



Displaced children outside their improvised shelters in Gaza. Photo by UNICEF/El Baba

# Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #162

06 May 2024

The OCHA oPt Flash Update is published every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with a comprehensive update on the West Bank included every Wednesday. The next update will be issued on 8 May.

## Key Highlights

- Israeli authorities closed Kerem Shalom Crossing after four Israeli soldiers were killed in an attack carried out by Palestinian armed groups on the area.
- The Israeli military orders people in 31 square kilometres of eastern Rafah governorate to move to Al Mawassi; the area encompasses nine sites hosting displaced people, three clinics, and six warehouses.
- UN agencies continue to warn about the potentially catastrophic consequences of a Rafah operation, emphasizing that there is no safe place in Gaza.
- Humanitarian actors are committed to maintaining operations to provide support to people in need, wherever they are.

## Gaza Strip Updates

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land, and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure.
- On 3 May, OCHA Spokesperson, Jens Laerke, [warned](#) that if there is an assault on Rafah, “hundreds of thousands of people would be at imminent risk of death” and this will also be “an incredible blow to the humanitarian operation in the entire Strip because it is run primarily out of Rafah.” In war, there is an obligation to protect civilians and have their essential needs met. One fundamental way to do this is to allow civilians to leave for safer areas. But civilians must have enough time to leave, as well as a safe route and place to go. Importantly, displaced civilians’ basic needs must be met, and they must be allowed to return as soon as the circumstances allow. The United Nations is not taking part in involuntary evacuations or in the setting up of any displacement zones in southern Gaza. Humanitarian actors are committed to stay and deliver and stand ready to bring assistance to people in need, wherever they are.
- Between the afternoons of 3 and 6 May, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 113 Palestinians were killed and 241 injured, including 52 killed and 90 injured in the last 24 hours. Between 7 October 2023 and 6 May 2024, at least 34,735 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 78,108 Palestinians were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are among the deadly incidents between 2 and 5 May:
  - On 2 May, at about 12:45, six Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a residential building was hit in Ash Sheikh Radwan area, in northwestern Gaza city.
  - On 2 May, at about 16:00, four Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when Bloc 4 of Al Bureij Refugee Camp was hit.
  - On 2 May, at about 18:00, two Palestinian men were reportedly killed when a house was hit in As-Salam neighbourhood in southwestern Rafah.

- On 3 May, at 2:25, seven Palestinians, including five children and a woman, were reportedly killed when a house was hit in northern Rafah.
- On 3 May, at about 23:50, at least three Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a residential building was hit in As Saftawi area west of Jabaliya town.
- On 4 May, at about 13:40, two Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Abu Halawa area in eastern Rafah.
- Between the afternoons of 3 May and 6 May, four Israeli soldiers were reported killed in Israel near Kerem Shalom crossing in an attack by Palestinian armed groups. Subsequently, the Israeli authorities announced the temporary closure of the crossing. As of 6 May, 266 soldiers have been killed and 1,610 soldiers have been injured in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, according to the Israeli media citing official Israeli sources, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals, including 33 children, have been killed in Israel, the vast majority on 7 October. According to Israeli [media](#) sources, the remains of a security guard who was presumed a hostage were found in the tomb of another security guard. As of 6 May, it is estimated that that 132 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld. On 2 May, Kibbutz Be'eri [announced](#) that a community member held hostage in Gaza was killed on 7 October and his body is being withheld in Gaza.
- On 6 May, the Israeli military ordered the residents of nine blocs in eastern Rafah to “temporarily move” to a so-called “expanded humanitarian area” in Al Mawassi. The area slated for evacuation is about 31 square kilometres and includes Al Shokat municipality area, As Salam neighbourhood, Al Juneineh, Tal Azar’a and Al Bayuk. This area was home to some 64,000 Palestinians prior to 7 October and currently encompasses nine sites hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs), three clinics, and six warehouses. With today’s evacuation orders, 277 square kilometres or about 76 per cent of the Gaza Strip have been placed under evacuation orders; this includes all areas north of Wadi Gaza, whose residents were ordered to evacuate in late October, as well as specific areas south of Wadi Gaza slated for evacuation by the Israeli military since 1 December.
- In a joint [statement](#) issued on 3 May, the oPt and Global Protection Cluster stated that a potential incursion in Rafah would make the already catastrophic situation “impossible,” even “unthinkable,” warning that “the repeated displacement of people, the staggering loss of life – specifically of women and children – and the strain placed by the infrastructural and economic decimation of Gaza” have already stretched “any sense of community and individual resilience to its absolute breaking point.” Only an immediate ceasefire and the urgent scale up of humanitarian access into Gaza, particularly via land crossings, would prevent further harm to civilians, underscored the Cluster.
- On 3 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) [warned](#) that a full-scale operation could lead to a “bloodbath,” substantially increasing mortality and morbidity and further crippling “an already broken health system.” This would compromise the functionality or overwhelm the capacity of the seven partially functioning hospitals in southern Gaza, including three in Rafah. According to WHO, An Najjar and Al Emirati hospitals, which provide vital dialysis and maternal health services, as well as Kuwaiti Hospital, all in Rafah, could quickly become non-functional. WHO also cautioned that the European Hospital in Khan Younis, which currently serves as a third-level referral centre for critical patients, may also become unreachable. Another partially functioning hospital in Khan Younis is Nasser Medical Complex, which has resumed partial operations following the completion of the first phase of restoration by Health Cluster partners, including the hospital’s emergency and maternity wards, nine operating theatres, the ICU and neonatal ICU, and the outpatient department. Work is also ongoing to resupply and expand services at key hospitals in northern Gaza, and to establish additional primary health centres and medical points in Khan Younis, Deir al Balah and northern Gaza, with supplies being prepositioned as part of contingency efforts to enable these facilities to treat diseases and manage trauma patients. Yet, all these efforts are just “band aid,” [stressed](#) the WHO Representative in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Rik Peeperkorn, warning that this will in no way prevent the new scale of death, disease and displacement that an incursion would cause.
- On 4 May, the Municipality of An Nusseirat issued a [statement](#) that details the level of incurred damage in An Nuseirat since the onset of hostilities. According to the municipality, about 27,000 square metres of roads, five main squares and intersections, 12 water wells, about 4,250 linear meters of water networks, 15 water valves, and two desalination plants have been destroyed. Ten power generators and six solar energy systems serving municipal facilities also sustained damage. Moreover, due to fuel shortages, the destruction of municipal vehicles and sewage networks and access limitations, about 22,000 tons of waste have accumulated in the streets and around IDP shelters. The lack of fuel has also undermined the functionality of water wells and sewage treatment plants, resulting in sewage overflow in some streets. The municipality called on international institutions to provide urgent support, including facilitating the entry of fuel, heavy machinery, and spare parts to repair sewage and water lines. According to the Union of Gaza Strip Municipalities, about 270,000 tons of solid waste have accumulated across the Gaza Strip, creating an environmental and public health catastrophe. According to the WASH Cluster, the inability to access official solid waste landfills in Gaza, particularly Sofa Landfill, has hindered the safe transfer of solid waste from contaminated, temporary dumpsites.

