



UN specialists inspect unexploded ordnance following the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Khan Younis city, on 10 April 2024. Photo by OCHA/Themba Linden

# Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #160

01 May 2024

The OCHA oPt Flash Update is published every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with an update on the West Bank included every Wednesday. The next update will be issued on 3 May.

## Key Highlights

- The risk of exposure to unexploded ordnance is at its “most dangerous stage,” warns UNMAS; a child sustains limb amputations in Khan Younis.\*
- More than 10,000 people are estimated to be missing under rubble in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Civil Defense.
- Since 7 October 2023, OCHA has recorded at least 800 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank that resulted in casualties or property damage, including the killing of 31 Palestinians by Israeli forces or settlers, the injury of about 500, and damage to about 80 houses, nearly 12,000 trees and saplings and 450 vehicles.
- Three schools in H2 area of Hebron city re-open for the first time in seven months, after Israeli authorities allow teachers to gain access to the area.

## Gaza Strip Updates

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land, and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure.
- In a statement on 30 April, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, [stressed](#) that recent improvements in aid delivery to Gaza, including the reopening of Erez crossing to bring aid from Ashdod and Jordan and efforts to open a maritime corridor, cannot be used to justify a full-blown assault on Rafah. Calling it “nothing short of a tragedy beyond words,” he added that a ground operation would deal a disastrous blow for “agencies struggling to provide humanitarian aid despite the active hostilities, impassable roads, unexploded ordnance, fuel shortages, delays at checkpoints, and Israeli restrictions” and would bring even more trauma and death for “the hundreds of thousands of people who have fled to Gaza’s southernmost point to escape disease, famine, mass graves and direct fighting.”
- Between the afternoon of 29 April and 11:00 on 1 May, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 80 Palestinians were killed and 118 injured, including 33 killed and 57 injured in the last 24 hours. Between 7 October 2023 and 11:00 on 1 May 2024, at least 34,568 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 77,765 Palestinians were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are among the deadly incidents on 29 April:
  - On 29 April, at about 12:25, two Palestinian women and two girls were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house was hit in Tall As Sultan neighborhood in western Rafah.
  - On 29 April, at about 13:20, three Palestinians, including a child and a woman, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit near Al Ihsan Mosque, in An Nuseirat Refugee Camp.



