

*Philippe Lazzarini says UNRWA
staff death toll largest in UN
history*



Geneva, July 28 (RHC)-- The head of UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, says the death toll exacted on the agency's staff since the onset of the Israeli regime's ongoing genocidal war on Gaza amounts to the largest in the world body's history.

"Nearly 200 UNRWA team members have been killed in Gaza," Philippe Lazzarini said in a statement on X, former Twitter, on Saturday. "This is by far the largest loss of personnel killed in a single conflict or natural disaster since the creation of the United Nations – a reality the world must never accept," he added.

“When the war in Gaza started nearly 10 months ago, no one thought we will reach this grim milestone,” the UN official regretted. “These are not numbers, these are our colleagues and our friends,” Lazzarini said, and reiterated a call made by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for full accountability for each of the deaths.

UNRWA, short for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, renders vital services to millions of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, the occupied West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

However, it has been having an increasingly difficult time providing those services in Gaza since the onset of the Israeli war that has so far claimed the lives of at least 39,258 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

Earlier this year, the Israeli regime claimed that 12 employees of the agency had been involved in a retaliatory attack by Gaza’s resistance groups, following which the regime launched the war.

Ever since, UNRWA staff have been the subject of increasingly violent protests and virulent misinformation and disinformation campaigns led by the regime.

Most recently, Knesset, the Israeli parliament, lent its preliminary approval to a bill branding the agency as a “terrorist organization.”

The legislature also rubberstamped two other bills banning the organization from operating on Tel Aviv-occupied territories, and stripping UNRWA personnel of the legal immunities and privileges that are afforded to the United Nations staff.

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