At least 5 killed, including children, as floods swamp Gaza’s tent camps

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At least five Palestinians, including children, were killed when a rain-soaked embankment collapsed onto their tents in central Gaza, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported Monday, November 9. Heavy rains swept through the besieged territory over the weekend, flooding displacement camps and directly affecting more than 106,000 people, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

Gaza’s approximately 2.1 million residents remain trapped in the devastated coastal enclave, with nearly the entire population crowded into less than half its territory. Israeli forces continue demolishing buildings and driving families from their shelters, further shrinking the area available to Palestinians and creating the conditions for mass expulsion.

Thousands of families are dealing with flooded tents, soaked mattresses, blankets and clothing and no adequate protection from the cold. In its November 8 statement, Save the Children warned of temperatures dropping as low as 5°C (41°F). Citing shelter assessments, it reported that 84 percent of surveyed families had no effective means of heating their shelters. The Israeli government continues to obstruct the entry of tents, insulation, blankets, fuel and materials, including timber, needed to repair damaged homes.

Rainwater is mixing with sewage in areas crowded with displaced families. UNICEF reported Monday that no wastewater treatment plant in Gaza was operational. At Gaza City’s Sheikh Radwan stormwater basin, only two of six pumps were working. The agency has been seeking Israeli approval for more than a year to bring in the equipment needed to repair the facility.

Disease was already spreading before the storm. OCHA’s October 29 report recorded an increase in suspected viral and bacterial meningitis cases since September, particularly in Gaza governorate. Communicable diseases accounted for 18 percent of consultations reported by its health partners; respiratory infections comprised 60 percent of those reported diseases. The World Health Organization warned in September that acute watery diarrhea cases had risen sharply, while restrictions on diagnostic and laboratory equipment obstructed efforts to identify and contain outbreaks.

In addition to disease, hunger is stalking the residents of Gaza. OCHA’s November 4 humanitarian snapshot cited projections that more than 1.4 million people, approximately two-thirds of Gaza’s population, would face crisis-level or worse food insecurity during the second half of 2026. More than 2,800 children under five were admitted for malnutrition treatment in September alone, including over 360 with severe acute malnutrition.

Seeking to hasten the deaths of Palestinian children, on November 1 Israeli authorities notified UN agencies that humanitarian and commercial shipments from Egypt would be suspended, with some exceptions. OCHA warned that a continued suspension could slash daily free cooked-meal provisions from approximately 600,000 meals to 330,000. Its November 5 report also recorded a need for 121,000 tents against stocks of just 2,800 inside Gaza. No emergency shelter kits were available.

Israeli restrictions on generators, engine oil and spare parts also threaten hospital power supplies, ventilators and ambulance services, OCHA warned. The flooding has compounded these shortages: Water entered departments at Nasser Medical Complex and flooded the basement housing pediatrics, the pharmacy and radiology at Patient’s Friends Benevolent Society Hospital. Medical teams suspended services as roads became impassable, while shortages of antibiotics and other essential medicines worsened.

This is not the first time Gaza floods have led to mass casualty events. In December 2025, Amnesty International documented nine deaths when three buildings damaged by the Israeli military collapsed during rain storms on December 12. A tenth person died the previous day in a building collapse in al-Shati refugee camp. Amnesty called the tragedy “utterly preventable,” identifying Israel’s deliberate obstruction of shelter and repair materials as a cause. Nearly a year later, families are again being killed after being denied the means to protect themselves.

The latest deaths are a direct consequence of US-Israeli policies aimed at destroying, in whole or in part, Gaza’s Palestinian population and driving survivors from the territory. Destroying homes, hospitals and sanitation systems, then blocking the materials needed to restore them, condemns people to death from exposure, disease and hunger.

