

The carnage in Gaza cannot be allowed to continue. Here are the steps to rein it in

15 Nov 2023



Statement by Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

As the carnage in Gaza reaches new levels of horror every day, the world continues to watch in shock as hospitals come under fire, premature babies die, and an entire population is deprived of the basic means of survival.

This cannot be allowed to continue.

The warring parties must respect international humanitarian law, agree to a humanitarian ceasefire and stop the fighting.

The United Nations and its humanitarian partners, present in Gaza for decades, are committed to responding to the mounting humanitarian needs, guided, as always, by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. We have the expertise, knowhow and most certainly the will.

On behalf of the humanitarian community that I represent, I urge the parties, all those who have influence over them, and the broader international community to do everything in their power to support and implement the following plan:

1. Facilitate aid agencies' efforts to bring in a continuous flow of aid convoys and to do so safely.
2. Open additional crossing points for aid and commercial trucks to enter, including Kerem Shalom.
3. Allow the UN, other humanitarian organizations and public and private sector entities access to fuel in sufficient quantities to deliver aid and provide basic services.
4. Enable humanitarian organizations to deliver aid throughout Gaza without impediment or interference.
5. Allow us to expand the number of safe shelters for displaced people in schools and other public facilities across Gaza and ensure that they remain places of safety throughout hostilities.
6. Improve a humanitarian notification mechanism that would help spare civilians and civilian infrastructure from hostilities and would help to facilitate humanitarian access.
7. Allow us to set up relief distribution hubs for civilians, in accordance with needs.
8. Allow civilians to move to safer areas and to voluntarily return to their residences.
9. Fund the humanitarian response, now amounting to \$1.2 billion.

10. Implement a humanitarian ceasefire to allow basic services to restart and essential commercial trade to resume. Such a ceasefire is also vital to facilitate the delivery of aid, allow the release of hostages, and provide respite to civilians.

These are the actions required to rein in the carnage. The plan is comprehensive, and we are determined to push for every step, but we need broad international support. The world must act before it is too late.

Geneva, 15 November 2023