



مركز العودة الفلسطيني
Palestinian Return Centre

Brief:

Israeli Orders of **Mass Evacuation** of over **1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza** in what the UN condemned as a **'crime against humanity'** and **'violation of international law'**.



A woman wearing a headscarf is carrying a young child on her back. The child is wearing a face mask. They are walking through a crowd of people, likely during an evacuation. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and what appears to be an outdoor setting.

► The Evacuation Orders - 13/10/2023

On Friday 13th October 2023, the Israeli army ordered all Palestinian civilians living in the north of the densely populated Gaza strip, to evacuate to the south in 24 hours. This evacuation order came on the seventh day of Israel's all out military offensive on Gaza, including Israel intensifying its blockade by blocking all aid, electricity, water, food, fuel and gas from entering Gaza ⁽¹⁾.

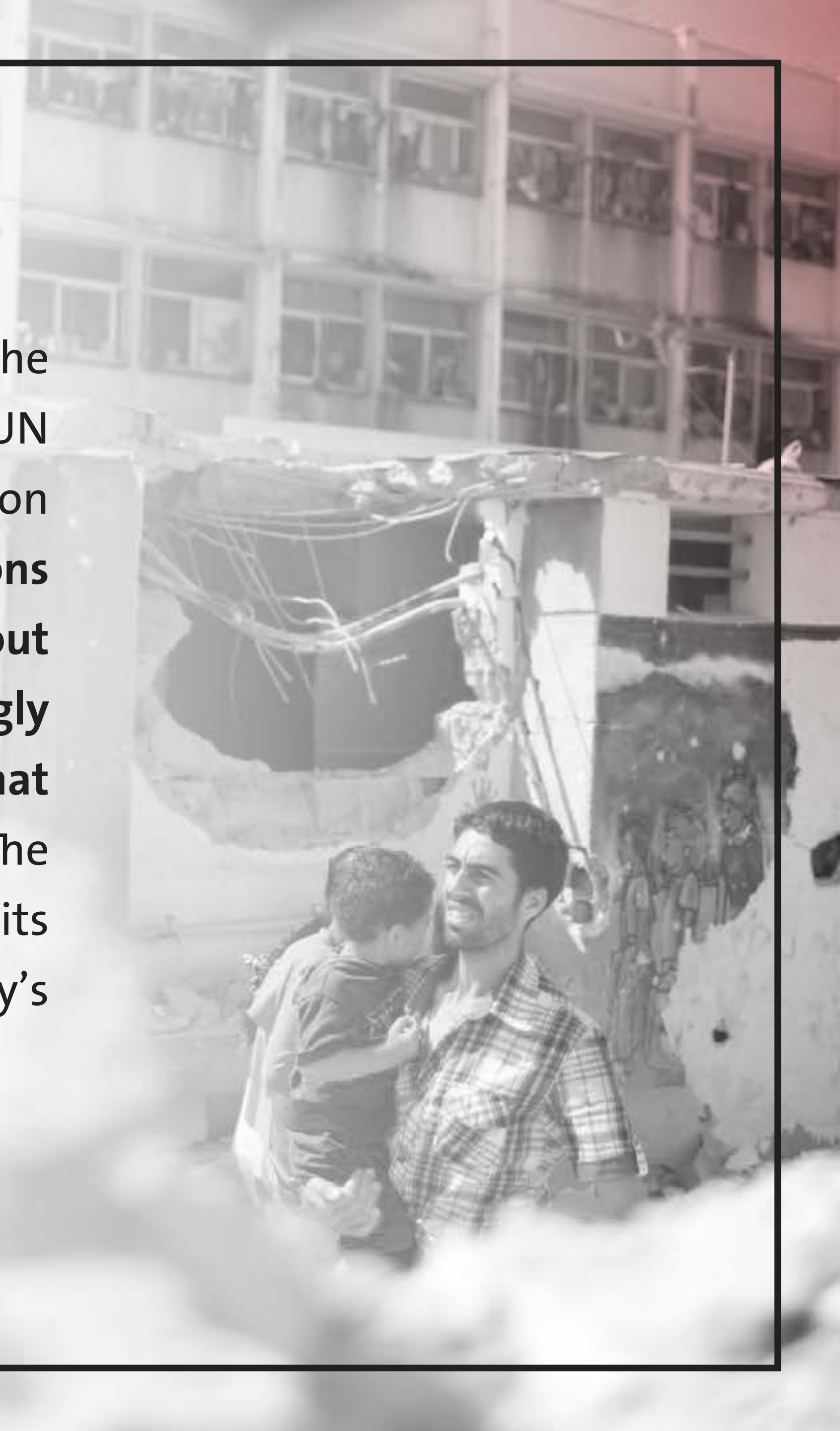
(1) Al Jazeera: Israel orders 1.1 million people in Gaza to move south: What to know. Aljazeera.org. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/13/israel-orders-1-1-million-people-in-gaza-to-move-south-what-to-know>

