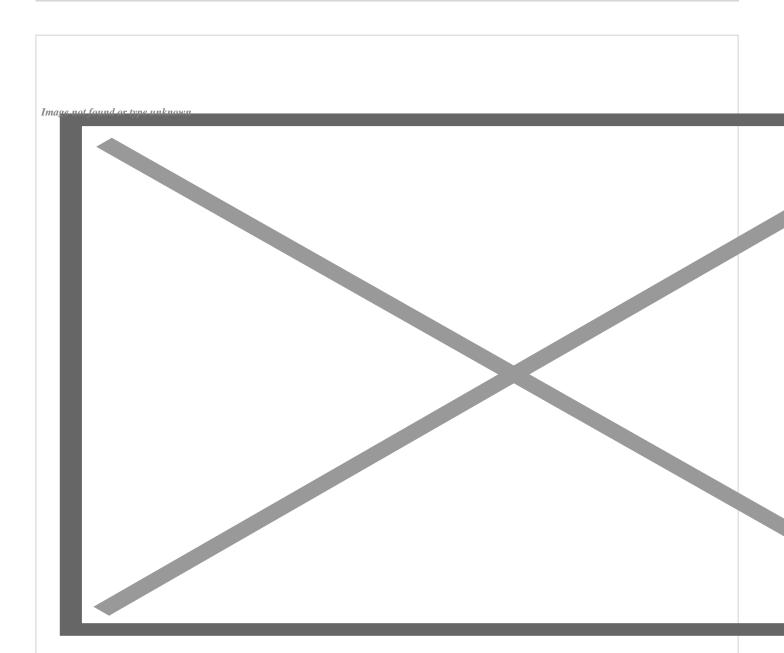# *Gaza Media Office says Israel has stolen over 2,000 bodies from graves during war*

Men bury bodies that were taken and later released by Israel during a mass funeral at a cemetery in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on August 5, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Gaza City, August 7 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have abducted more than 2,000 bodies exhumed from various cemeteries across the Gaza strip, with reports from the Gaza government media office saying some corpses have been returned after Israeli forces "desecrated the bodies" of the deceased.

Gaza's Government Media Office in a statement said that Israel has stolen 2,000 Palestinian bodies since the beginning of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza on October 7 and returned some in an inhumane manner.

"Over the course of 304 days of the genocide, the occupation has kidnapped more than 2,000 bodies of martyrs from dozens of cemeteries in the governorates of the Gaza Strip, which the occupation bulldozed with bulldozers and military vehicles and turned their graves over, in a scene that violates humanity and human feelings," the statement reads.

The statement added that "the Israeli occupation army desecrates the dignity of the bodies of 89 martyrs, handing them over as skeletons and decomposed corpses."

Meanwhile, director of the Palestinian Civil Emergency Service in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza, Yamen Abu Suleiman, said on Monday they had "received 80 bodies inside 15 bags, with more than four martyrs in each bag, each wrapped in a single shroud."

Abu Suleiman added that Israeli forces did not provide any information about the bodies, including their names or where they were found or taken from, which he said is "a war crime, a crime against humanity."

"We do not know if they are martyrs (killed by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip) or detainees who had been tortured and killed in (Israeli) jails", he said, adding that the bodies will be screened and examined in an attempt to identify them and determine the causes of death.

Palestinian resistance group Hamas in a statement reacted and said the fact that 89 decomposed bodies have been released by the Israeli military further highlights the "unprecedented crimes" committed in Gaza. "They kill unarmed civilians in hospitals and shelters, kidnap their bodies, and exhume graves of martyrs and the dead, transferring them to occupation centers," Hamas said, adding that this doubles the pain of Palestinian families who only wish to know the fate of their killed loved ones and bury them with dignity.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has reported that an estimated 10,000 Palestinians remain missing or under the rubble in Gaza, a number that includes individuals reportedly abducted by Israeli forces as well as the bodies of those exhumed from various cemeteries throughout the region.

Due to the ongoing bombing campaign by occupying forces, medical facilities in Gaza are severely constrained, which makes them unable to perform DNA tests on the bodies returned for identification purposes.

At least 39,623 people have been killed and 91,469 wounded in in Gaza since the Israeli regime launched the genocidal war on Gaza in early October.

Radio Habana Cuba