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World Report 2025 - Israel and Palestine

In 2024, the Israeli military continued to kill, wound, starve, and forcibly displace thousands of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, and to destroy their homes, schools, hospitals, and infrastructure at a scale unprecedented in recent history. The Gaza Ministry of Health reported in late November that more than 44,000 people had been killed and 104,000 wounded since hostilities escalated on October 7, 2023. Nearly all Palestinians in Gaza were forcibly displaced, and all faced severe food insecurity or [famine](#).

In November, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued [arrest warrants](#) for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza from October 7, 2023, to May 20, 2024, when the ICC Prosecutor requested the warrants, and the leader of Hamas's military wing, [Mohammed Deif](#), for the attacks in Israel on October 7, 2023, that included war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Prosecutor's request had also named Hamas leaders Ismail Haniyeh and Yahya Sinwar, whom Israel later killed.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the [UN reported](#) that Palestinians killed 6 Israeli settlers and 16 soldiers, while Israelis [killed](#) 719 Palestinians, from October 7, 2023, to October 7, 2024 – far more than in any other year since 2005, when the UN began systematically recording fatalities. The number of Palestinian dead stem from Israel's [continued use of excessive lethal force](#), including [airstrikes](#) and drone-launched missiles.

In September, Israel escalated airstrikes in Lebanon, following attacks using booby-trapped [pagers](#) and [walkie talkies](#) distributed among Hezbollah members that killed at least 32 people and wounded more than 3,250. Israeli ground forces invaded Lebanon on October 1. From October 7, 2023, to mid-November 2024, there were 3,445 conflict-related [deaths](#) and [14,600](#) wounded in Lebanon, most after mid-September. Over 400,000 people fled to Syria.

Armed groups in the Gaza Strip killed 6 hostages from Israel and continued to hold an estimated 100, including over 30 people believed to have died during the hostilities. Since October 7, 2023, Hezbollah, Iran, the Houthis in Yemen, and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza [launched](#) 28,000 rocket, missile and [drone attacks](#), mostly intercepted, that killed at least 29 civilians in Israel and in Israeli-occupied territory as of mid-October. Twelve children were killed by a rocket in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights; Hezbollah denied responsibility. The attacks displaced tens of thousands of people from the Gaza Envelope and northern Israel.

The Israeli authorities continued to commit the crimes against humanity [of apartheid and persecution](#) through their repression of Palestinians. In July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion finding Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory is unlawful, that Israel is in breach of the prohibition on racial discrimination and apartheid, that it should evacuate and dismantle all settlements and make reparation to Palestinians, including compensation and allowing Palestinians it displaced after 1967 to return to their homes, and that other governments should cease any recognition of, trade or investment in settlements and work to bring the illegal situation in the occupied territory to an end.

The EU, UK, and other countries resumed funding to UNRWA, the key humanitarian agency for Palestinians. The US continued to withhold funding to [UNRWA](#), while it approved over 100 [arms sales](#) and provided Israel an unprecedented [\\$17.9 billion](#) in security assistance. Countries including the [Netherlands](#), Canada, and the [UK](#) suspended some arms transfers or licenses to Israel due to a clear risk of their arms being used in serious violations of international law.

Gaza Strip

The 44,000 deaths in Gaza due to the conflict reported by the Gaza Ministry of Health did not include many people who died from illness, disease, or who were buried under the rubble. The data on deaths and injuries do not include civilian status, but [70 percent](#) of the 8,200 fatalities the UN Human Rights office (OHCHR) had verified by September were women and children.

Israeli forces forcibly displaced nearly all of Gaza's population, often multiple times. In October 2023, Israel ordered more than 1 million people in northern Gaza to evacuate within 24 hours. By May 2024, more than half of Gaza's population was crammed into the southern city of Rafah, which the Israeli military then attacked, forcing more than 1.4 million people to flee again. Beginning in October 2024, Israel cut all aid to northern Gaza and again forcibly displaced people there. Most of Gaza's territory was under military [evacuation orders](#), part of a system of forcible transfer of Palestinian civilians that amounts to a crime against humanity. Al-Mawasi, the Israeli-declared "humanitarian zone," lacked adequate shelter, water, sanitation, or other infrastructure, and had a population density of [88,000 people](#) per square mile as of August. Israeli attacks and demolitions by combat engineers and military bulldozers destroyed or damaged 63 percent of all Gaza's buildings, rendering much of the Strip uninhabitable, clearly constituting ethnic cleansing in some areas and violating Palestinians' right to return.