▶ UN's Response

Responding immediately to the Israeli Army's evacuation order, UN experts demanded that Israel immediately rescind its order for **1.1 million Palestinians** to leave northern Gaza within 24 hours, condemning the evacuation order as a crime against humanity and a blatant violation of international humanitarian law. According to Paula Gaviria Betancur, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons the **“Forcible population transfers constitute a crime against humanity, and collective punishment is prohibited under international humanitarian law”**. Betancur further adds **“We are horrified at the prospect of an additional 1 million Palestinians joining the over 423,000 people already forcibly driven from their homes by the violence over the past week. It is inconceivable that more than half of Gaza's population could traverse an active war zone, without devastating humanitarian consequences, particularly while deprived of essential supplies and basic services.”**⁽²⁾

⁽²⁾United Nations: Israel must rescind evacuation order for northern Gaza and comply with international law: UN expert. Un.org. Available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/israel-must-rescind-evacuation-order-for-northern-gaza-and-comply-with-international-law/>

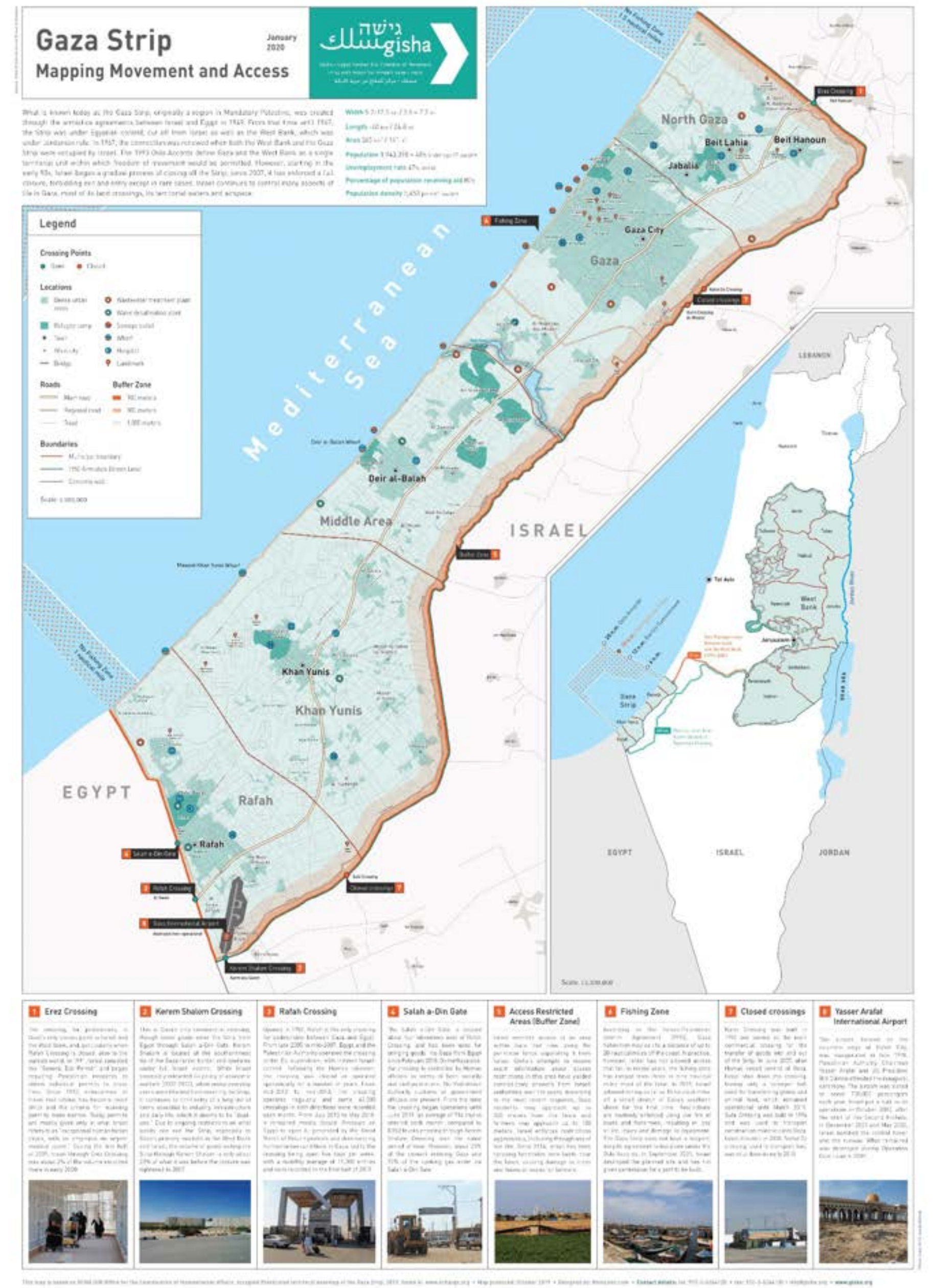
The broad order for all of Gaza's north also applied to all UN staff and to the **hundreds of thousands of people** who have taken shelter in UN schools and other facilities since Israel launched non-stop air strikes on October 7th. UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric stated **“The United Nations considers it impossible for such a movement to take place without devastating humanitarian consequences. The United Nations strongly appeals for any such order, if confirmed, to be rescinded avoiding what could transform what is already a tragedy into a calamitous situation”**.¹ The UN stated its agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, had to move all its operations and foreign staff to southern Gaza, following the Israel army's evacuation order.



