

White House reaffirms it has no “red lines” for Israeli war crimes

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The Biden administration reiterated Monday that the United States has no “red lines” for the war crimes it allows Israel to commit with US weapons, amid mounting global opposition to Israel’s genocide and deliberate starvation of the population of Gaza.

“I don’t think it’s productive to assign a ‘red line’ terminology to what is a very complex set of policies,” said Principal Deputy Press Secretary Olivia Dalton at a briefing aboard Air Force One on Monday.

These remarks reinforced the statement made by Biden in an interview with MSNBC that aired on Saturday in which he declared, “The defense of Israel is still critical. So there’s no red line where I’m going to cut off all weapons so they don’t have the Iron Dome to protect them.”

While reaffirming the US position of unequivocal support for Israel, Biden criticized Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s plans to invade Rafah, declaring, “You cannot have 30,000 more Palestinians dead.”

In response, Netanyahu vowed to proceed with the Rafah invasion, declaring, “We’ll go there.”

In a separate interview, Netanyahu asserted, “I’m telling you that we’re not getting off the gas.” He added, “I’m telling you that we have to take care of Israel’s security and our future, and that requires eliminating the terrorist army. That’s a prerequisite for victory.”

Earlier this month, Biden had speculated that a ceasefire agreement could be in place by the start of Ramadan, which began on Monday.

But the holiday began with a continuation of Israeli bombings and mass starvation. Over the weekend, 234 people were killed, according to Gaza’s Ministry of Health.

On the first day of Ramadan, two babies died of malnutrition and lack of medical supplies in northern Gaza, according to the Health Ministry. This brings the death toll from malnutrition and dehydration in the Gaza

Strip, caused by the Israeli siege, up to 27.

In a statement to the Anadolu news agency, Palestinian pediatrician Dr. Samer Lubbad warned that Israel’s blockade of food and medical supplies “will lead to the death of many children due to malnutrition.

“The two infants died as the Israeli occupation army refused to allow food and medical supplies into northern Gaza,” he said. He added that malnutrition occurs “as a result of the lack of food resources for children, such as basic milk for premature babies and infants.”

The Defense for Children International-Palestine said in a statement, “The true death toll due to starvation is feared to be much higher as many Palestinians, particularly in northern Gaza, face famine and are almost entirely cut off from the limited humanitarian aid entering Gaza through the southern Rafah crossing.”

Ayed Abu Eqtaish, accountability program director at the children’s rights group, said, “The starvation of children is a hallmark of genocide and a deliberate political choice by Israel, backed by the Biden administration.”

In a statement, Gaza’s Health Ministry said 2,000 medical staff in northern Gaza are in need of food and are facing famine alongside the broader population. The Health Ministry said the workers “did not find anything to break their fast with on the first day of Ramadan,” adding, “We call on international and relief institutions to quickly provide food to hospitals in northern Gaza.”

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement, “Yet even though Ramadan has begun, the killing, bombing and bloodshed continue in Gaza,” stressing that the “threatened Israeli assault on Rafah could plunge the people of Gaza into an even deeper circle of hell.”

Al Jazeera reported a major escalation in bombings throughout Gaza on Monday, with 19 people killed in a series of attacks on residential homes in Rafah, Khan

Younis city and Gaza City.

The death toll continues to rise, with the Ministry of Health reporting that 31,112 people in Gaza have been killed and 72,760 wounded by Israeli attacks since October 7.

In a statement on Monday, the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor warned of the soaring death rate among elderly people. Euro-Med said its field team is recording nearly daily deaths among the elderly due to Israel's systematic and pervasive crimes of starvation and treatment deprivation in the Gaza Strip, especially in Gaza City and the Strip's northern regions.

It added, "The majority of these cases do not reach hospitals, which are only partially operational in northern Gaza because of the difficulty of access given the ongoing Israeli military attacks. Consequently, after dying at home, the elderly are buried either close to their residences or in makeshift graves dispersed across the Strip. There are currently more than 140 such cemeteries."

Last week, Euro-Med published a report alleging the fact that "Palestinian prisoners and detainees from the Gaza Strip who are being held by the Israeli army are being subjected to premeditated murder and arbitrary execution outside the purview of the law and the judiciary."

It noted ongoing reports of intentional killings of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, while others were tortured to death in the Sde Teman camp and other Israeli detention centers and military facilities.

Amid the ongoing genocide and mass starvation in Gaza, the war continues to widen in geographic scope. On Monday, Israel carried out strikes deep inside Lebanon, striking the city of Baalbek, 62 miles from the border. The same day, the US and UK carried out a new round of strikes on Yemen, killing at least 11 people.



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