

# *UN chief says humanitarian situation in Gaza a moral stain on us all*

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**A Palestinian boy stands in a destroyed house in Gaza's Nuseirat area following Israeli**

**bombardment overnight, May 23, 2024. (File by AFP)**

United Nations, July 18 (RHC)-- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says the current humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is “a moral stain on us all.” Guterres delivered his comments in a statement read out by his chief of staff Courtenay Rattray, during a meeting about the Middle East led by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Wednesday.

The UN chief emphasized the urgent need for a humanitarian ceasefire in the war-ravaged coastal region, noting that talks with Egypt, Qatar and the United States to reach a deal to release the hostages and secure a ceasefire are continuing with some reported progress.

“The parties must reach such a deal now. The humanitarian situation in Gaza is a moral stain on us all,” Guterres said, warning that the humanitarian support system in Gaza is on the verge of collapse, with a total breakdown of public order. He also touched on the situation on the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds, warning that “high levels of violence persist, including by Israeli security forces and settlers.”

Israel has faced international criticism for continuing its brutal aggression in Gaza, despite a UN Security Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire. The ongoing barbarous campaign has devastated large areas of Gaza, exacerbated by a severe blockade affecting food, clean water, and medical supplies.

Lavrov, on his part, criticized the UN Security Council, stating that its resolutions regarding the Gaza Strip have not succeeded in halting the violence in the occupied Palestinian territories. “Four resolutions have been adopted. However, the ongoing bloodshed in the occupied Palestinian territories only reaffirms that all of these decisions have remained ink on paper,” he said.

“The large-scale military operation which Israel has conducted, together with its American ally, has resulted in horrifying statistics in terms of casualties and destruction in 300 days in 10 months,” Lavrov noted, adding that there are almost 40,000 dead and 90,000 injured Palestinian civilians, most of whom are children and women.

“The current unprecedented explosion of violence in the Middle East is largely a consequence of failed US policy in the region,” the top Russian diplomat said.

Israel launched the genocidal campaign of death and destruction in Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas conducted the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the regime in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Since then, the US has supplied the Tel Aviv regime with more than 10,000 tons of military equipment and used its veto power against all UN Security Council resolutions that called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

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