

Israel blocks entry of food into Gaza, plans to cut power and water

Andre Damon
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The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Sunday that Israel has blocked all food shipments into Gaza, aiming to starve the population into submission and ethnically cleanse the enclave.

“We have decided to block all entry of goods and supplies into Gaza,” Netanyahu declared before a cabinet meeting. “No trucks entered Gaza this morning, nor will they at this stage,” said Omer Dostri, a spokesperson for the prime minister.

The White House endorsed Israel’s policy of mass starvation. “Israel has negotiated in good faith since the beginning of [the Trump] administration to ensure the release of hostages held captive by Hamas terrorists,” said National Security Council spokesperson Brian Hughes. He added, “We will support their decision on next steps, given Hamas has indicated it is no longer interested in a negotiated ceasefire.”

Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich praised the policy, stating, “The decision... to completely stop the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza until Hamas is destroyed or completely surrenders and all our hostages are freed is an important step in the right direction.” He called on Israel to “open the gates of hell as quickly and violently as possible against the merciless enemy until total victory.”

The announcement came after the lapse of “phase one” of the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas. The Netanyahu government has reneged on its commitment to begin “phase two” and is instead demanding the release of more hostages before continuing “phase one.”

In reality, Israel’s refusal to uphold the ceasefire agreement is a calculated provocation aimed at creating the conditions for mass starvation of the people of Gaza in order to forcibly displace them and seize their land.

Last month, Trump declared that the United States supported the ethnic cleansing of Gaza, a policy previously proposed by sections of the Israeli government.

In announcing the blockade, Netanyahu’s office warned, “If Hamas continues its refusal, there will be further consequences.”

The Israeli newspaper *Israel Hayom* reported that the government is preparing to enforce a total blockade of food and water into Gaza. Israel’s Channel 14 reported that Energy Minister Eli Cohen is planning to propose shutting off Gaza’s electricity supply at the next Israeli cabinet meeting.

Israel’s blockade of food aid to Gaza is a war crime and a crime against humanity. Oxfam condemned the move in a statement, calling it “a reckless act of collective punishment, explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law.”

UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Fletcher condemned the move in a post on Twitter, declaring, “Israel’s decision to halt aid into Gaza is alarming. International humanitarian law is clear: We must be allowed access to deliver vital lifesaving aid.”

In a statement, MSF (Doctors Without Borders) spokesperson Caroline Seguin said, “Israel is once again blocking an entire population from receiving aid, using it as a bargaining chip. This is unacceptable, outrageous, and will have devastating consequences.”

Kenneth Roth, former head of Human Rights Watch, said that Israel has an “absolute duty” under the Geneva Conventions to allow food to enter Gaza. “Israel’s latest threat to cut off all aid is a resumption of the war-crime starvation strategy” that led to war crimes charges against Netanyahu at the International Criminal Court.

The entire population of Gaza is suffering from food insecurity due to Israel's deliberate blockade of aid. In December, the UN estimated that over 19,000 children had been hospitalized for acute malnutrition in just four months. Last month, health officials in Gaza reported that six babies froze to death in a two-week period due to a widespread lack of fuel to counter freezing temperatures.

Meanwhile, the United States is escalating its military support for Israel. On Friday, the US State Department announced that Secretary of State Marco Rubio had invoked "emergency authorities" to send an additional \$4 billion in weapons to Israel. The State Department said the US would "continue to use all available tools to fulfill America's longstanding commitment to Israel's security, including means to counter security threats."

The package includes a variety of potential weapons, with reports indicating that over 35,000 2,000-pound bombs could be sent. Each of these bombs is capable of leveling an entire city block. The Biden administration sent Israel at least 14,000 of these bombs, which Israel used—alongside other US-provided weapons—to destroy most of the structures in Gaza.

Responding to the announcement, Netanyahu praised Trump, saying, "Donald Trump is the greatest friend that Israel has ever had in the White House... He has shown it by sending us all the munitions that were being held up. This way, he is giving Israel the tools we need to finish the job against Iran's terror axis."

According to Gaza's health ministry, 46,565 Palestinians have been killed and 109,660 injured since the start of the Gaza genocide on October 7, 2023. Gaza's government media office puts the death toll at over 61,000, including the thousands of Palestinians missing and believed to be buried under the rubble. The real death toll, including those who have starved to death and succumbed to disease, is far higher.



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