

UN warns fuel running out in Gaza, hitting water, food, medical and aid operations

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United Nations, May 8 (RHC)-- Critical diesel fuel supplies needed to power drinking water pumps, maintain communications and deliver humanitarian aid within the war-torn Gaza Strip will run out today, a senior UN official said after Israel's closure of the two key border crossing points into the Palestinian territory

Andrea De Domenico, the head of the UN's humanitarian aid office in the Palestinian territory, said Israel's military incursion and order for people to leave Rafah has resulted in "the forced displacement of tens of thousands of people."

De Domenico said the UN normally uses 200,000 litres of diesel fuel a day in Gaza. As of Tuesday night, the UN had 30,000 litres remaining.

Without a fuel delivery, the main water production facility in northern Gaza will be shut, "depriving the entire population of access to drinking water." The same shutdown will happen in another day for the middle and south of Gaza, affecting 1.9 million people, the Associated Press news agency reports.

De Domenico also said the area that Israeli officials have told Palestinians to move to is mainly sand dunes and has no toilets, water points, drainage, shelter or health facilities.

Israeli authorities are also not on the ground providing humanitarian services, he said, adding that without fuel and more flour, the 16 bakeries supported by the UN throughout Gaza will be forced to suspend operations.

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