More than 87 percent of all [schools](#), and all universities in Gaza were damaged or destroyed, including in attacks that were apparently [unlawful](#). Since October 7, more than [10,000](#) students and 441 educational staff were killed in Gaza.

Almost [84 percent](#) of health facilities were destroyed or damaged, including in apparently [unlawful](#) attacks. The collapse of the healthcare system deprived the estimated [50,000](#) pregnant women and girls in Gaza of access to adequate care, and increased the [risk of serious](#) health complications during pregnancy, birth, and post-partum. UN experts warned of a 300 percent [increase](#) in miscarriages in Gaza.

In January, March, and May, the International Court of Justice issued provisional measures as part of a case filed by South Africa that Israel violated its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention in Gaza. Israel flouted the court's orders Israel to open border crossings and allow humanitarian aid into Gaza at scale.

Israeli authorities deprived people in Gaza of [adequate water needed for survival for months](#), restricting piped water and forcing water pumps, desalination, wastewater, and sewage facilities offline by cutting electricity, razing solar panels at several facilities, and blocking fuel needed to run electricity generators. Israeli forces attacked water and sanitation workers and warehouses, preventing repairs, and blocked the entry of equipment and parts. On average, from October 2023 to July 2024, people had access to less than 5 liters of water per day, one-third of the WHO's minimum standard for survival, and lack of water and sanitation contributed to a public health disaster, notwithstanding a child-vaccination campaign after the first polio case in 25 years were [detected](#) in August. Cases of diarrhea among children under 5 increased from 2,000 per month before October 7, 2023, to 71,000 as of January. Israel's denial of water to the Palestinian population of Gaza amounts to the crime against humanity of extermination and the genocidal act of inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of the group in whole or part.

Israel's blockade denied [83 percent](#) of food aid entry to Gaza as of September, and on average people were eating one meal every other day, while more than one million people in southern and central Gaza did not receive any food rations in August. In October, Israel ordered the population of northern Gaza to evacuate and blocked all aid to the area, while the total aid Israel allowed to enter Gaza overall [fell](#) to its lowest level since the beginning of the escalation, leading to [assessments](#) that famine was "imminent" in the north.

Israeli forces repeatedly [attacked known aid-worker locations](#) after aid workers had shared with the Israeli military their precise coordinates in advance. In September, the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee](#) stated that "the number of aid workers killed in Gaza in the past year is the highest ever

in a single crisis.” At least 318 aid workers were killed in Gaza from October 2023 to October 2024.

The Israeli military’s forced displacements, lack of effective advance warnings of attacks, and siege of Gaza created [extreme risks and suffering](#) for children and adults with disabilities, who often could not flee for safety or access the food, medicine and assistive devices necessary for their survival. Its extensive use of explosive weapons, including in densely populated areas and attacks on [residential buildings](#) with no apparent military target, caused injuries resulting in permanent disabilities and lifelong scarring for children in Gaza. All children with disabilities faced unique psychological harm due to the violence and deprivation they have experienced or witnessed.

Israeli authorities did not allow any Palestinians to exit Gaza through the Erez Crossing, the only passenger crossing from Gaza into Israel through which Palestinians can travel to the West Bank and abroad. About 110,000 people were able to leave Gaza to Egypt from October 2023 until Israel took control of the Rafah crossing and closed it on May 6. From May to November, Israel allowed only around 320 critical patients to leave Gaza for medical care. About [12,000 people](#) in need of medical evacuation were on waiting lists to go to Egypt as of September. Egypt, Turkey, Qatar, Jordan, Italy and several other countries accepted or offered to accept Palestinians in need of medical care; other Western countries, such as [the UK](#), had accepted [none](#) by early November.

Hamas and Palestinian Armed Groups in Gaza

In addition to holding civilian hostages, Palestinian armed groups shot to death six hostages one to two days [before](#) their bodies were found by Israeli forces in a tunnel under Rafah on August 31. The Qassam Brigades stated that fighters guarding hostages had been given “[new instructions](#)” and that Israeli military pressure would cause hostages to be returned “in shrouds.”

The UN special representative on sexual violence in armed conflict [reported](#) in March that her mission had found “clear and convincing information” that some hostages held in Gaza had been subjected to sexual violence including rape.

West Bank

Israel’s repression of Palestinians in the West Bank intensified during 2024. Israeli authorities [rarely prosecute](#) those responsible for [violence against Palestinians](#).

Israeli forces carried out several large-scale raids, particularly targeting refugee camps, where 130 Palestinians were killed, based on OCHA reports.

