

UNICEF official emphasizes hidden danger of so-called safe zones



Paris, December 8 (RHC)-- James Elder, spokesman for the UN's child relief agency (UNICEF), says that so-called safe zones in Gaza risk crowding thousands of people in inhumane conditions.

The Israeli military said on X on Monday that it was defining “safe areas” for civilians, but Al Jazeera correspondents and people on the ground say it is difficult to heed these orders.

Safe zones “risk being zones of disease and human suffering”, Elder said in an audio message posted to his X account.

“Currently in a shelter in Gaza, there’s around one toilet for 400 families. In these safe zones, there’ll be no toilet, and it’s tens of thousands of people,” he said. “For safe zones to be safe, they must, by law, have water, food, medical supplies and shelter.”

Elder stressed that for safe zones to provide protection, people need to be able to safely get to them. Throughout its war on Gaza, the Israeli army has repeatedly instructed Palestinians to evacuate to various areas of the Strip for their safety, only to later bomb those areas as well as evacuation routes. “Only a ceasefire can save the children of Gaza,” he said.

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