

US expands Middle East war as UN warns “every single person in Gaza is hungry”

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The United States military carried out a new round of illegal attacks on Yemen Tuesday, the third set of bombings in just under a week. The latest round of strikes makes clear that the United States is escalating a broader war throughout the Middle East, with Iran and its allies as the central targets, amid the ongoing US-Israeli genocide in Gaza.

The US military said its strike early Tuesday targeted missile launch sites in Yemen, which the pro-Iranian Houthi rebels are using to target US warships providing logistical support for the genocide in Gaza. The latest attack follows strikes on Thursday and Friday.

Also on Tuesday, the United States reported that two Navy SEALs who were lost at sea last Thursday, and presumed dead, were on a mission to seize what the US claimed were weapons from Iran being supplied to the Houthi rebels.

The escalation of the war comes amid new and desperate warnings about the humanitarian disaster in Gaza, with the United Nations warning that “every single person” in Gaza faces hunger.

In a report published Tuesday, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights warned that Gazans now make up 80 percent of all people facing famine or catastrophic hunger around the world, as a result of Israel’s systematic bombardment and blockade of food, water, medicine and electricity.

The report warned:

Currently, every single person in Gaza is hungry. A quarter of the population is starving and struggling to find food and drinkable water, and famine is imminent. Pregnant women are not receiving adequate nutrition and healthcare, putting their lives at risk. In addition, all

children under five – 335,000 – are at high risk of severe malnutrition as the risk of famine conditions continues to increase. A whole generation is now in danger of suffering from stunting.

The UN warned that hunger and malnutrition in childhood “causes irreparable physical and cognitive impairments,” and “will undermine the learning capacity of an entire generation.”

The UN report made it clear that Israel is the responsible party for the humanitarian disaster. It stated:

Nowhere is safe in Gaza. Since October 9, Israel declared and imposed a “total siege” on Gaza, depriving 2.3 million Palestinians of water, food, fuel, medicine, and medical supplies. This is against the backdrop of a 17-year Israeli blockade, which before this war made approximately half of the people in Gaza food insecure and more than 80 percent reliant on humanitarian aid.

It concluded, “It is unprecedented to make an entire civilian population go hungry this completely and quickly. Israel is destroying Gaza’s food system and using food as a weapon against the Palestinian people.”

In a meeting with a Biden administration official, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu allegedly declared, “There is no humanitarian disaster in Gaza,” according to news reports in the Israeli media.

Against the backdrop of last week’s hearings at the

International Court of Justice accusing Israel of committing genocide in Gaza, US officials have only doubled down on their support for the genocide.

In an interview with CNBC, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was asked to respond to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's declaration that Israel will continue its onslaught on Gaza in defiance of The Hague.

To this, Blinken replied, "From day one, we strongly supported Israel's right to defend itself. We strongly supported its right to try to ensure that October 7 never happens again."

In a separate statement in the interview, Blinken declared, "What we're focused on is trying to make sure that October 7 never happens again. That should be the bar. That should be the measure." He proclaimed, absurdly, that "Israel has made good progress."

On Tuesday, President Joe Biden spoke with German Prime Minister Olaf Scholz and the two leaders "reaffirmed their support for Israel's right to self-defense."

The US media, meanwhile, is escalating its demands for a wider war throughout the Middle East. In an editorial titled "Iran and the Houthis Don't Get Biden's Message," the *Wall Street Journal* declared: "Iran's Houthi proxy militia keeps firing missiles at US ships, and two Navy SEALs are missing at sea after a mission to seize Iranian-made missile parts bound for the Houthis."

Saying "it sure looks like the Houthis and Iran are at war with the US," the *Journal* demanded an even more aggressive military response.

As of Friday, the death toll in the Gaza Strip stood at 31,497, according to the Euro-Med Monitor, including both those officially reported dead and those who have been missing for more than 14 days, most likely buried in the rubble.

Gaza's Ministry of Health reported that between Monday and Tuesday, 158 Palestinians were killed and another 320 people were injured. The UN noted, "On January 15, in the early morning, 20 people, the majority women and children, were reported killed when a house was struck in the Al-Sabra neighborhood of Gaza City." In a separate attack the same day, "at about 19:00, 12 people were reportedly killed and another 12 injured when a house between the towns of

Khan Younis and Rafah was struck."

In a statement on Twitter, Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, declared that she "never thought we would witness mass starvation of these proportions used in the 21st century." She continued: "Yet here it is in Gaza, after 100 days of bombing, with insufficient food, fuel, and water allowed in." She added, "Children are dying first. Adults will follow. Before our eyes."



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