- On 29 April, at about 16:00, two Palestinians were reportedly killed and two injured when a house was hit in At Tuffah neighborhood, in Gaza city.
- On 29 April, at about 18:45, three Palestinians, including a child and a journalist, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in An Nuseirat Refugee Camp.
- Between the afternoons of 28 April and 1 May, two Israeli soldiers were reported killed in Gaza. As of 1 May, 262 soldiers have been killed and 1,602 soldiers have been injured in Gaza since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals, including 33 children, have been killed in Israel, the vast majority on 7 October. As of 1 May, Israeli authorities estimate that 133 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld.
- More than 10,000 people are estimated to be missing under rubble in Gaza, the Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD) said in a statement on 30 April. PCD added that they are facing enormous challenges in recovering dead bodies, including lack of equipment, heavy machinery and personnel, warning it could take up to three years to retrieve the bodies using the primitive tools they have on hand. Rising temperatures can accelerate the decomposition of bodies and the spread of disease, warned PCD, appealing to UN agencies and all relevant stakeholders to urgently intervene to allow the entry of needed equipment, including bulldozers and excavators, to avert a public health catastrophe, facilitate dignified burials, and save the lives of injured people.
- On 29 April, the Government Media Office (GMO) reported that a 14-year-old boy was seriously injured, and sustained limb amputations, after opening a booby-trapped can of food found while looking for his belongings in his house that had been shelled by Israeli forces in Khan Younis. The GMO indicated that many people have been recently injured due to the explosion of booby-trapped canned goods, urging the population to exercise maximum care. Based on UN estimates of unexploded munitions, the GMO assessed that around 7,500 tons of unexploded ordnance (UXO) might be scattered throughout Gaza, appealing for assistance by the international community to remove explosive remnants of war (ERW) and mitigate the risk for civilians. Specialized UN agencies have consistently noted that explosive remnants of war and unexploded ordnance continue to pose significant risks of injury or death to displaced people and those who wish to return to their homes. Booby traps are not a threat UN specialized agencies have documented in Gaza.\*
- The risk of exposure to unexploded ordnance is now at its “most dangerous stage,” [warned](#) the Chief of the UNMAS Mine Action Programme in the occupied Palestinian territory, Charles Birch, on 28 April. “Once people start returning to the north, that’s when most accidents will occur, because they will not be familiar with where unexploded ordnance is located,” Birch explained. UNMAS estimates that over 37 million tons of debris in the Gaza Strip contain about 800,000 tons of asbestos, other contaminants, and UXO, noting that at least 10 per cent of fired ammunition potentially fails to function. A UN assessment team visiting Khan Younis on 10 April, following the withdrawal of Israeli troops, [reported](#) that streets and public spaces were littered with UXO, with “unexploded 1,000-pound bombs lying on main intersections and inside schools.” To ensure the safety of humanitarian convoys delivering lifesaving assistance and where access permits, UNMAS [continues](#) to conduct explosive ordnance risk assessments of hospitals and UN installations, particularly UNRWA facilities sheltering internally displaced persons (IDPs). On 28 April, UNRWA and UNMAS carried out a damage [assessment](#) at UNRWA facilities in Khan Younis, marking shrapnel and UXO. Efforts are also ongoing to map UXO and high-risk areas and scale up Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) messaging; UNMAS has already reached via social media and SMS around 1.2 million people in Gaza and continues to conduct EORE sessions and deliver leaflets as part of aid packages distributed by other humanitarian partners. The Protection Cluster [reports](#), however, that administrative obstacles and restrictions on the entry of critical supplies into Gaza limit the number of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) experts that may safely deploy to the Strip and the ability to bring in required EORE materials. Funding is also a major concern; UNMAS Chief Charles Birch stated that US\$5 million has been secured for clearance processes but another \$40 million is required over the next 18 months to address the unprecedented scale of contamination.
- Persons with disabilities, whether pre-existing or newly acquired, are among the vulnerable groups worst affected by hostilities in Gaza. Many have lost their assistive devices or have been separated from their primary caregivers, according to [ACAPS](#), preventing them from fleeing or finding safe shelter. Others who have been injured face the risk of long-term disability due to the lack of supplies to treat even minor injuries or fractures, warned Handicap International ([HI](#)). On 26 April, the UN [shed light](#) on the suffering of a deaf and mute Palestinian man who has been displaced with his wife and child to Deir al Balah; living in constant fear for his family, his hearing aid allows him to capture only a “weak echo” of what is happening around him, including the sound of bombing. In April, [Atfaluna](#) Society for Deaf Children also highlighted the challenges facing a 30-year-old Palestinian woman with a mobility impairment, who was forced to flee her home without her wheelchair and has since been displaced multiple times with her family. According to the 2022 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment ([MSNA](#)), about 21 per cent of households in the Gaza Strip were assessed to include at least one member of the household with a physical or mental disability. Since then, although data is limited, the number of people with disabilities in Gaza is believed to have dramatically increased; UNICEF [estimated](#) in December 2023 that around 1,000 children had lost one or both legs and Atfaluna Society later [estimated](#) that some 5,000 have acquired disabilities from injury.
- Humanitarian actors continue to face a number of access constraints in reaching people in need of assistance across Gaza, including denials of planned missions or prolonged delays at Israeli military checkpoints on Salah El Din and Al Rasheed roads that control movement between northern and southern Gaza. In April 2024, 55 per cent (52 out of 94) of humanitarian aid missions to northern Gaza were facilitated by Israeli authorities, 27 per cent (25) were impeded, 10 per cent (9) were denied, and eight per cent (8) were cancelled due to logistical constraints. In addition, during the same period, out of 185 humanitarian aid missions to areas in southern Gaza that require coordination, 80 per cent (147) were facilitated by Israeli authorities, three per cent (6) were impeded, 10 per cent (19) were denied, and seven per cent (13) were cancelled due to logistical constraints. Facilitated missions involved food distributions, delivery of medical supplies to hospitals, movement of emergency medical teams, fuel delivery, assessments, and support for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities.

