

UN experts affirm Israel is weaponizing starvation in Gaza



United Nations, March 7 (RHC)-- A group of UN human rights experts has sounded the alarm about Israel using starvation as a weapon of war in Gaza by blocking humanitarian aid delivery to the besieged territory.

The warning came on Thursday from more than 30 UN experts, who said Israel's blockade of aid deliveries to Gaza is a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

Stressing that Israel is once again weaponizing aid, they called the regime's move a war crime and a crime against humanity under international law. The experts noted that as the occupying power, Israel is obliged to ensure provision of sufficient food, medical supplies and other relief services.

On Sunday, Israel halted aid deliveries to Gaza, demanding Hamas accept its terms for extending the ceasefire agreement's first phase.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel would "open the gates of hell" in Gaza if all captives were not returned. Gaza has already been devastated by the war that followed the attacks.

Hamas rejected the demand, saying that no more captives would be released until the second phase is negotiated. "Apart from the cruelty of these statements on the second day of the holy month of Ramadan, these moves are patently unlawful under international law," the experts said.

"As the occupying power, Israel is always obliged to ensure sufficient food, medical supplies and other relief services."

"Israel is once again weaponising aid. These are serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws, and war crimes and crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute," they added.

Meanwhile, South Africa denounced Israel for blocking the entry of food into the besieged Gaza Strip, saying the regime is using starvation as a weapon of war against the people of Gaza.

The South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the international community on Wednesday to hold Israel accountable for preventing food from entering Gaza.

On March 2nd, Israel announced it was blocking aid deliveries until Hamas accepted its terms for an extension of the ceasefire agreement. Israel has said it wants to extend the first phase of the ceasefire until mid-April. Hamas is against this.

The Palestinian resistance movement has insisted on a transition to the deal's second phase, which would allow for a permanent end to the regime's campaign of genocide.

In December 2023, South Africa brought a case before the ICJ that argued the actions of the Israeli regime during the war in Gaza breached the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention.

Since then, several nations have added their political weight to the proceedings, including Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Libya, Mexico, Spain and Turkey.

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