

UN says Israeli attacks on Rafah could result in large scale loss of civilian lives

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Geneva, February 7 (RHC)-- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) says Israeli attacks on Rafah, a small city in southern Gaza on the border with Egypt, could lead to large-scale loss of civilian lives.

“So to be clear, intensified hostilities in Rafah in this situation could lead to large-scale loss of civilian lives, and we must do everything possible within our power to avoid that.” Jens Laerke, spokesperson for OCHA, said at a briefing in the Swiss city of Geneva. “Under international humanitarian law, indiscriminate bombing of densely populated areas may amount to war crimes,” he added.

“We can warn what might unfold with the ground invasion, and we can make clear what the law says,” the UN humanitarian office warned.

The Israeli regime has pressed on with its genocidal campaign and threatened a new ground assault on Rafah where over half of Gaza's 2.3 million people are now living, mostly in makeshift tents.

About 1.4 million people are sheltering in Rafah after being ordered there by Israeli forces, which previously described the area as a “safe zone.” OCHA recently reported that intense Israeli bombardment from air, land, and sea continues across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure.

The UN humanitarian office said that the influx of thousands of internally displaced persons into Rafah was due to intense fighting in Khan Younis, combined with reports of an increase in strikes in Rafah on Monday and Sunday.

In its latest aggression, regime forces killed several people, including two children, in a new airstrike on the southern city of Rafah. Elsewhere in southern Gaza, the regime targeted the vicinity of Nasser Hospital. That's located in the city of Khan Younis, which has been the focal point of Israeli strikes in recent weeks. In separate attacks on the same city, at least eleven people lost their lives.

The genocidal war against Gaza has continued for over four months, with the death toll approaching 27,600, mostly women and children. Palestinians have been enduring a catalogue of miseries, including the lack of basic needs and displacement.

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