## West Bank Update (23-29 April)

- Latest development: 30 April: A 26-year-old Palestinian man died after falling off the roof of a building while being chased by Israeli forces in Adh Dhahiriya town in Hebron governorate. According to his family, the man and his friend were driving to their workplace and then left the vehicle and ran back to the town upon seeing an Israeli military checkpoint. The other man was arrested by Israeli forces.
- Between 23 and 29 April, Israeli forces shot and killed five Palestinians, including a child, and injured 13 others. Since 7 October, 474 Palestinians including 116 children, have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and about 5,000 were injured. The fatalities included 457 killed by Israeli forces, ten by Israeli settlers and seven where it remains undetermined whether the perpetrators were Israeli forces or settlers. Over 70 per cent of the fatalities took place during search-and-arrest and other operations by Israeli forces. Nine Israelis have also been killed and 104 were injured in the West Bank since October 2023; these include five members of Israeli forces killed and 69 injured.
- In two separate incidents, three Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in attacks or alleged attacks against Israeli forces at two checkpoints in the West Bank. These include two Palestinians, aged 21 and 22 years, who were shot after reportedly shooting at Israeli forces from inside their vehicle at Salem Barrier checkpoint on 27 April. Their bodies have been withheld by Israeli authorities. Two additional Palestinians were injured, but it remains unclear whether they were inside the same vehicle. They were evacuated by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) 15 minutes following the incident. On 24 April, a 20-year-old woman was shot after allegedly attempting to stab Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint leading to Hebron city. According to an eyewitness, however, the woman was shot when she stepped out of her car after facing mechanical problems.
- In another two separate incidents, two Palestinians were shot during operations by Israeli forces, including a 16-year-old boy who was shot on 25 April when Israeli forces raided Ramallah city to deliver at least one punitive house demolition order and opened fire toward Palestinian stone throwers. The demolition order was issued for the house of one of the Palestinians suspected of shooting at vehicles travelling on Road 60 on 7 January 2024, which resulted in the killing of a Palestinian from East Jerusalem and a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Also, a 44-year-old man was shot and killed while reportedly standing in front of his house in Aqbet Jaber Refugee Camp in Jericho during an Israeli night raid on 23 April; the incident reportedly did not involve exchanges of fire between Israeli forces and Palestinians, nor clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian stone throwers.
- In H2 area of Hebron city, Israeli authorities allowed teachers to gain access to three schools serving at least 350 boys and girls for the first time since 7 October 2023, enabling the schools to re-open after nearly seven months. Movement restrictions affecting an estimated 7,000 residents of H2 area in Hebron have been in place since 7 October, with 29 checkpoints controlling access to the area only open for Palestinian residents. During the reporting period, Israeli forces detained at least 11 Palestinians at checkpoints controlling access from/to the H2 area or while walking en route to their houses in the area. Since the beginning of the year, 142 Palestinians have been detained in H2 area, compared to 63 in the same period last year.
- During the reporting period, Israeli settlers perpetrated six attacks that led to the injury of two Palestinians and damage to property. In three incidents, Israeli settlers physically assaulted Palestinian herders (including an elderly man) while grazing their livestock near Ein Samiya herding community (Ramallah) and in Ma'in and Masafer Yatta (Hebron). Also in Masafer Yatta, settlers grazed their sheep on and damaged about four acres (17 dunums) of Palestinian land planted with seasonal crops. In two other incidents, Israeli settlers reportedly contaminated a water well in Al Maniya community (Bethlehem) and uprooted some 70 saplings of olives, grapes and figs in Qarawat Bani Hassan village (Salfit). In Ad Deir community (Tubas), Israeli settlers broke into private Palestinian land and destroyed crops and farm property, including generators, water pumps, solar panels, water pipes, and an agricultural tent, as well as stole an electric converter.
- Since 7 October 2023, OCHA has recorded at least 800 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians that resulted in Palestinian casualties (84 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (629 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (90 incidents). These incidents resulted in the killing of 31 Palestinians either by Israeli settlers or forces, close to 500 injuries, and vandalization of nearly 80 houses, at least 11,700 trees and saplings, and about 450 vehicles.
- There were 16 other settler incidents during the reporting period that did not result in casualties and/or property damage. In one incident, Israeli settlers established a new outpost on land belonging to the villages of Al Mughayyir and Kafr Malik in Ramallah governorate. Hundreds of settlers accompanied by Israeli forces also entered the archeological site in Sabastiya village in Nablus governorate, reportedly to celebrate the Passover, preventing the movement of Palestinians to and from the area. In addition, there were incidents of intimidation and access obstruction, affecting Palestinians' access to their farms and water pumps in Ein al Hilweh and Ad Deir herding communities, respectively, in Tubas governorate. Since 7 October 2023, at least 206 Palestinian households comprising 1,244 people, most of whom are herding families, including 603 children, have been displaced amid settler violence and access restrictions.
- Since 7 October 2023, some 1,765 Palestinians, of whom 43 per cent are children, have been displaced due to the demolition of their homes. Over half (961 people) were displaced during operations by Israeli forces, of which 94 per cent took place in the refugee camps of Nur Shams, Tulkarm and Jenin. This is followed by 37 per cent displaced by lack-of-permit demolitions and eight per cent due to demolitions on punitive grounds.

