



Deadly Attack on World Central Kitchen Team Exemplifies Israel's Policy of Targeting Humanitarian Relief Operations in Gaza Amid the Ongoing Genocide

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The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights and Al-Haq condemn Israel's deliberate targeting of the World Central Kitchen (WCK) team through airstrikes, despite prior coordination of the convoy's movement in the central Gaza Strip. Seven members of [WCK team](#) were killed,

including a 25-year-old Palestinian, Saif Al-Din Issam Ayed Abu Taha, and six foreign nationals, Lalzawmi (Zomi) Frankcom, 43 (Australia), Damien Sobol, 35 (Poland), Jacob Flickinger (US and Canada), John Chapman, 57 (UK), James (Jim) Henderson, 33 (UK), and James Kirby, 47 (UK), leading WCK to suspend operations in Gaza. According to information obtained by our field researchers, at approximately 22:15 on Monday, 1 April 2024, Israeli drones launched three separate strikes on a convoy of three white Toyota Hilux vehicles traveling along the Deir al-Balah coastline and heading to the south of the Gaza Strip. Two of these vehicles were marked as WCK armored cars. The initial strike completely burnt the first car's front with a missile, whereupon the driver was able to flee and join another car in the convoy. Subsequently, a second missile struck another vehicle 500 meters away, killing three passengers, while two others managed to flee and board the third car. Afterwards, around one kilometer south of al-Tal Site, the Israeli drones again targeted the third car with a missile that killed four team members. WCK said in a [statement](#) that despite coordinating movements with the Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF), the convoy was hit as it was leaving the Deir al-Balah warehouse, in the central Gaza Strip, where the team had unloaded more than 100 tons of humanitarian food aid brought to Gaza on the maritime route. Following this

attack, WCK decided to pause its operations immediately in Gaza, adding it will be making decisions about the future of its work soon. This Israeli attack, which involved three separate strikes on the convoy, underscores the IOF's deliberate targeting of humanitarian operations and killing of aid workers. It provides yet another example in the pattern of Israel's systematic military attacks on humanitarian aid convoys and distribution centers, and coupled with the deliberate attacks on [Palestinians awaiting aid](#) and workers involved in aid distribution and protection -- amounts to a continuing act of genocide -- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction. Since the start of the ongoing genocide, around 196 aid workers have been [killed](#) in the Gaza Strip, with the majority of them having worked for the United Nations (UN) Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), which runs the largest aid operation in Gaza. This represents the highest number of UN aid workers killed in any conflict in the history of the UN. By targeting humanitarian aid operations, through airstrikes or [smearing and defunding campaign](#), Israel attempts to push and force humanitarian organizations to cease their life-saving operations in the Gaza Strip, using [starvation as a weapon of war](#), and an act of genocide intended to destroy Palestinians in Gaza. Despite successive rulings by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordering Provisional Measures against Israel for a plausible case of genocide, and the UN Security Council's resolution on 25 March 2024, demanding an immediate ceasefire, and an ongoing investigation by the International Criminal Court into Israel's international crimes, Israel continues to flagrantly carry out internationally wrongful acts in Gaza, with its agents acting under the shield of prolonged impunity. There may also be implications for a number of Third States, where these States, acting with knowledge that they are contributing to Israel's internationally wrongful acts, by providing arms for example, may be held internationally responsible for aiding and assisting. Thus, mere statements and condemnations from the international community in response to Israel's ongoing genocide, starvation of Palestinians and military attacks and their consequent killing of humanitarian aid workers are insufficient. Immediate, meaningful, and concrete measures must be taken to exert the necessary pressure on Israel to end its ongoing genocide, and ensure accountability for international crimes and wrongful acts perpetuated by the Israeli authorities and military. We call upon the international community and UN bodies to exert genuine and effective efforts to ensure delivery of food, medicines and potable water for the population in a way that guarantees protection of their lives and dignity. Most importantly, we reiterate that all states must take concrete measures to deter Israel, including diplomatic and economic sanctions, and immediately halt the transfer of weapons to both sides, including the halt of weapons transits through third countries to Israel, and hold Israeli agents accountable for international crimes perpetrated

against the Palestinian people. Israel's relentless perpetration of such reprehensible attacks lends evidence of Israel's flagrant impunity and the international community's glaring double standards and selective approach when addressing Israeli international crimes, including genocide.

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