

# After massacring Gaza aid seekers, Israel escalates bloodshed with assault on Deir al-Balah

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The Zionist regime responded to international outrage over its cold-blooded massacre Sunday of 92 Palestinians seeking aid in Gaza by escalating mass murder and starvation of the population. Gaza's Health Ministry reported that at least 130 Palestinians were killed Monday and over 1,000 wounded across Gaza, as Israeli troops assaulted the city of Deir al-Balah.

Deir al-Balah had been until now the last settlement in Gaza spared bombardment, reportedly because Israeli officials believed Israeli hostages were held there. As a result, it became a center for Palestinian refugee camps, UN aid operations and the remaining operational water treatment facilities in Gaza. An estimated 80,000 Palestinians were forced to flee Deir al-Balah after the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) issued evacuation orders for several neighborhoods in the city.

One Deir al-Balah resident, Thurayya Abu Qunneis, told CNN: "The planes came and dropped many leaflets on us; the entire sky was covered with leaflets on the houses, the streets and everywhere, stating that we had to evacuate from certain areas. ... We are living on edge. We can't sleep, eat or drink. There is no flour, no anything, and we are hungry. We are dying, and our children are dying of hunger."

Yesterday, Israeli tanks and armored personnel carriers invaded Deir al-Balah, bombarding mosques, civilian homes and UN and World Health Organization (WHO) facilities. UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said, "UN staff remain in Deir al-Balah, and two UN guesthouses have been struck, despite parties having been informed of the locations of UN premises ... These locations—as with all civilian sites—must be protected, regardless of evacuation orders."

IDF forces attacked the WHO's staff residence and main warehouse in Deir al-Balah three times, bombing

and setting them aflame and detaining two WHO staff and their relatives. "Israeli military entered the premises, forcing women and children to evacuate on foot toward Al-Mawasi amid active conflict. Male staff and family members were handcuffed, stripped, interrogated on the spot and screened at gunpoint," WHO director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tweeted, adding: "WHO demands the immediate release of the detained staff and protection of all its staff."

The IDF reported that one soldier, Staff Sgt. Amit Cohen, 19, had been killed and another wounded by a detonation of Israeli munitions in the Deir al-Balah area. The Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, also reported that their fighters had damaged an Israeli Merkava tank by detonating a "powerful landmine" directly under the tank as it advanced.

The IDF attack on Deir al-Balah is part of a systematic policy of genocide by denying food, water, electricity and medical treatment to the Palestinian population. Starvation is rapidly spreading in Gaza, with at least 19 people having confirmed to have starved to death in Gaza since Saturday. In the meantime, fully stocked UN food aid warehouses across the border in Egypt contain enough to feed Gaza for 3 months, but food shipments are blocked by the IDF.

Medical personnel, hospitals and healthcare facilities remain a particular target of IDF forces operating with undisguised contempt for international law. In a statement Sunday, the British charity organization Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) noted that Israeli evacuation orders "endanger vital humanitarian and primary healthcare sites ... and are accelerating the systematic dismantling of Gaza's already-decimated healthcare system."

Gaza Health Ministry officials said hospitals are running out of fuel, food and medicine, risking a collapse

of medical care. Spokesperson Khalil Al-Deqran said medical staff only get one meal a day, and that hospitals are overrun with patients suffering from exhaustion and malnutrition. Yesterday, Israeli commandos south of the city of Khan Younis kidnapped Dr. Marwan al-Hams, the head of Gaza's field hospitals, killing a journalist and wounding another near a Red Cross facility.

The Israeli genocide in Gaza is a crime against humanity unfolding thanks to the unstinting support of the major imperialist powers. The United States, Germany, Britain, France and Spain have all sent materiel shipments to Israel to arm the Zionist regime to commit genocide. As they try to push through a neocolonial conquest of the Middle East, they see the genocidal Zionist regime, in the debased words of German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, as doing their "dirty work" for them.

The IDF's ceaseless resort to atrocities and the mass murder of defenseless civilians, as in calls by top Israeli officials and US President Donald Trump to murder or expel all Palestinians from Gaza, unmistakably recalls the crimes of the Nazis.

Yesterday, Gideon Levy, a columnist for Israel's *Ha'aretz* paper, told Al Jazeera: "There's now a very systemic destruction project of whole towns and villages, one after the other. Israel is doing things that the Germans did in the early years of the Third Reich, which Israelis don't see any similarity. ... I must remind all of us: The extermination of the Jews in the Holocaust started with evacuating people to the east [of Europe]. Same plan. That's the first stage. We should stop it here."

Stopping the Gaza genocide requires, however, the building of an international movement against the imperialist governments in the working class. Isolated strikes have broken out against weapons shipments to Israel in US or European ports and airports. However, halting the flow of arms to Israel altogether requires fusing such strikes together in an international movement in the working class directed not only against the Zionist regime, but above all against its imperialist backers and their neocolonial wars in the Middle East.

Workers and youth must reject the illusion that pressure and moral appeals upon imperialist governments, whose hands are drenched in blood, can persuade them to oppose genocide. In reality, these governments have supported the genocide, while sometimes cynically issuing tepid criticisms of Israel, for the nearly two years the genocide has unfolded.

These cynical statements include the two-faced declaration issued yesterday by 25 countries, including

Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Criticizing "inhumane killing of civilians" in Gaza and declaring that it is "horrifying that over 800 Palestinians have been killed while seeking aid," it issued an impotent appeal that "Israel must comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law."

No less horrific than the Israeli regime's genocidal policy, however, is the bloodstained cynicism of imperialist governments that arm Israel for the very same genocide they claim to oppose. This cynicism was epitomized by the posturing of British Foreign Secretary David Lammy, who said:

The Israeli government must answer: What possible military justification can there be for strikes that have killed desperate, starving children? What immediate actions are they taking to stop this litany of horrors? And what will they do to hold those responsible to account?

But the far-right Israeli regime will not answer Lammy. It will press ahead with its genocide, expecting that it will retain not only the explicit support of Washington and Berlin but the tacit support of the imperialist powers that signed this cynical document. Of these powers, one could ask:

What is their justification for arming Israel as it kills desperate, starving children? What actions can be taken to stop their transfer to Israel of weapon systems that make this litany of horrors possible? And what can be done to hold figures like Lammy responsible for their complicity in genocide?

The decisive question is building an international movement in the working class, independent of and opposed to all the capitalist governments and their petty-bourgeois supporters, against imperialist war, fascism and genocide and for socialism.



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