## West Bank Update

- On 4 May, the Israeli military carried out a 16-hour military operation in Deir al Ghusun village near Tulkarm city. During the operation, heavy forces supported by a military bulldozer surrounded a residential building and exchanged fire with Palestinians. According to human rights organizations, citing eyewitnesses, the house was hit by at least 30 air strikes, ground missiles and bombs. Israeli forces pulled out and withheld the bodies of four Palestinians and informed Palestinian authorities of their identities. A fifth fatality was found headless under rubble, according to the Ministry of Health, and his identity remains unclear.

Initial information indicates that three families comprising 19 people, including 13 children, have been displaced. An assessment by the UN and its partners is underway.

- An operation carried out by Israeli forces and fighting between Israeli forces and armed Palestinians are taking place in Tulkarm city and its refugee camps, as of the time of writing on 6 May. Initial reports indicate that Israeli forces have bulldozed multiple streets in Tulkarm Refugee Camp, resulting in extensive infrastructural damage and cutting off the water and electricity supplies and internet services. Schools in Tulkarm have also closed and movement from and to the area remains severely restricted. Israeli forces reportedly impeded access to the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) teams, and some of its volunteers were trapped in a house for several hours.

## Funding





- On 17 April, the Humanitarian Country Team released a new [Flash Appeal](#) for the oPt, which requests \$2.8 billion to meet the most critical needs of 2.3 million people in Gaza and 800,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between April and December 2024.
- The [oPt HF](#) has 118 ongoing projects, for a total of \$72.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (85 per cent) and West Bank (15 per cent). In light of the updated Flash Appeal, the HF has allocated an additional \$22 million to bolster prioritized HF-funded projects in Gaza. Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized \$90 million from Member States and private donors, designated for programmes throughout Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in March 2024 is available through this [link](#) and the 2023 Annual report of the oPt HF can be accessed [here](#). Private donations are collected directly through the [Humanitarian Fund](#).

For the Gaza Humanitarian Response Update for the period between 29 April and 5 May, please visit: [Gaza Humanitarian Response Update | 29 April–5 May 2024](#). It is updated throughout the week to reflect new content.


## Access restriction on Humanitarian aid map



**Legend ▼**

- High Risk Areas (shooting and shelling)
- High Risk Areas (breakdown in civil order)
- Partially Open Road for Humanitarian Aid
- Accessible Road for Humanitarian Aid
- Israeli Military Road
-  Israeli Checkpoints (frequent, unpredictable closures)
-  Open Crossing Point for Goods/People
-  Partially Open Crossing Point for Goods
-  Holding Point



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