

United Nations says one million Palestinians displaced in a week after Israel's attack on Gaza

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United Nations, October 15 (RHC)-- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) says more than one million people have been displaced in the Gaza Strip since the Israeli bombardment of the besieged enclave last week.

Juliette Touma, UNRWA Director of Communications made the remarks on Sunday, saying “the number is likely to be higher as people continue to leave their homes” amid warnings of a ground invasion by the Israeli regime.

On Friday, Israel ordered residents of Gaza City to evacuate the area within 24 hours, in what is viewed as a precursor of a ground invasion by the occupying entity after suffering a serious setback by the Palestinian resistance groups over the past few days.

Israel has amassed troops around the strip in preparation for a potential ground offensive after warning people in northern Gaza to evacuate and move toward the southern part of Gaza.

Medical officials in the Gaza Strip say more than 400 Palestinians have been killed in the past 24 hours as the Israeli military continues its aerial bombardment campaign against the besieged coastal enclave. Millions of Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza have been forced to flee ahead of the expected assault, an exodus that aid groups said would set off a humanitarian disaster.

The Israeli regime has also cut off food, water, medicine, internet and electricity to Gaza’s 2.3 million people. Officials have warned a humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding there due to a lack of medicine and medical equipment.

Philippe Lazzarini, the commissioner-general of UNRWA, the UN's Palestinian refugee agency, has also warned that water has now become a “matter of life and death” for civilians across the Gaza Strip, adding that “more than two million people are now at risk as water runs out.”

Pope Francis has called for humanitarian corridors in Gaza, urging that "children, the sick, the elderly, women and all civilians should not fall victim to the conflict." "There have already been so many deaths, please let's not shed any more innocent blood," he said, castigating "the diabolical force of hatred, terrorism and war."

Israel launched the deadly strikes on Gaza last Saturday after the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement waged a surprise attack, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, against the occupying regime. Hamas said that its operation came in response to Israel’s violations at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied East al-Quds and growing Israeli settler violence.

The death toll of Palestinians killed since Israel began the bombing campaign in Gaza on October 7 has risen to 2,450, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health in the territory. At least 10,000 Palestinians were also injured.

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