THE GAZA STRIP: 100 DAYS OF DEATH, DESTRUCTION AND DISPLACEMENT

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The Gaza Strip: 100 days of death, destruction and displacement

FROM UNRWA COMMISSIONER-GENERAL PHILIPPE LAZZARINI

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THE GAZA STRIP,

"The massive death, destruction, displacement, hunger, loss, and grief of the last 100 days are staining our shared humanity.

"It's been 100 days since the devastating war started, killing and displacing [illegible] in Gaza, following the horrific attacks that Hamas and other groups carried out against people in Israel. It's been 100 days of ordeal and anxiety for hostages and their families.

"In the past 100 days, sustained bombardment across the Gaza Strip caused the mass displacement of a population that is in a state of flux - constantly uprooted and forced to leave overnight, only to move to places which are just as unsafe. This has been the largest displacement of the Palestinian people since 1948.

"This war affected more than 2 million people- the entire population of Gaza. Many will carry lifelong scars, both physical and psychological. The vast majority, including children, are deeply traumatized.

"Overcrowded and unsanitary UNRWA shelters have now become "home" to more than 1.4 million people. They lack everything, from food to hygiene to privacy. People live in inhumane conditions, where diseases are spreading, including among children. They live through the unlivable, with the clock ticking fast towards famine.

"The plight of children in Gaza is especially heartbreaking. An entire generation of children is traumatized and will take years to heal. Thousands have been killed, maimed, and orphaned. Hundreds of thousands are deprived of education. Their future is in jeopardy, with far-reaching and long-lasting consequences.

"The crisis in Gaza is a man-made disaster compounded by dehumanizing language and the use of food, water and fuel as instruments of war. The humanitarian operation has fast become one of the most complex and challenging in the world; largely due to cumbersome procedures for the entry of aid into the Gaza Strip and a myriad of obstacles to the safe and orderly distribution of aid, including ongoing hostilities. Humanitarian aid alone will not be sufficient to reverse a looming famine. A flow of commercial goods must also be allowed in.

"International Humanitarian Law, put in place to protect civilians and regulate the conduct of hostilities, is regularly flouted. Civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and UNRWA shelters, were hit over the last three months, killing hundreds of civilians and injuring thousands. UNRWA installations should be protected at all times, and provide the protection civilians are seeking. They should never be used for military purposes by any party.

"Despite repeated calls, a humanitarian ceasefire is still not in place to stop the killing of people in Gaza and enable the safe delivery of food, medicine, water and shelter. The onset of winter makes life even more unbearable, especially for those living out in the open.

"Aid workers, including 146 of my own UNRWA colleagues, were killed [illegible] doctors, journalists and children – no one is spared. Entire residential neighborhoods, places of worship, and historic buildings were razed, wiping out centuries of history, civilization and people's memories.

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"For the people of Gaza, the past 100 days have felt like 100 years.

"It is high time we restore the value of human life".

-ENDs

Background Information:

UNRWA (https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.unrwa.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7CHQ-PIO%40UNRWA.ORG%7C7edfcbc8399c400e4a6c08dafba2254d%7C262f6a4120e941408d3efdf the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The United Nations General Assembly established UNRWA in 1949 with a mandate to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to registered Palestine refugees in the Agency's area of operations pending a just and lasting solution to their plight.

UNRWA operates in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, The Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Tens of thousands of Palestine refugees who lost their homes and livelihoods due to the 1948 conflict continue to be displaced and in need of support, nearly 75 years on.

UNRWA helps Palestine Refugees achieve their full potential in human development through quality services it provides in education, health care, relief and social services, protection, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance, and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.

Your support is crucial to help us provide emergency aid (https://bit.ly/3rXMZ0P) to displaced families in Gaza (https://bit.ly/3rXMZ0P)

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