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Israel's indiscriminate bombardment and siege is making it impossible to sustain human life in Gaza

4 December 2023



Israel's indiscriminate bombardment and siege is making it impossible to sustain human life in Gaza, Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) has warned today.

On Thursday 30 November, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that it was "imperative" that Israel ensure "that the massive loss of civilian life and displacement of the scale that we saw in northern Gaza not be repeated in the south".

Instead, since the temporary ceasefire ended, Israel has intensified its offensive across all areas, bombarding homes, killing hundreds of people, and injuring thousands more. 2.2 million people, half of them children, are now living in constant mortal terror.

The largest hospital still functioning in Gaza – the Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis – is operating beyond 200% capacity, and is close to collapse. Hunger, thirst and infectious diseases are [spreading rapidly](#) among the population, with more than 85,000 cases of diarrhoea recorded, an early warning sign of cholera outbreaks. The distribution of aid to adequately address these needs is impossible due to insecurity, lack of fuel, and the [targeting of aid workers](#) by Israeli forces.

A map published by Israel, which splits Gaza into 2,376 numbered zones, has not provided any sense of security for civilians. With communications difficult, and bombardment continuing both inside and outside those areas demarcated as "unsafe", it has instead heightened the panic among people who are desperately seeking a scrap of land where they can find shelter, food and safety.

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The truth is that no such place now exists in Gaza. This map therefore does not represent a serious attempt by Israel to protect civilian life, but rather a new tactic by which the occupied population are terrorised. World leaders must be unflinching in rejecting it and demanding the meaningful protection of civilians wherever they are, in line with international law.

Our own team, now all displaced from their homes along with 1.8 million others in Gaza, have expressed the constant fear they and their families are experiencing. They feel they are being pushed ever southwards by the bombs, and fear being displaced out of Gaza into Egypt. One staff member today told us: "Please let everyone know that there is no such thing as a 'safe place' in Gaza ... Nothing is left of our safety and dignity and that's the actual war we are facing." We are gravely worried for their lives.

The unwillingness of world leaders, including in the UK, to demand a ceasefire, or even set out red lines on the protection of civilians and healthcare, is helping to fuel this escalating catastrophe in Gaza. We reiterate our warning of 12 October about the very real prospect of mass displacement of Palestinians into Egypt.

Our political leaders must recognise the seriousness of this situation and the inevitable consequences of continued inaction. They must act to uphold Responsibility to Protect civilians from atrocity crimes and heed the [call from 36 UN human rights experts](#) to take action to prevent genocide against the Palestinian people before it is too late.

Photo: Palestinians are forcibly displaced from their homes in Gaza. (Credit: Mohammed Zaanoun).



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