## Funding

- On 17 April, the Humanitarian Country Team released a new [Flash Appeal](#) for the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), which requests \$2.8 billion to meet the most critical needs of 2.3 million people in Gaza and 800,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between April and December 2024. The figure reflects what is deemed most likely to be implemented over the

next nine months, under access constraints and security challenges that limit the rapid scale-up of the humanitarian response, and represents only a part of the requirement that the UN and its partners estimate is needed to meet the scale of humanitarian needs across the oPt. This Flash Appeal replaces the previous appeal launched in October 2023 and extended until March 2024, which sought \$1.23 billion; roughly half of this amount was utilized in the last quarter of 2023 and the remaining half in the first quarter of 2024.

- The [oPt HF](#) has 118 ongoing projects, for a total of \$72.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (85 per cent) and West Bank (15 per cent). In light of the updated Flash Appeal, the HF has allocated an additional \$22 million to bolster prioritized HF-funded projects in Gaza to enhance the operational capacity of humanitarian partners as well as ensure the continuity and expansion of essential services amid escalating challenges. In the West Bank, the oPt HF has allocated \$5 million for key partners to enhance system readiness and responsiveness to sudden-onset emergencies. Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized \$90 million from Member States and private donors, designated for programmes throughout Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in March 2024 is available through this [link](#) and the 2023 Annual report of the oPt HF can be accessed [here](#). Private donations are collected directly through the [Humanitarian Fund](#).





For the Gaza Humanitarian Response Update for the period between 22 and 28 April, please visit: [Gaza Humanitarian Response Update | 22–28 April 2024](#). It is updated throughout the week to reflect new content.

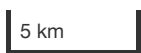
\* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.


## Access restriction on Humanitarian aid map



**Legend ▼**

- High Risk Areas (shooting and shelling)
- High Risk Areas (breakdown in civil order)
- Partially Open Road for Humanitarian Aid
- Accessible Road for Humanitarian Aid
- Israeli Military Road
-  Israeli Checkpoints (frequent, unpredictable closures)
-  Open Crossing Point for Goods/People
-  Partially Open Crossing Point for Goods
-  Holding Point



 © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap