



مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان
AL MEZAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

On World Soil Day: Al Mezan Calls for Action Against Israel's Ecocide in Gaza

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Gaza, 5 December 2024— Today marks [World Soil Day](#), an occasion aimed at drawing attention to soil's vital role in sustaining life and food security. In Gaza, soil is being systematically destroyed as part of the ongoing genocide perpetrated by Israel against Palestinians. For the past 14 months, Gaza's soil has been subjected to relentless Israeli military attacks, Gaza's soil has endured relentless Israeli military assaults, including attacks involving the use of unidentified weaponry, which pose grave risks not only to the population but to the environment as a whole.

Al Mezan recently released a report—[Ecocide: Israel's Deliberate and Systematic Destruction of Gaza's Environment](#)—highlighting the severe and long-term

environmental catastrophe caused by Israeli military actions and policies in Gaza and its consequences on 2.3 million Palestinians.

The report analyzes multiple forms of environmental degradation, including soil damage caused by the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings, which has contaminated arable land and hindered agricultural activity. Israeli forces have deliberately targeted both urban and agricultural areas, inflicting irreversible harm on the soil. The environmental impact of these attacks is devastating. The deliberate use of certain weapons increases the risk of toxic substances leaching into the soil, creating a dangerous chemical mix that contaminates both the land and water sources. This pollution disrupts the food chain, posing serious long-term health risks to humans and animals alike.

The use of explosive munitions, soil leveling, and the burial of debris from demolished buildings have significantly degraded soil quality, jeopardizing future agricultural productivity and food security. The destruction has also extended to vital [tree species](#), such as date palms, sycamores, mulberries, and eucalyptus, crucial in maintaining soil health and stability. Farmers and agricultural workers have suffered the brunt of this destruction. The widespread decimation of crops and fields has left them unable to tend to or rehabilitate their lands. Also, the loss of livestock and poultry, alongside difficulties in accessing feed and veterinary supplies, has further deepened the humanitarian crisis, leaving the population unable to sustain their livelihoods.

An investigation by [Forensic Architecture](#) revealed that Israel's ground invasion has affected nearly 50% of Gaza's farms and orchards, with around 40% of Gaza's land, previously used for food production, destroyed as of March 2024. An imagery analysis conducted by [UNOSAT](#) confirmed that by September 2024, about 68% of permanent crop fields had suffered a significant decline in health and density. The destruction of orchards, trees, and agricultural resources is escalating, pushing Gaza to the

brink of widespread famine. The [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#) (IPC) continues reporting that “the risk of famine persists across the whole Gaza Strip”, making the region one of the most food-insecure places in the world. This widespread food insecurity is a direct result of the extensive damage to Gaza’s agricultural infrastructure, exacerbated by the ongoing genocide.

Al Mezan’s [report](#) on ecocide determined that Israel’s systematic environmental destruction serves as a tool of genocide. By targeting essential environmental components—water, soil, and air—Israel has severely undermined Gaza’s ecosystem and its ability to sustain life. These actions are part of a broader, intentional strategy aimed at eroding the foundation of human survival in Gaza.

On this World Soil Day, Al Mezan calls on the international community to take immediate and decisive action to end the genocide in Gaza. This includes ensuring a comprehensive ceasefire and immediate measures to stop the ongoing destruction of Gaza's soil and environmental resources, preserve what remains, and address the critical humanitarian needs of the population.