

# *United Nations chief warns time to end Israel's terrible war on Gaza*

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United Nations, July 13 (RHC)-- The United Nations secretary-general has appealed once again for immediate termination of the Israeli regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip that has left an unspeakable trail of death and destruction.

Antonio Guterres made the remarks on Friday at the opening of the pledging conference of UNRWA, the world body's agency for Palestinian refugees. "And now is the time to bring an end to this terrible war, starting with an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza," he said.

Guterres described the situation in the coastal sliver as "a total breakdown in law and order." "Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse in Gaza -- somehow, appallingly, civilians are being pushed into ever deeper circles of hell," he said.

The brutal military onslaught began on October 7 following a retaliatory operation staged by Gaza's resistance groups, during which hundreds were taken captive. The war has so far claimed the lives of nearly 38,350 Palestinians, mostly women and children, besides turning almost the entirety of Palestinian territory into a scene of utter devastation.

Concomitantly with the war, the regime has been enforcing a near-total siege on the coastal sliver, which has reduced the flow of foodstuffs, medicine, electricity, and water into the Palestinian territory into a trickle.

Guterres asserted that "nothing justifies the collective punishment of the Palestinian people." The Gazans, he said, have been subjected to an "extreme level of fighting and devastation" that was "incomprehensible and inexcusable." He bemoaned that the Palestinians there kept being forcibly displaced "like human pinballs across a landscape of destruction and death," while noting, "Nowhere is safe. Everywhere is a potential killing zone."

The UN chief decried the Israeli regime's egregious mistreatment of UNRWA's employees. Earlier this year, the regime claimed that 12 employees of the agency were involved in the Hamas-led retaliatory attack.

Ever since, UNRWA staff have been the subject of increasingly violent protests and virulent misinformation and disinformation campaigns, Guterres said. "Some have been detained by Israeli security forces, and subsequently reported mistreatment and even torture."

The war has also claimed the lives of as many as 194 UNRWA staff members, the UN chief, meanwhile, reminded, describing the sheer extent of the fatalities as "the highest staff death toll in UN history."

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