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Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #139

14 Mar 2024

Key Highlights

- One of the few remaining UNRWA distribution centres in Gaza was hit by an Israeli strike on 13 March.
- Catastrophic healthcare conditions are impeding the disease management of thousands of chronically ill patients in Gaza, according to a new report.
- Mine Action response in Gaza is hindered by the need for authorization to deploy specialized personnel, restrictions on the import of humanitarian mine action supplies, and unreliable communications systems.
- The UN Human Rights Office has called on the Israeli authorities to immediately halt any imminent home demolitions and the forcible displacement of some 1,550 Palestinians in Al Bustan area of Silwan in East Jerusalem.

Gaza Strip Updates

- Intense Israeli bombardment and ground operations as well as heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups continue to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, particularly in the Hamad area of Khan Younis, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure.
- Between the afternoon of 13 March and 10:30 on 14 March, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 69 Palestinians were killed and 110 Palestinians were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 14 March 2024, at least 31,341 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 73,134 Palestinians were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are among the deadly incidents reported on 12 and 13 March:
 - On 12 March, at about 20:00, 11 Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house in Al Mahatta area in Deir al Balah governorate was hit.
 - On 12 March, four Palestinian bodies were recovered from multiple locations in An Nuseirat and Al Mughraqa areas in Deir al Balah governorate.
 - On 12 March, around noon, two Palestinian fishers were reportedly shot and killed while fishing off the coast of An Nuseirat in Deir al Balah governorate.
 - On 13 March, at about 3:00, eight Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house in Az Zaitoun neighbourhood, in southeastern Gaza city, was hit.
 - On 13 March, at about 8:30, eight Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house in Al Bureij, in Deir al Balah governorate, was hit.
- Between the afternoons of 13 and 14 March, the Israeli military reported no Israeli soldiers killed in Gaza. As of 14 March, 247 soldiers have been killed and 1,475 soldiers injured in Gaza since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, the vast majority on 7 October. As of 14

March, the Israeli authorities estimate that 134 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld.

- On 13 March, up to six people, including an UNRWA staff member, were reported killed and 22 others injured by an Israeli strike on an UNRWA facility in Rafah, which serves as both a warehouse and a distribution centre. One of the fatalities is believed to be a Hamas commander, who the Israeli military [says](#) was “precisely targeted” in a strike in Rafah on 13 March. According to [UNRWA](#) Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini, the strike affected “one of the very few remaining UNRWA distribution centres in the Gaza Strip ... as food supplies are running out, hunger is widespread and, in some areas, turning into famine.” The Commissioner-General said that UNRWA shares the coordinates of all its facilities in Gaza with the parties to the conflict on a daily basis and that the Israeli authorities had received the coordinates of the Rafah facility the day before it was struck. Since the beginning of the current round of hostilities, UNRWA has recorded an “unprecedented number of violations against its staff and facilities that surpass any other conflict around the world,” with at least 165 UNRWA team members killed, more than 150 UNRWA facilities struck, and over 400 internally displaced persons (IDPs) killed while seeking shelter in UNRWA facilities. “The United Nations, its personnel, premises and assets must be protected at all times,” the Commissioner-General added.
- A new [report](#) by Juzoor for Health and Society Development highlights the challenges facing the healthcare system in Gaza, which was already struggling due to recurrent hostilities and the blockade, and is now at “a breaking point,” with emergency response activities at a minimum. The system’s ability to detect disease outbreaks, respond to mass casualty incidents, and record health outcomes has been disrupted, necessitating urgent efforts to stabilize the healthcare system and restore its functionality. The report focuses on the catastrophic conditions impeding the disease management of thousands of chronic patients in Gaza, including at least 10,000 Palestinians with cancer, and the lack of data on the number of people dying because they cannot access health care for their chronic conditions. “The inability to continue renal dialysis, the lack of insulin, and other life-saving cardiac medications, fuel shortages, scarcity of clean water, and lack of electricity means thousands of people with cardiovascular diseases (CVD), asthma, kidney disease, or diabetes are unable to treat or control their conditions, which will result in the rapid increase in deaths,” according to the report. In addition, the report notes that there are currently some 2,000 cancer patients who require treatment abroad, a two-fold increase compared to cancer cases scheduled for referral prior to 7 October.
- Humanitarian partners warn that it will take years to clear nearly 23 million metric tons of debris generated by the destruction of residential units and other properties across the Gaza Strip as well as to clear up unexploded ordnance contamination. Calling for immediate action to enable large-scale assessments of explosive ordnance contamination, the Protection Cluster reports that Mine Action partners are carrying out explosive threat assessments for prioritized humanitarian sectors, delivering explosive ordnance risk education, and conducting digital, radio and SMS campaigns tailored to different groups including persons with disability. Challenges hindering Mine Action response include the need for authorization to deploy specialized personnel, restrictions on the import of humanitarian mine action supplies, and unreliable communication systems. [Humanity and Inclusion](#) is also warning of the lasting impact of long-term pollution on people in Gaza: “Given Gaza’s urban environment – where buildings have collapsed, are in ruins or damaged – explosive remnants are not only a permanent danger, but will also have a long-term impact on Gazans’ daily lives and their territory’s socio-economic development.”