Trump’s grotesquely misnamed “Board of Peace” provides the colonial framework for continuing this policy. Chaired by Trump and including former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, a principal architect of the invasion of Iraq, the body places decisions over Gaza’s administration and reconstruction funds in the hands of the imperialist powers and their partners. Its proposed International Stabilisation Force would police the devastated territory. In February, Indonesia announced preparations to

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contribute up to 8,000 troops.

Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner has presented plans for seaside resorts, residential towers, data centers and industrial parks on the ruins of Gaza. Over the bodies of the dead and displaced, Gaza's land is being offered as an investment opportunity.

In opposition to war and genocide, millions in the US and Israel voted at the ballot box for candidates who spoke out against the genocide. Despite these millions of votes, the ruling class in the US and Israel will continue the genocide, and all capitalist parties remain committed to the military alliance through which Washington arms and finances Israel's crimes.

In Israel, President Isaac Herzog has tasked former army chief Gadi Eisenkot with forming a government following the October 27 election. Eisenkot served in Netanyahu's war cabinet for eight months and formulated the Dahiya doctrine of overwhelming force against civilian infrastructure. As the *World Socialist Web Site* explained in its November 8 analysis, the contest between Netanyahu and his principal opponents concerned how to prosecute Israel's wars and preserve imperialist backing amid mounting international opposition.

In the United States, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) celebrated the election results. On November 4, it congratulated hundreds of victorious Democrats and Republicans, singling out Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries for their caucuses' victories. The following day, it reported that more than 245 candidates supported by its members had won. AIPAC's bipartisan network dwarfs the eight-member House bloc claimed by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), whose representatives remain within the Democratic Party.

On Monday, November 9, Schumer welcomed newly elected Democratic senators to the Capitol, including Michigan's Abdul El-Sayed, the first Muslim elected to the Senate. Photographs shared by the senator from Wall Street and a lifelong defender of Israel showed him and El-Sayed smiling and shaking hands. Schumer backed El-Sayed's primary opponent, Haley Stevens, before endorsing him for the general election.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid made clear that the Israeli ruling class welcomed the Democratic victories. In a post following the election, translated from Hebrew, he wrote:

> Hakeem Jeffries will lead the House of Representatives. Chuck Schumer will run the Senate. Both are my friends; both voted with Israel this year even when the majority of their party caucus voted otherwise. They're exactly the kind of leaders Israel should know how to work with, even if we don't agree on everything.

Despite collapsing support for Israel among large sections of the population, the Zionist state can count on Democratic Party leaders who have repeatedly defended it against popular opposition. The Biden-Harris administration backed the crackdown on campus protests, while Democratic mayors deployed police against students opposing the genocide. The Trump administration escalated this repression, targeting international students and other noncitizens for exercising their democratic right to oppose war and mass murder. Its campaign of detention, visa revocation and threatened deportation has targeted Rümeysa Öztürk, Momodou Taal and Mahmoud Khalil, as well as pro-Palestinian photojournalist Ya'akub Vijandre. The DSA's promotion of a small congressional bloc obscures the Democratic Party's class interests and cons workers and youth into believing it can be transformed into an instrument of working class emancipation.

The fact is the fight to stop the genocide and secure the freedom of the Palestinians cannot be entrusted to Democratic politicians, however "progressive" or "democratic socialist" they claim to be. The Democratic Party is a party of Wall Street, the CIA and American imperialism. It can no more be transformed into a working class party than the FBI can be transformed into a working class organization.

The October 30 international dockworkers' action demonstrated the only social force capable of intervening and ending imperialist war. Tens of thousands of workers struck, picketed and demonstrated at 113 ports in 22 countries and regions against genocide, war and the use of ports to transport military supplies.

This movement must be expanded and given an independent political perspective, rooted in international socialism and the historical lessons of Marxism. Workers must build rank-and-file committees, coordinated across workplaces and national borders through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC), to take control of their struggles and organize sustained action against weapons production and shipments. The task is to prepare a general strike against the capitalist oligarchy and develop the political leadership necessary for workers to take power, end imperialist war and reorganize society around human need.

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