

*Israel forcing Palestinians to  
starve just kilometers from trucks  
filled with food*

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Rafah, January 18 (RHC)-- Israel's blockade of food and attacks on Gaza's food system is so severe that Palestinians in Gaza are at severe risk of starving to death while humanitarian aid trucks "filled with food" sit just across the border awaiting entry, the head of the World Food Program has warned.

"People in Gaza risk dying of hunger just miles from trucks filled with food," said World Food Program Executive Director Cindy McCain in a statement this week calling for Israeli forces to open aid routes and allow aid workers safe passage. "Every hour lost puts countless lives at risk. We can keep famine at bay but only if we can deliver sufficient supplies and have safe access to everyone in need, wherever they

are.”

A recent report from UN-backed international food researchers found that the entire population of Gaza is in an acute food crisis, with a quarter of the population, or about 570,000 people under “famine” levels of hunger. World Food Program Chief Economist Arif Husain has said that the food crisis is the worst he’s ever seen, and pointed out in a recent interview that 80 percent of the global population experiencing famine is in Gaza.

UN agencies and other humanitarian aid groups have been for months calling for Israel to end its blockade of basic human needs like food, water, electricity and medical supplies. Hundreds of trucks containing such aid are lined up at the two border crossings that haven’t been closed by Israeli forces, but Israeli officials are blocking the vast majority of them from entering, with only about 120 trucks a day going in compared to the 500 trucks a day that aid groups say would be needed to properly provide help.

When aid groups are allowed entry, they are subject to the same relentless Israeli bombing and attacks that have killed over 24,000 Palestinians so far. Aid workers have said that, unlike in other global conflicts, Israel is not hesitant to kill humanitarian aid workers in its assault and has on occasions actively targeted aid groups. This has led to unprecedented rates of death among aid workers, with 152 UN workers killed since October 7, UN Secretary-General António Guterres announced recently.

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