

GAZA: Leaders of major aid groups call on world leaders to intervene following UN genocide conclusion

“As world leaders convene next week at the United Nations, we are calling on all member states to act in accordance with the mandate the UN was charged with 80 years ago.

What we are witnessing in Gaza is not only an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe, but what the UN Commission of Inquiry has now concluded is a genocide.

With this finding, the Commission joins a growing number of human rights organisations and leaders globally, and within Israel.

The inhumanity of the situation in Gaza is unconscionable. As humanitarian leaders, we have borne direct witness to the horrifying deaths and suffering of the people of Gaza. Our warnings have gone unheeded and thousands more lives are still at stake.

Now, as the Israeli government has ordered the mass displacement of Gaza City – home to nearly one million people – we are on the precipice of an even deadlier period in Gaza’s story if action is not taken. Gaza has been deliberately made uninhabitable.

About 65,000 Palestinians have now been killed, including more than 20,000 children. Thousands more are missing, buried under the rubble that has replaced Gaza’s once lively streets.

Nine out of 10 people in Gaza’s 2.1 million population have been forcibly displaced - most of them multiple times - into increasingly shrinking pockets of land that cannot sustain human life.

More than half a million people are starving. Famine has been declared and is spreading. The cumulative impact of hunger and physical deprivation means people are dying every day.

Throughout Gaza, entire cities have been razed to the ground, along with their life-sustaining public infrastructure, such as hospitals and water treatment plants. Agricultural land has been systemically destroyed.

If the facts and numbers aren’t enough, we have harrowing story upon harrowing story.

Since the Israeli military tightened its siege six months ago, blocking food, fuel, and medicine, we witnessed children and families waste away from starvation as famine took hold. Our colleagues too have been impacted.

Many of us have been into Gaza. We have met countless Palestinians who have lost limbs as a result of Israel’s bombardment. We have personally met children so traumatized by daily airstrikes that they cannot sleep. Some cannot speak. Others have told us they want to die to join their parents in heaven.

We have met families who eat animal food to survive and boil leaves as a meal for their children.

Yet world leaders fail to act. Facts are ignored. Testimony is cast aside. And more people are killed as a direct consequence.

Our organisations, together with Palestinian civil society groups, the UN, and Israeli human rights organisations, can only do so much. We have tirelessly tried to defend the rights of the people of Gaza and sustain humanitarian assistance, but we are being obstructed every step of the way.

We have been denied access, and the militarization of the aid system has proved deadly. Thousands of people have been shot at while trying to reach the handful of sites where food is distributed under armed guard.

Governments must act to prevent the evisceration of life in the Gaza Strip, and to end the violence and occupation. All parties must disavow violence against civilians, adhere to international humanitarian law and pursue peace.

States must use every available political, economic, and legal tool at their disposal to intervene. Rhetoric and half measures are not enough. This moment demands decisive action.

The UN enshrined international law as the cornerstone of global peace and security. If Member States continue to treat these legal obligations as optional, they are not only complicit but are setting a dangerous precedent for the future. History will undoubtedly judge this moment as a test of humanity. And we are failing. Failing the people of Gaza, failing the hostages, and failing our own collective moral imperative.

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