



Rädda Barnen

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Statement on Conflict-Induced Hunger in Gaza

We, the signatories of this statement, call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and a massive increase in humanitarian assistance to avoid famine in Gaza, and as the only way to comply with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417. Allowing access for humanitarian aid to reach the civilian population is an obligation under International Humanitarian Law and immediate measures need to be taken to effectively address and comply with the demands of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417 which condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.

The [risk](#) of famine is increasing each day in Gaza due to the continuation of

hostilities, and the continued blockade of the Strip. The Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Phase Classification (IPC) analysis [results from the end of 2023 found the entire population are living with crisis-level hunger, and](#) one in four households – more than half a million people – face catastrophic conditions. This is the highest proportion of any population in food security crisis and above on the IPC's global records. Virtually all households are skipping meals each day. Some families go days and nights without eating. Before October 7th, acute malnutrition in Gaza was almost non-existent. However, the UN predicts that child wasting is likely to increase by [27 per cent](#) in Gaza in the coming months.

[The UN](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), and [humanitarian organisations](#) have warned that starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is being used in Gaza. Starvation of the civilian population is illegal under International Humanitarian Law, and in direct breach of UNSC Resolution 2417.

Before the current conflict, humanitarian food assistance was supporting over two-thirds of the population. Now, needs have largely increased and worsened and humanitarian assistance has reduced due to violence, insecurity and access barriers. The siege tactics imposed by Israel on Gaza are one of the key factors impeding the delivery of aid. Under International Humanitarian Law, parties to the conflict are obliged to facilitate rapid unfettered access to aid. Additional factors include the ongoing bombardments of densely populated areas, [including distribution sites](#), and Israel's denial of humanitarian aid missions to the [North and other areas of Gaza](#).

Infants, young children, and pregnant and lactating women are currently more vulnerable than before the conflict escalation. The wholly insufficient access to food, water and essential lifesaving services exposes these groups to greater chances of suffering from malnutrition and disease, heightening the risk of mortality and morbidity.

Lack of adequate water and sanitation is leading to widespread diarrhoea and disease, one of the direct causes of malnutrition, along with dietary intake. Only one out of the three water pipelines coming from Israel is operational, and there is no access to clean water in the northern governorates. At least [twenty](#) water facilities, including reservoirs, have been damaged or destroyed. Fuel shortages are also severely impacting water infrastructure. Accumulation of solid waste in streets - approximately 50,000 tonnes - is a priority health

concern.

The destruction of food production and distribution infrastructure and the restriction of commercial imports have reduced access to food. OCHA [reports](#) that only 15 of the 97 bakeries operating in Gaza before October 7 are still operational. Satellite imagery shows the destruction of many fishing ports, markets, greenhouses and agricultural land.

The prevention of sufficient food aid from reaching the population and targeting food production and distribution infrastructure, including farms, water systems, mills, food processing and storing sites, hubs, and means for food transportation are a direct violation of [United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417](#). This resolution was unanimously approved in 2018 to condemn the use of hunger and starvation as a weapon of war.

Recent provisional measures delivered by the International Court of Justice demand that Israel must take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance in Gaza, such as food assistance and safe drinking water. Third States have the legal obligation to ensure that all parties are allowing for sufficient aid to enter Gaza, and removing any barriers to timely and unimpeded access.

The only way to avoid the risk of famine is to immediately stop the deterioration of health, nutrition and food security, and increasing morbidity, through the restoration of health services, water and sanitation services, fisheries and agricultural lands, and markets. Avoiding famine cannot be done with ongoing hostilities. An immediate and permanent ceasefire and the scale-up of access to aid across the Gaza Strip are essential.

Signatories:

1. Action Against Hunger
2. ActionAid
3. Danish Refugee Council
4. Humanity and Inclusion / Handicap International (HI)
5. Insecurity Insight
6. INTERSOS
7. Islamic Relief USA
8. Mercy Corps
9. Norwegian Refugee Council

10. Plan International
11. Project Hope
12. Save the Children
13. Solidarités International
14. Tarjimly
15. War Child Alliance

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