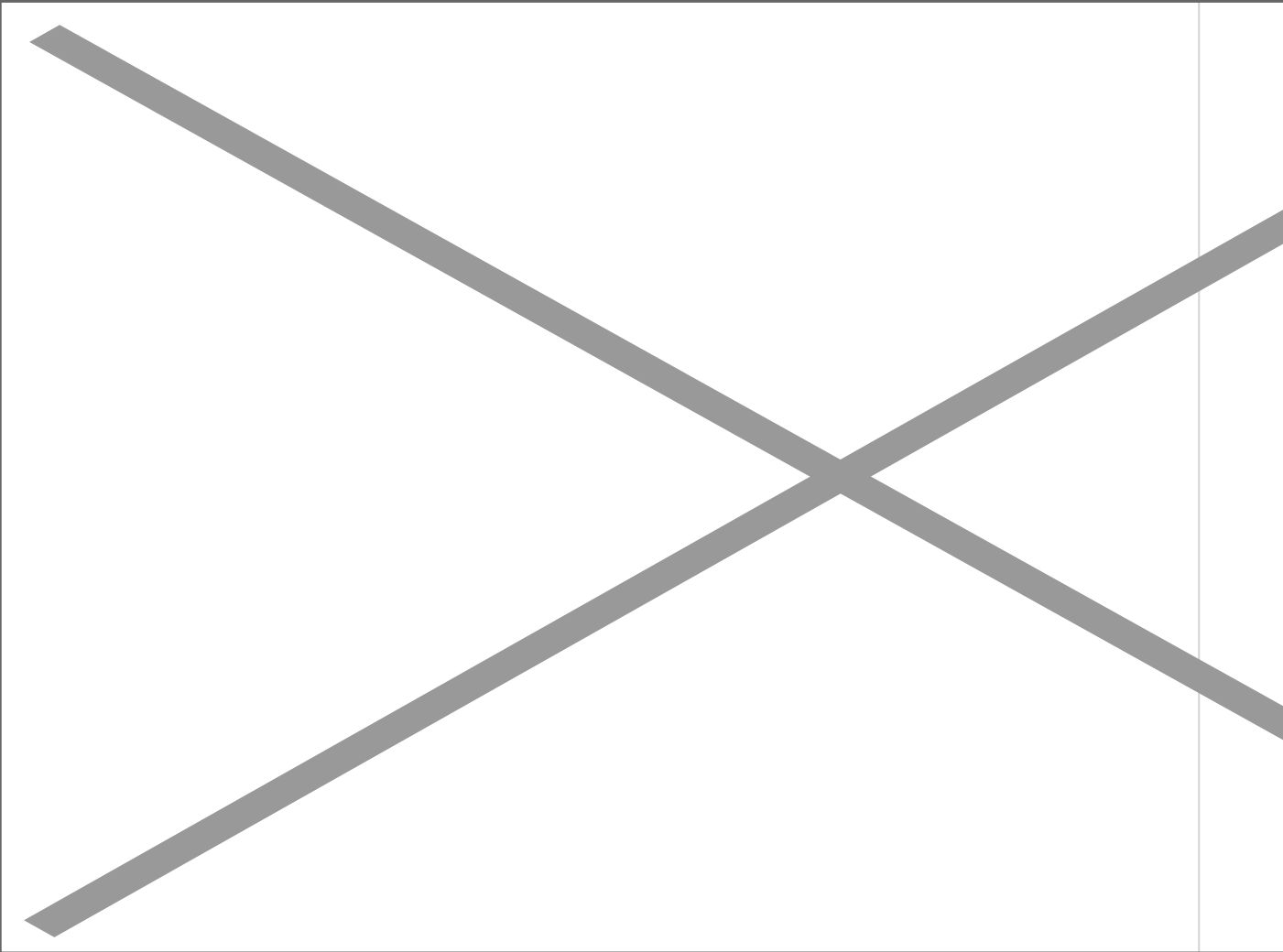


# *Gaza government slams U.S. aid airdrop as theatrical and ineffective*

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Gaza City, March 4 (RHC)-- The government in the Gaza Strip has dismissed a decision by the United States to airdrop humanitarian aid into the besieged territory, saying the theatrical and ineffective move cannot offset Israeli restrictions on the transfer of food into Gaza via land crossings.

"The policy of airdropping humanitarian aid and preventing the delivery of aid through border crossings is in fact part of an evasive strategy that does not address the core issue and resorts to theatrical and ineffective solutions instead," the Government Media Office in Gaza said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement said the aid airdrop by the US is in line with the occupying Israeli regime's policy of intentionally starving the Palestinians, adding that it is also meant to kill time and to prolong the hunger crisis in Gaza to inflict as much damage as possible upon the population in the strip.

It said that aid airdrops also entail serious risks for Palestinians in Gaza as some of them could land near the fence along the border with the Israeli-occupied territories, prompting Israeli military forces to fire indiscriminately on unarmed civilians seeking to pick up the aid items.

The statement reiterated that airdrops of aid into densely populated areas like the Gaza Strip, which is home to some 2.4 people, are fairly difficult because the aid can be damaged because of potential adverse weather conditions or unexpected incidents.

"Some of the food bundles were dropped into the sea and did not reach needy people. This is while humanitarian aid brought into Gaza via trucks would reach a great proportion of the population, and is not subject to damage," it added.

The government in Gaza held the US administration and the Israeli regime accountable for the ongoing genocidal war against Palestinians in Gaza while calling on freedom-loving nations of the world to stop the Tel Aviv regime from continuing its ethnic cleansing in the enclave.

The U.S. Central Command said in a statement on Saturday that together with Jordan's air force it had "conducted a combined humanitarian assistance airdrop into Gaza ... to provide essential relief to civilians affected by the ongoing conflict."

The C-130 planes "dropped over 38,000 meals along the coastline of Gaza allowing for civilian access to the critical aid", it further claimed. U.S. President Joe Biden had announced a day earlier that the US would airdrop aid there after more than 100 Palestinians were killed on Thursday in an Israeli attack on a crowd waiting for food in Gaza City.

Additionally, a senior Lebanese Shia cleric has lambasted the controversial airdrop of food by the US into the besieged Gaza Strip, stating that Washington is seeking to cover up its complicity in Israeli war crimes and to divert the world's public opinion from its all-out support for the Tel Aviv regime.

"The United States' decision to airdrop humanitarian aid into Gaza is clearly an attempt to cover up its actions and unqualified military support for the Zionist enemy. It comes as the occupying regime is carrying out massacres against Gaza residents," Sheikh Hussam al-Eilani, the imam of al-Ghofran Mosque in the southern Lebanese city of Sidon, said on Sunday.

He went on to note that Arab and Muslim nations are uninfluenced by the US measure as they view Washington as the chief supporter of Israel's terrorism. Eilani called upon the U.S. administration to refrain from providing unqualified support to the Israeli regime.

The Israeli aggression on Gaza has killed at least 30,410 people, most of them children and women, and wounded another 71,700 since it started in early October.



**Radio Habana Cuba**