

# *UNICEF: Over 50,000 children killed and injured in Israeli genocidal war on Gaza*

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Geneva, May 29 (RHC)-- The Regional Director for West Asia and North Africa of UN's International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) says the Israeli regime is directly responsible for the death or injury of more than 50,000 children in Gaza either through direct military assault or through causing hunger and disease.

Edouard Beigbeder on Wednesday condemned the toll the Gaza war has had on the Palestinian children of the enclave and how indifferent the Israeli regime has been toward child casualties.

“Since the end of the ceasefire on March 18, 1,309 children have been killed and 3,738 injured. In total, more than 50,000 children have reportedly been killed or injured since October 2023. How many more dead girls and boys will it take?” he said.

“What level of horror must be live-streamed before the international community fully steps up, uses its influence, and takes bold, decisive action to force the end of this ruthless killing of children?”

Beigbeder mentioned the case of the Palestinian doctor Alaa al-Najjar, a physician at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, who on Friday lost nine of her 10 children during an Israeli airstrike on their home and the horrifying death of at least 31 people on Monday, including 18 children, during an Israeli strike on a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City.

“These children, lives that should never be reduced to numbers, are now part of a long, harrowing list of unimaginable horrors: the grave violations against children, the blockade of aid, the starvation, the constant forced displacement, and the destruction of hospitals, water systems, schools, and homes. In essence, the destruction of life itself in the Gaza Strip,” he added.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza, especially for Gaza children, has escalated dramatically since March 18, when the Israeli regime violated its ceasefire agreement with the resistance group Hamas.

The Ministry of Health in Gaza reported on Wednesday that at least 60 children had died of the famine that the Israeli regime has forced upon the enclave. Malnutrition has been spreading in Gaza at an accelerated rate since March 2, when the Israeli regime blocked all entries in the enclave.

Meanwhile, the very limited aid distribution is being hindered by displacement and constant assaults by the Israeli regime on aid workers.

According to the World Food Programme, bakeries operated by the organization have been shut down due to a lack of cooking gas and soaring prices for the limited amount of food available in markets and shops.

UN agencies have said that the amount of aid entering Gaza falls extremely far short of what is required to ease the crisis.

New data shared by the US-based Project Hope, which focuses on healthcare “[has] found that malnutrition among children, pregnant and lactating women has surged amid the almost three-month aid blockade, with some clinics reporting up to 42% of pregnant women and 34% of lactating mothers being diagnosed as malnourished.”

According to the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), Gaza suffers from phase 5 famine, and nearly 71,000 children under the age of five are at risk of acute malnutrition.

The IPC defines phase 5 famine as when at least one in five households experience an extreme lack of food and face starvation, resulting in destitution, extremely critical levels of acute malnutrition, and death.

Furthermore, the Ministry said in a statement that Gaza’s healthcare system is near total collapse as 22 out of 32 Gaza hospitals are out of service due to a severe lack of supplies and the Israeli regime’s systematic attack on hospitals.

According to the statement, 47% of essential medications and 65% of medical supplies are now unavailable across the enclave. Hospital bed occupancy has exceeded 106%, but only 50 of 104 operating rooms remain functional, it added.

Last November, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for the Israeli regime’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his former war minister, Yoav Gallant, for war crimes and crimes

against humanity in Gaza.

Israel also faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for its war crimes against civilians in the enclave.

[ SOURCE: AL JAZEERA and AFP ]

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