

# *World Food Programme calls for urgent action to prevent famine in Gaza*

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Rome, October 30 (RHC)-- The World Food Programme is calling for immediate action to prevent famine in the Gaza Strip, warning Palestinians across the besieged territory are losing hope of finding any food for their starving children.

The aid agency said Tuesday it has nearly 100,000 tons of food ready for shipment from Egypt and Jordan — enough to feed a million Palestinians for four months — but that Israel has largely denied access to convoys.

The situation is most dire in northern Gaza, where the Israeli army has blocked all aid access for a 25th consecutive day. This comes amid dire warnings from aid organizations over Israel's decision to ban the U.N. relief agency UNRWA. On Tuesday, the U.N. humanitarian office called the policy "collective punishment" — a war crime.

UNICEF spokesperson James Elder warned of a complete collapse of Gaza's humanitarian system. "You take away the healthcare workers, you take away the nutritional support, you take away the people who will provide the lifesaving supplies for a population that is physically, physically, absolutely on death's door — and psychologically, of course, in uncharted territory — you take away these healthcare workers, you take away the nutritionists, then we will see many more children die."

On Tuesday, Israel's military once again bombed residential buildings in Beit Lahia, killing at least 19 Palestinians just hours after a separate attack killed at least 93 people, including 25 children. Beit Lahia has been declared a "disaster area" amid weeks of relentless Israeli bombings and military siege.

Meanwhile, a new report by the research group Forensic Architecture finds Israel is systematically committing crimes of persecution and destruction in Gaza, amounting to genocide.

The group found Israel has destroyed over 83% of all plant life in Gaza, over 70% of agricultural land, nearly half of all groundwater wells and two-thirds of water tanks. Of Gaza's 36 hospitals, Israel has forced 35 to stop service at least once, targeted 31 in bombings and attacks, and violently invaded 10 hospitals.

[ SOURCE: DEMOCRACY NOW ]

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