

*UN humanitarian chief warns
Israel's Rafah assault could lead
to slaughter and put aid work at
death's door*

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Geneva, February 15 (RHC)-- The United Nations humanitarian chief has raised alarm about potential Israel's ground invasion of Rafah, saying the raid could lead to a "slaughter" in the densely populated Gaza city and put aid operation at "death's door."

In a strongly worded statement released on Tuesday, Martin Griffiths said the Tel Aviv regime "cannot continue to ignore" warnings issued by the international community against the dangerous consequences of an onslaught on Rafah.

"Today, I'm sounding the alarm once again: Military operations in Rafah could lead to a slaughter in Gaza. They could also leave an already fragile humanitarian operation at death's door," he added. "We lack the safety guarantees, the aid supplies and the staff capacity to keep this operation afloat."

Rafah, situated in the Gaza Strip's closed southern border with Egypt, is home to nearly 1.5 million Palestinians who have been displaced due to Israel's genocidal war on the besieged territory.

Israel had designated Rafah a "safe zone," but it is now threatening an all-out military offensive, leaving the people sheltering there terrified with nowhere left to go. The looming assault has mounted fears over a new carnage against Palestinians and drawn global condemnations. The city has recently come under heavy Israeli airstrikes, with over 100 people killed there on Monday.

Also in his statement, Griffiths said more than half of Gaza's population are now "crammed in Rafah, staring death in the face," noting that they "have little to eat, hardly any access to medical care, nowhere to sleep, nowhere safe to go." Palestinians in Gaza are already suffering an "assault that is unparalleled in its intensity, brutality and scope," he noted.

The UN official further stressed that despite being "shot at, held at gunpoint, attacked and killed," humanitarian workers have been doing "the near-impossible" to assist the people in Gaza over the past few months. "But no amount of dedication and goodwill is enough to keep millions of people alive, fed and protected – while the bombs are falling and the aid is choked off," he asserted.

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