Israeli authorities apply Israeli civil law to settlers but govern West Bank Palestinians under military law, deny them basic due process, and try them in [military courts](#).

The difficulty in obtaining Israeli building permits in East Jerusalem and the 60 percent of the West Bank under Israel’s exclusive control (Area C) has driven Palestinians to build structures at risk of demolition for being unauthorized.

Nearly 6,200 Palestinians, including more than 2,700 children, were displaced from their homes in the West Bank since October 7, by Israeli military home-demolitions or attacks that destroyed homes, as well as by state-supported settler violence. The UN recorded more than 1,400 settler attacks as of [October 2](#), 2024.

In September, Israel's supreme court [ruled](#) in favor of a settler organization to evict a Palestinian family from their homes in East Jerusalem, under [a discriminatory law](#) that allows settlers to claim land Jews owned in East Jerusalem before 1948. Palestinians are barred under Israeli law from making analogous land claims in Israel.

Israeli authorities provide security, infrastructure, and services to more than 700,000 [settlers](#) in the occupied West Bank, which includes East Jerusalem.

Since 2023, the Israeli government approved the construction of more than 20,000 new housing units in unlawful settlements in the occupied West Bank. As of [October](#), 28 settlement “outposts” were established, which are not authorized but receive government and military support to take over Palestinian land.

Australia, Canada, the EU, the US and the United Kingdom imposed sanctions on violent settlers and settlement entities in the West Bank, but not Israeli officials.

Prominent Palestinian civil society organizations in the West Bank [remain outlawed](#) as “terrorist” organizations.

Freedom of Movement

Israeli authorities continued to require Palestinian ID holders to hold difficult-to-obtain, time-limited permits to enter Israel and large parts of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Israeli forces harshly restricted Palestinians’ travel within the West Bank, and largely prohibited Palestinians’ harvesting olives in 2023 and again in 2024, causing economic losses.

Israel continued construction of the separation barrier, [85 percent](#) of which falls within the West Bank, and which will isolate [9 percent](#) of the West Bank when complete.

Abuses by the Palestinian Authority

The PA arbitrarily detained opponents and critics, including students and journalists. Between January and November 2024, the Palestinian statutory watchdog, the Independent Commission for Human Rights, [received](#) 231 complaints against the PA of arbitrary arrests, including detention without trial or charge, 117 complaints of torture and ill-treatment during detention.

There was no change to personal status laws for Muslims and Christians that discriminate against women.

Israel

In October, the Israeli Knesset approved legislation to [prevent](#) the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) from operating in areas under Israeli control and to ban communication with its staff . The agency employed 14,000 staff in the Gaza Strip, where it was an essential provider of humanitarian aid, education and medical care.

At least [six](#) Lebanese and 137 Palestinian journalists and media workers were [killed](#), and 69 were arrested from October 7, 2023 to November 2024. Israel forcibly closed Al Jazeera’s office in Ramallah and revoked the press credentials of Al Jazeera journalists in September.

Israeli authorities systematically denied the claims of most asylum seekers, including roughly 30,000 from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan, but began offering residency to men who [enlisted](#) in the military.

Detention, Torture, and Ill-Treatment of Palestinians

Israeli authorities arbitrarily detained, tortured, inflicted [sexual](#) violence on, and denied adequate food and medical care to detained Palestinian men, women, and children. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir pushed through punitive policies including to limit detainees' food. The Health Ministry [restricted](#) access to hospitals for detainees from Gaza at the Sde Teiman facility in Israel unless they faced immediate death or severe disability "such as a limb amputation or loss of an eye." At least [53](#) Palestinians died in detention as of July, with Israel often withholding their bodies.

After October 7, Israeli authorities detained incommunicado and abused thousands of Palestinian workers who had been in Israel lawfully. In 2024, Israeli authorities continued to deport Palestinians arrested in Gaza to facilities inside Israel, including healthcare workers, who reported being tortured and denied food, water and medical care. Israeli news media reported [amputations](#) of detainees due to abusive use of restraints, surgeries without anesthesia, and [sexual and gender-based violence](#). At the Sde Teiman military base, nine soldiers were arrested but then [released](#) for raping a detainee, who had to be hospitalized.

As of June, Israeli authorities [held](#) 3,377 Palestinians in administrative detention without charge, trial or the ability to contest evidence of wrongdoing, and [detained](#) 1,415 Palestinians from Gaza under the "Unlawful Combatants" law, a form of administrative detention. Israel denied independent access to detention facilities, including to the ICRC, since October 7, 2023.