

UNICEF reports over 50 children in Gaza's Jabalia killed in 48 hours

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United Nations, November 4 (RHC)-- UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell has said that the Israeli killing of more than 50 children in "deadly" 48 hours in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip is another

“dark chapter” of the “terrible” Israeli war against the besieged territory.

In a statement published over the weekend on the UN agency’s website, Russell said Israeli forces not only killed a large number of Palestinians, children included, but also, cut humanitarian aid and attacked UN staff. “This has already been a deadly weekend of attacks in North Gaza. In the past 48 hours alone, over 50 children have reportedly been killed in Jabalia, where strikes leveled two residential buildings sheltering hundreds of people.

She also highlighted the dangers humanitarian workers face, especially those involved in sensitive campaigns such as polio vaccination. “And this morning, the personal vehicle of a UNICEF staff member working on the polio vaccination campaign came under fire by what we believe to be a quadcopter while driving through Jabalia-Elnazla. The car was damaged. Fortunately, the staff member was not injured. But she has been left deeply shaken.

“Meanwhile, at least three children were reportedly injured by another attack in the proximity of a vaccination clinic in Sheikh Radwan, while a polio vaccination campaign was underway,” she added.

Russell condemned the attacks on Jabalia, the vaccination clinic, and UNICEF staff members as part of the broader Israeli genocidal tactic of indiscriminate strikes on civilians in the Gaza Strip. “The attacks on Jabalia, the vaccination clinic, and the UNICEF staff member are yet further examples of the grave consequences of the indiscriminate strikes on civilians in the Gaza Strip.

“Taken alongside the horrific level of child deaths in North Gaza from other attacks, these most recent events combine to write yet another dark chapter in one of the darkest periods of this terrible war,” she warned.

The executive director of UNICEF emphasized that international humanitarian law mandates the protection of civilians, civilian structures, humanitarian workers, and their vehicles during conflicts.

Displacement or evacuation orders do not excuse any party from their obligations to differentiate between military and civilian targets, ensure proportionality, and take all feasible precautions in attacks, according to Russell.

“Yet these principles are being flaunted over and over again, leaving tens of thousands of children killed, injured, and deprived of essential services needed for survival.,” she lamented.

She called for an end to attacks on civilians, humanitarian workers, and the remaining civilian facilities and infrastructure in Gaza, highlighting the dire situation in North Gaza, where the entire Palestinian population, particularly children, faces imminent threats of death from disease, starvation, and continued bombardment.

“UNICEF is asking Israel for an immediate investigation into the circumstances surrounding the attack on its staff member, and that actions to be taken to hold accountable those found responsible,” she said.

The Israeli regime launched its genocidal war on the defenseless people of the Gaza Strip in October 2023 following a retaliatory operation by the Hamas resistance movement. Last month, Israeli forces intensified their attacks launching a sweeping air and land assault on northern Gaza, killing and wounding more Palestinians, many of them innocent children.

The overall death toll caused by the relentless Israeli attacks has reached 43,314 so far, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry. It said that since October 7, 2023, more than 102,000 Palestinians have been injured in the Israeli onslaught.

Most of the helpless Palestinian victims have been women and children.

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