

# *Dozens demonstrate in northern Gaza to demand full lifting of siege*

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Gaza City, October 9 (RHC)-- Dozens of Palestinians have staged a demonstration in the northern part of the Gaza Strip to demand that Israeli authorities completely lift the blockade that has been imposed on the impoverished coastal enclave for more than a decade.

On Tuesday, the protesters converged near Erez crossing, which is situated at the northern end of the Gaza Strip and opens to the Israeli-occupied territories, in a demonstration organized by the syndicate of trade unions and the highest commission of "The Great March of Return."

The Israeli siege and assaults have totally or partially affected 100 percent of factories in the Gaza Strip. Raed Abu Hassanein, spokesman of the syndicate, said the protest aims "to attract the world's attention to see the crime of the siege on Gaza has caused disastrous consequences that influenced the life aspects."

He called on the international community "to bear its responsibility and stand by the side of the Palestinians against the unjust siege that suffocates the people and fully disabled the trade union and all its fields in Gaza."

Abu Hassanein emphasized that unity among all Palestinian factions would certainly contribute to the lifting of the Gaza siege, calling on the Palestinian Authority officials to help residents of the Gaza Strip confront the blockade's consequences.

Palestinians have been holding "The Great March of Return" protests every week since March 30 last year. The Palestinians demand the right to return for those driven out of their homeland by Israeli aggression.

Israeli troops have killed at least 314 Palestinians since the beginning of the rallies and wounded more than 17,000 others, according to the Gazan Health Ministry.

The Gaza clashes reached their peak on May 14 last year, on the eve of the 70th anniversary of Nakba Day (Day of Catastrophe), which coincided with the US embassy relocation from Tel Aviv to occupied East Jerusalem al-Quds.

In March, a United Nations fact-finding mission said that Israeli forces were committing rights violations during their crackdown against the Palestinian protesters in Gaza that may amount to war crimes.

Gaza has been under Israeli siege since June 2007, which has caused a decline in living standards. Israel has also launched three major wars against the enclave since 2008, killing thousands of Gazans and shattering the impoverished territory's already poor infrastructure.

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