhile, Palestinians seeking food — mostly young men and boys — continue to be shot and killed in the vicinity of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) sites. Reports indicate the Israeli military is targeting large groups of civilians with lethal force, including shooting and shelling, in the absence of any threat to life or serious injury. Despite these dangers, Palestinians have little choice, as the entire population faces starvation, while Israel continues to unlawfully limit the entry into Gaza of basic items indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. Since GHF started operating in Gaza on 27 May, the UN Human Rights office has recorded that more than 634 Palestinians were killed in the vicinity of sites run by them, as of 10 July at noon.

We are concerned that the GHF's poor operational methods, including leaving food at sites without announcement, operating very short opening hours – sometimes for only 3-4 minutes and in the middle of the night – and erratic closures for days at a time, have fuelled further instability. In this context, the food distribution sites appear to continue to attract desperate Palestinians, even when

there are no deliveries. For example, despite no announcements that the GHF Saudi site in northwestern Rafah would be open on 8 July, 6 Palestinians, including 3 boys, were reportedly killed in the vicinity, while another 8 were killed on 9 July. On the morning of 11 July, 10 Palestinians were reportedly killed and 60 injured, again in the same area.

Israeli military attacks on Palestinians occur in the context of increasing civil disorder. According to the UN Human Rights office in OPT, intra-Palestinian violence involving Palestinian armed groups and different criminal groups have also been on the rise, with allegations that some groups have been receiving external support, further sowing distrust and disorder in a community where law enforcement and judicial systems have been largely destroyed.

These conditions, along with highly restricted entry of food and other basic necessities and reported plans by Israeli authorities to concentrate much of the population in a so-called “humanitarian city” in Rafah, possibly with the intention to forcibly displace them outside Gaza altogether, may amount to atrocity crimes.

We call on Israel to comply with fundamental rules and principles governing the conduct of hostilities. As the occupying power in Gaza, it also has the obligation to ensure the provision of basic necessities, including food, and to facilitate humanitarian organisations’ access to provide such assistance, and must also maintain public life and order in full compliance with international human rights law standards applicable to law enforcement. It must respect and protect the right to life of civilians seeking food at GHF sites, and refrain from taking any steps aimed at, or which may result in, the forcible transfer of the Palestinian population within Gaza or its deportation outside of the strip.

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ohchr-opt-media@un.org

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