

UN warns “humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is getting worse” as Israel plans to resume onslaught after “pause”

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The “humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is getting worse by the day,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said Monday, as the besieged enclave of 2.2 million remains without electricity, food or water. Israel is using a four-day “pause” in its onslaught—which is reportedly being extended for another two days—to make preparations for an even more ruthless onslaught on southern Gaza.

“You have a few days. When we return to fighting, we will apply the same force and more ... and we will fight across the whole of the [Gaza] Strip,” Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told soldiers on Monday, according to CNN.

On Monday, Gaza’s Government Media Office reported that the death toll of the genocide has surged to 15,000, after dozens of people were found buried under rubble during the “pause” in fighting. The death toll includes 6,160 children and 4,000 women, while a further 33,000 people are injured. In addition, another 7,000 people are still missing—most likely buried in collapsed buildings—including 4,700 children. Adding the missing to the dead brings the death toll to 22,000, including 10,860 children.

The Government Media Office reported that 207 doctors, nurses and other healthcare personnel had been killed since the start of Israel’s offensive. Seventy journalists have been killed during this time and 266 schools have been destroyed, with 67 completely out of service.

The United Nations noted that “over 1.8 million people in Gaza, or nearly 80% of the population, are estimated to be internally displaced.” In a staggering statistic, a report by the Shelter Cluster states that “across the Gaza Strip, over 234,000 housing units

have been damaged and more than 46,000 homes have been completely destroyed, amounting to over 60% of the total housing stock.” The report adds that “a few days’ pause is inadequate to address the catastrophic impact of attacks on homes and civilian infrastructure in Gaza. The loss of life and destruction of property has been devastating. Residential neighbourhoods, housing and civilian infrastructure must be protected.”

It further states:

In Gaza City and North Gaza, extensive bombardment has resulted in damage to over 50% of all buildings, alongside widespread damage to roads and essential infrastructure such as power systems and distribution networks, and water storage tanks, pipes, supply networks and drainage channels. The cumulative effect of the strikes prevents access to functional services and infrastructure that severely compromises the ability to meet basic requirements to sustain life.

Israeli officials are only intensifying their genocidal rhetoric. On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hosted Elon Musk, the world’s richest man and a notorious proponent of racism and antisemitism, to promote his onslaught against the Palestinians.

“There’s no choice but to kill those who insist on murdering civilians. There’s no choice. They’re not going to change their mind,” Musk said during the visit.

Musk’s visit was broadly condemned even within

Israel. “Blatant antisemite & publisher of antisemitism Elon Musk should be persona non grata in Israel,” wrote Esther Solomon, the editor-in-chief of the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*. “Instead, Netanyahu—plumbing new depths of amoral sycophancy—gifts him a PR visit to the kibbutzim devastated by Hamas. Profane, venal, bilious, both of them.”

Ahead of the visit, Musk publicly endorsed a Twitter post advocating the “great replacement theory,” which declared that “Jewish communities have been pushing the exact kind of dialectical hatred against whites that they claim to want people to stop using against them.”

The “pause” applies only to Gaza. In the West Bank, the Israeli military and far-right settlers are continuing their attacks on Palestinians. Since October 7, some 231 Palestinians, including 59 children, have been killed in the West Bank.

The spokesman for the Palestinian Health Ministry, Ashraf Al-Qudra, noted in an interview with *Al Jazeera* that more than 60 ambulances and 160 health facilities have been destroyed during Israel’s attacks on Gaza. “We were subjected to a direct targeting operation by the Israeli forces after strangling the health system on the first day of the aggression by cutting off medical supplies, fuel, and electricity,” he said.

The Biden administration, meanwhile, is making preparations for the political fallout from the resumption of Israel’s onslaught against Gaza. In an article headlined “White House Grapples with Internal Divisions on Israel-Gaza,” the *Washington Post* concludes with the following blunt admission: “Still, Biden officials are in an increasingly vexing predicament. ‘The problem they have, which is the problem they’ve had from Day 1, is the Israelis’ don’t have ‘a strategy for doing what they want to do that does not harm, kill and expel a lot of Palestinians from Gaza,’ one outside adviser said. ‘They have to go down south and do the same thing. I don’t know how you do that with 2-plus million people in the south.’”

Of course, this is a “problem” only from the standpoint of public relations. Israeli officials have made clear that they are seeking the murder or expulsion of the population of Gaza from their land, while the White House has repeatedly insisted that there are no “red lines” on the number of civilians the Israeli military is allowed to massacre.



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