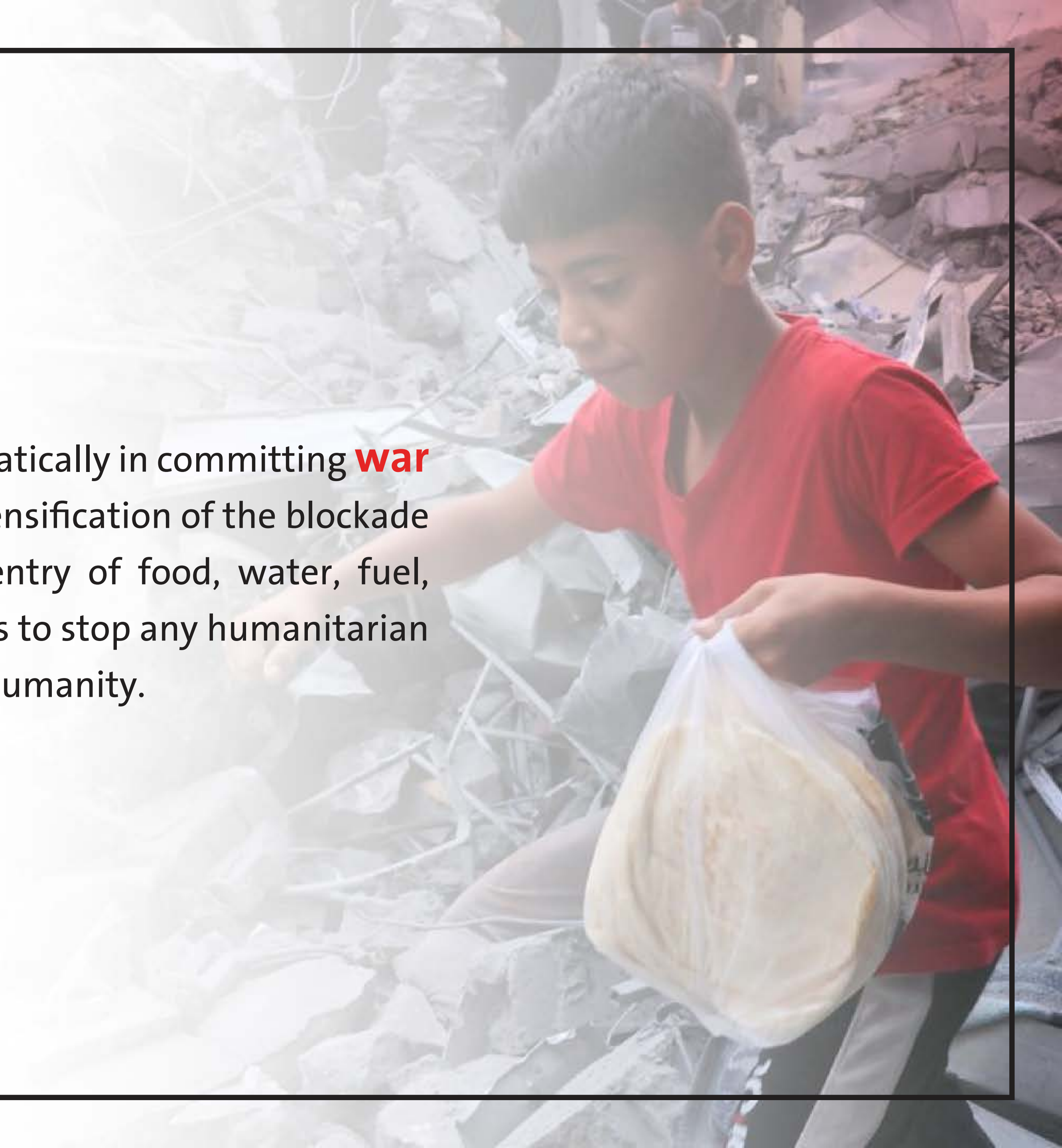
This map⁽³⁾ of the besieged Gaza strip illustrates how catastrophic of an order it is to demand over **1.1 million Palestinian** civilians to ‘evacuate’ from one side of the Gaza strip to the other. During the 24 hour time frame of these evacuation orders, the Israeli military targeted civilians traveling on safe routes from the north to the south of Gaza. Aerial footage shows a truck carrying over **70 civilians**, mostly women and children, traveling to the south of Gaza as ordered, being struck by an Israeli airstrike, killing **70 Palestinian civilians** ⁽⁴⁾.

(3) Gisha: Map of Gaza. Gisha.org. Available at: <https://gisha.org/en/map-of-gaza-crossings/>

(4) The Guardian: Gaza civilians afraid to leave home after bombing of ‘safe routes’. Theguardian.com. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/14/gaza-civilians-afraid-to-leave-home-after-bombing-of-safe-routes>




Since October 7th Israel has acted almost systematically in committing **war crimes**. Israel's evacuation orders, its lethal intensification of the blockade including cementing water sources, blocking entry of food, water, fuel, medicine, gas, electricity, and internet. It's efforts to stop any humanitarian aid entering Gaza, all amount to crimes against humanity.



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