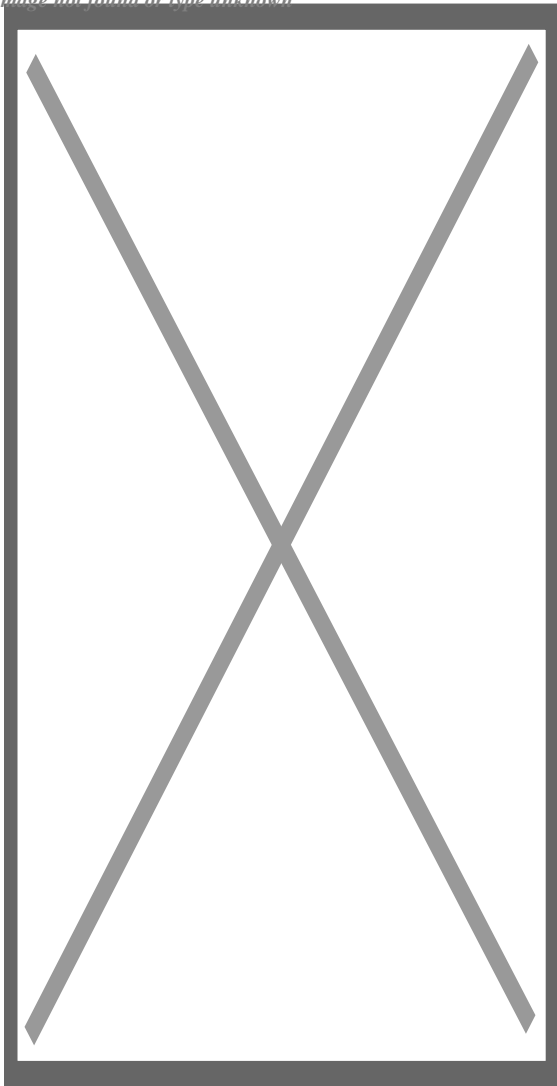


Palestinian prime minister slams genocide of Gazans by Israel

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Ramallah, October 17 (RHC)-- Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh has slammed the “genocide” of the people trapped in the besieged Gaza Strip by the Israeli regime. “Our people in Gaza are going through genocide, and Gaza has become a disaster area,” Shtayyeh said, speaking at a press conference in Ramallah over the weekend.

Shtayyeh said the world should take a clear stand against the regime to stop its “doctrine of killing, burning, erasure and genocide” of the Palestinians. Gaza has been under a complete Israeli siege since October 7, when the resistance movement Hamas launched Operation Al-Aqsa Storm that has been without precedent in scale.

Israel has deployed thousands of military forces, tanks and heavy weaponry in preparation for an expected large-scale ground offensive on Gaza. Israeli warplanes continuously bombard residential areas. The regime claimed Friday its warplanes “struck 750 military targets in the northern Gaza Strip overnight” – the civilian casualty count proves otherwise, however.

Heavy strikes were reported in the northern Gaza Strip on Friday morning, including Al-Shati refugee camp and Gaza City, primarily targeting residential buildings. Analysts believe Tel Aviv and Washington are apparently paving the way for a wider war, as was the case prior to the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq under the false pretexts of war against terror and weapons of mass destruction.

The Israeli military on Friday dropped flyers warning residents to “immediately” flee south of Wadi Gaza, with a map pointing south across a line in the center of the 40-kilometer-long territory. Arab League chief Ahmed Abul Gheit said the evacuation order is a “forced transfer” that constitutes “a crime.” Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas said it will be “tantamount to a second Nakba (catastrophe)”, referring to the 760,000 Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes during the 1948 war that coincided with the advent of Israel.

More than 423,000 people have already fled their homes, according to the UN, which said the evacuation order could turn “already a tragedy into a calamitous situation.” The World Health Organization said hospitals are struggling to cope with the dead and wounded from the relentless Israeli bombardment, and the health system in Gaza has already been “at a breaking point.”

Ashraf al-Qudra from the Gaza Health Ministry said hospitals were “starting to lose capacity” and medicine was running out. The health ministry said as of Friday at least 1,799 Palestinians, including 583 children and 351 women, have been martyred in the Israeli bombardment. More than 7,000 Palestinians have also been wounded.

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