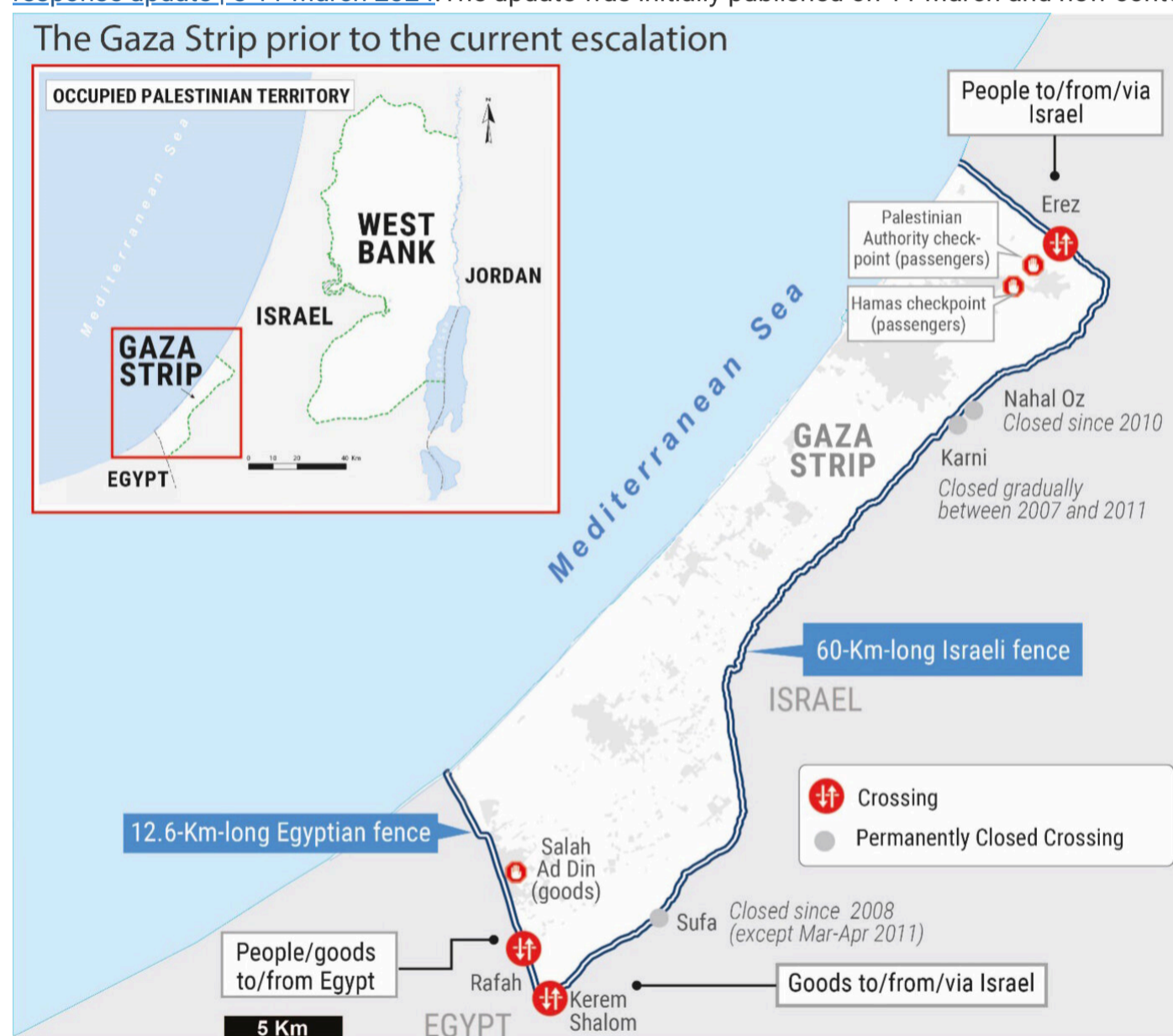
West Bank Updates

- Since 7 October, 418 Palestinians have been killed, including 407 by Israeli forces, nine by settlers and two by either Israeli forces or settlers, across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. These include 109 Palestinians killed since the start of 2024 (compared with 80 during the same period in 2023), the vast majority by Israeli forces. Some 4,690 Palestinians have been injured, including 724 children, since 7 October in the West Bank.
- The Israeli authorities have [announced](#) measures on the entry of Palestinians holding West Bank IDs, with valid permits and magnetic cards, to Al Aqsa Mosque on the first Friday of the month of Ramadan (15 March), limiting entry to children under 10 years of age, women over 50, and men over 55. In 2023, men over 55, women of all ages and children under 12 were allowed entry without a permit on Fridays during Ramadan.
- Since 7 October, 15 Israelis, including four members of Israeli forces, have been killed and 99 injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Israel.
- Between 7 October 2023 and 14 March 2024, an estimated 1,680 Palestinians have been displaced due to home demolitions carried out by Israeli forces across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, nearly triple the number of people displaced by home demolitions during the corresponding period last year. These include some 900 people displaced as a result of the destruction of 138 houses during operations carried out by Israeli forces across the West Bank, the vast majority in the refugee camps of Tulkarm and Jenin. In addition, 25 houses have been demolished on punitive grounds, resulting in the displacement of some 140 people. Over 600 people have also been displaced by the demolition of their homes due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, more than half of whom were in East Jerusalem. On 11 March, the UN Human Rights Office [called](#) on the Israeli authorities to immediately halt any imminent home demolitions and the forcible displacement of some 1,550 Palestinians in Al Bustan area of Silwan in East Jerusalem to create a park next to an Israeli settlement in the heart of the city.
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 14 March 2024, OCHA has recorded 645 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians that resulted in Palestinian casualties (59 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (513 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (73 incidents). These incidents have resulted in damage to an estimated 9,850 trees and saplings, 80 per cent of which were vandalized by Israeli settlers between October and December 2023. In comparison, between 7 October 2022 and 14 March 2023, Israeli settlers vandalized more than 8,300 trees and saplings across the West Bank.

