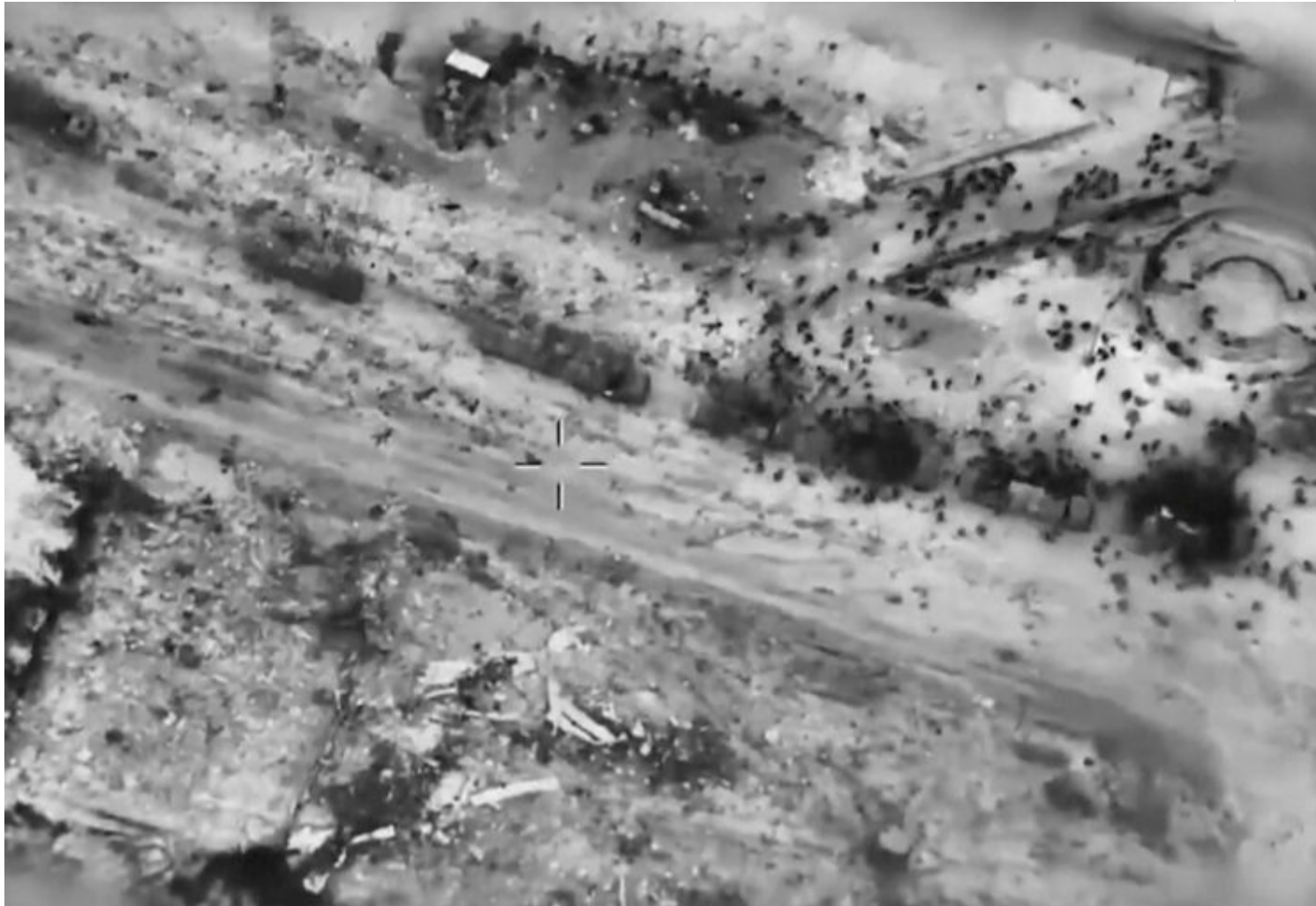


Top European Union diplomat affirms Israel's attack on civilian aid seekers in Gaza was unjustifiable



Brussels, March 3 (RHC)-- The European Union raps a recent "unjustifiable" attack by the Israeli occupation forces on Palestinian civilians seeking food aid in the besieged Gaza Strip, calling for an international probe into the deadly incident.

In a statement on Saturday, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell condemned the restrictions imposed by Israel on the entry of humanitarian aid and the opening of crossing points. He said the firing by Israeli troops against civilians trying to access foodstuff is unjustifiable.

"We request an impartial international investigation on this tragic event allowing for a clear picture of the events and responsibilities," he added.

At least 112 people were killed and more than 750 others wounded on Thursday as the Israeli forces opened fire on Palestinians who had surrounded a convoy of 38 aid trucks in Gaza, with the Palestinian health ministry calling the incident a "massacre."

The latest Israeli crime comes as NGOs and UN experts have on several occasions voiced fears of famine in the besieged territory, which has been completely cut off from aid by the occupation since October last year.

A United Nations team says "a large number" of Palestinian civilians seeking food aid have been shot in the Gaza Strip, after Israeli military forces opened fire on an aid convoy in the besieged enclave. Borrell emphasized that Israel shoulders the responsibility to comply with the rules of international law and to protect the distribution of humanitarian aid to civilian populations in any case.

"The responsibility for this incident lays on the restrictions imposed by the Israeli army and obstructions by violent extremist to the supply of humanitarian aid," the top EU diplomat pointed out.

Borrell warned that the restrictions on the entry of humanitarian assistance contribute to creating scarcity, hunger and disease, saying it would also lead to a level of desperation that brings about violence. He added that unabated fighting and disregard for international humanitarian law will lead to "complete chaos" making the distribution of humanitarian aid impossible.

He stressed the need to restore a minimum of order and security in Gaza to preserve a humanitarian space.

"We urge Israel to fully cooperate with the UN agencies and other humanitarian actors involved in the humanitarian response and to allow free, unimpeded and safe humanitarian access through all crossing points," Borrell said.

The EU's top diplomat also urged Israel to swiftly remove the obstacles at the Kerem Shalom crossing and open the access in the north at Karni and Erez crossings, to open the port of Ashdod to humanitarian aid and to allow a direct humanitarian corridor from Jordan.

He emphasized that airdrops should be the solution of last resort given their minimal impact and their risks to civilians. Borrell also urged the United Nations Security Council to call for an "urgent cessation of hostilities".

The top EU official said the UN body should reiterate the utmost necessity to allow "a full, rapid, safe and unhindered" humanitarian access to deliver swift, massive and adequate aid in response to the needs of the civilian population in Gaza. "An immediate humanitarian pause, leading to a lasting ceasefire is urgently needed to enable the large-scale delivery of humanitarian aid and the protection of civilians in Gaza," he emphasized.

Israel waged its genocidal war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian Hamas resistance group carried out Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities

against the Palestinian people.

Since the start of the offensive, the Tel Aviv regime has killed 30,320 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 71,533 others.

The Tel Aviv regime has also imposed a “complete siege” on the territory, cutting off fuel, electricity, food, and water to the more than two million Palestinians living there.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/348810-top-european-union-diplomat-affirms-israels-attack-on-civilian-aid-seekers-in-gaza-was-unjustifiable>



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