

Oxfam affirms that Israel weaponizing water in ongoing invasion of Gaza



London, July 19 (RHC)-- The international humanitarian organization Oxfam has hit out at Israel for systematically using water as a weapon of war against civilian population in the Gaza Strip. In a new

report published on Thursday, Oxfam said the tactic is strongly indicative of the regime's disregard for human life and is in violation of international law.

Israel "has used water deprivation to dehumanize and ultimately threaten Palestinian lives since the 1993 Oslo Accords", it said.

Near total destruction of Gaza's water and sanitation infrastructure by the Israeli military "has contributed significantly to the catastrophic deterioration of conditions of life in Gaza", it added. The report further revealed that the water supply has been reduced by 94 percent, which is less than five liters a day per person, and that the amount is just under a third of the recommended minimum in emergencies.

"Israel's actions have deprived the entire population of Gaza of life-saving water and sanitation services, creating unavoidable immediate and long-term threats to people's health and survival," Oxfam warned.

A lack of clean water and sanitation led to a quarter of Gaza's population falling ill to easily preventable diseases, the charity group said. Oxfam also noted that the Israeli regime instigated the water shortage by cutting off the external water supply, destroying water facilities and deliberately obstructing aid from getting to Palestinians in Gaza.

"These acts collectively, and combined with continuous bombardment by Israel, have obliterated the capacity of humanitarian actors to provide even minimal life-saving emergency services to the people of Gaza, and crippled efforts to restore water production. They have also caused widespread contamination by sewage, threatening the lives of Palestinians," it said.

According to Oxfam, five water infrastructure sites have been damaged every three days since the start of the Israeli onslaught against Gaza. It added that 70 percent of all sewage pumps and 100 percent of all wastewater treatment plants have been destroyed as well.

Oxfam noted that the impact of Israeli offensives on public health in Gaza has been catastrophic, with reported cases of waterborne diseases skyrocketing.

The charity called on Israeli officials to lift the blockade on Gaza and to allow unhindered and sustainable access to humanitarian assistance, particularly for food, clean water, sanitation and shelter.

It also urged the international community to take decisive action "to uphold justice and human rights, prevent further suffering and protect the rights of Palestinians in Gaza, including those enshrined in the Geneva and Genocide Conventions."

Israel launched the war on Gaza on October 7 after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a surprise retaliatory operation into the occupied territories. Concomitantly with the war of aggression, the regime has been enforcing a near-total siege on the coastal territory, which has reduced the flow of foodstuffs, medicine, electricity, and water into the Palestinian territory into a trickle.

So far during the military onslaught, the regime has killed at least 38,848 Gazans, most of them women, children, and adolescents. Another 89,459 Palestinians have sustained injuries as well.

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