Funding

- The [Flash Appeal](#) for the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), which requests US\$1.2 billion to meet the critical needs of 2.7 million people across the oPt (2.2 million in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem), was extended through the end of March 2024. As of 13 March, member states disbursed nearly \$974 million for the updated Flash Appeal (79 per cent); this includes about \$616 million out of \$629 million (98 per cent) requested for October-December 2023 and about \$358 million out of \$600 million (60 per cent) requested for January-March 2024. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#).
- During February 2024, the oPt Humanitarian Fund ([oPt HF](#)) had a total of 122 ongoing projects, for a total of US\$ 74.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (83 per cent) and West Bank (17 per cent). Projects focused on the areas of Education, Food Security, Health, Protection, Emergency Shelter & NFI, WASH, Coordination and Support Services, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Nutrition. Of these, 77 projects were being implemented by international NGOs (INGOs), 29 projects by national NGOs (NNGOs), and 16 projects by UN agencies. Of the 93 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN, 52 were being implemented in partnership with NNGOs. The oPt HF has also recently finalized its critical and time sensitive First Reserve Allocation of 2024, titled "Emergency Fleet Augmentation for Enhanced Gaza Aid Delivery", amounting to US\$3.5 million. The allocation aims at boosting the aid transport capacity to enable humanitarian partners to increase the delivery of vital aid and services to people across the Gaza Strip. For a summary of the oPt HF activities in February 2024, please follow this [link](#). Since 7 October, the oPt HF has received a total of \$88 million in contributions from member states and private donors. Private donations are collected directly through the [Humanitarian Fund](#).

For the Humanitarian Needs and Cluster Response Update for the period between 5 and 11 March, please visit: [Humanitarian needs and response update | 5-11 March 2024](#). The update was initially published on 11 March and new content has been subsequently added.



* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.