



# Gaza genocide

The **Gaza genocide** is the ongoing, intentional, and systematic destruction of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip carried out by Israel during the Gaza war. It encompasses mass killings, deliberate starvation, infliction of serious bodily and mental harm, and prevention of births. Other acts include blockading, destroying civilian infrastructure, destroying healthcare facilities, killing healthcare workers and aid-seekers, causing mass forced displacement, committing sexual violence, and destroying educational, religious, and cultural sites.<sup>[16]</sup> The genocide has been recognised by a United Nations special committee<sup>[17]</sup> and commission of inquiry,<sup>[16]</sup> the International Association of Genocide Scholars,<sup>[18][19]</sup> multiple human rights groups,<sup>[c]</sup> numerous genocide studies and international law scholars,<sup>[25][26]</sup> and other experts.<sup>[27]</sup>

By October 2025, the Gaza Health Ministry had reported that at least 66,148 people in Gaza had been killed.<sup>[28]</sup> The vast majority of the victims were civilians,<sup>[29][30]</sup> and around 50% were women and children.<sup>[31][32]</sup> Compared to other recent global conflicts, the numbers of known deaths of journalists, humanitarian and health workers, and children are among the highest.<sup>[33]</sup> Thousands more uncounted bodies are thought to be under the rubble of destroyed buildings.<sup>[30][34]</sup> A study in the medical journal *The Lancet* estimated that traumatic injury deaths were undercounted by June 2024, while noting an even larger potential death toll when "indirect" deaths are included.<sup>[35]</sup> The number of injured is greater than 171,000.<sup>[5][15][36]</sup> Gaza has the most child amputees per capita in the world;<sup>[37]</sup> the Gaza war has caused more than 21,000 children to be disabled.<sup>[38]</sup>

An Israeli blockade has heavily contributed to ongoing starvation and confirmed famine. As of August 2025, projections show about 641,000 people experiencing catastrophic levels and that "the number of people facing emergency levels will likely increase to 1.14 million".<sup>[39][40]</sup> Early in the conflict, Israel cut off

## Gaza genocide

Part of the Gaza war, the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip, and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict



### Photographs of the Gaza genocide

**Top:** Destruction in northern Gaza, February 2025

**Middle left:** A destroyed ambulance of the Palestinian Red Crescent, January 2024

**Middle right:** Gazans receiving treatment on the floor at the overcrowded emergency ward of Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, October 2023

**Bottom left:** A destroyed mosque, February 2025

**Bottom right:** Children collecting food aid, August 2024

**Location** Gaza Strip

**Date** On or after 7 October 2023 – present<sup>[a][1]</sup>

Gaza's water and electricity, but it later partially restored the water.<sup>[41]</sup> As of May 2024, 84% of Gaza's health centres have been destroyed or damaged.<sup>[42]</sup> Israel has also destroyed numerous cultural heritage sites, including all 12 of Gaza's universities, and 80% of its schools.<sup>[43][44]</sup> Over 1.9 million Palestinians—85% of Gaza's population—have been forcibly displaced.<sup>[45]</sup>

In December 2023, the government of South Africa instituted proceedings, *South Africa v. Israel*, against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), alleging a violation of the Genocide Convention.<sup>[46]</sup> In January 2024, the court ordered Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of acts of genocide, to prevent and punish incitement to genocide, and to allow basic humanitarian service, aid and supplies into Gaza.<sup>[47][48][49]</sup> The court later ordered Israel to increase humanitarian aid into Gaza and to halt its Rafah offensive.<sup>[50][51]</sup> Israel did not fully comply with the court's orders.<sup>[52][53][54]</sup>

Israel and its supporters maintain that its actions do not constitute genocide.<sup>[49][55]</sup> The Israeli government maintains that its military actions were a response to the Hamas-led October 7 attacks on Israel and that it sought to destroy Hamas and free Israeli hostages.<sup>[56][49][57]</sup> There is increasing consensus among genocide and international legal scholars on the genocide assessment,<sup>[25]</sup> though some academics challenge it.<sup>[58][59]</sup>

## Background

Israel's occupation of the Gaza Strip began in 1967. In 2005, Israel withdrew its ground forces in the context of the Oslo Accords and the Second Intifada.<sup>[60]</sup> The International Court of Justice subsequently issued an advisory opinion that despite the withdrawal Israel is still illegally occupying the Gaza Strip.<sup>[61]</sup>

Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has been governed by Hamas, an Islamist militant group, while the West Bank remained under the control of the Palestinian Authority. After Hamas took over, Israel intensified its blockade of the Gaza Strip, citing security concerns;<sup>[62][63]</sup> international rights groups have called the blockade a form of collective punishment.<sup>[64][65][66]</sup> UNRWA reported that, due to the blockade, 81% of Gazans were living below the poverty level in 2023, with 63% food insecure and dependent on international assistance.<sup>[67][68]</sup> Since 2007, Israel and Hamas (and other Palestinian militias in Gaza) have engaged in conflict,<sup>[63][69][70]</sup> including four wars in 2008–2009, 2012, 2014, and 2021.<sup>[71][72]</sup>

<b>Target</b>	<u>Palestinians</u>
<b>Attack type</b>	<u>Genocide</u> , <u>massacres</u> , <u>ethnic cleansing</u> , <u>forced displacement</u> , <u>bombardment</u> , <u>blockade</u> , <u>war crimes</u> , <u>targeted killings</u> , <u>starvation</u> , <u>torture</u> , <u>rape</u> and <u>sexual violence</u> , <u>attacks on healthcare</u> , <u>birth prevention</u> , <sup>[2][3]</sup> <u>ecocide</u> , <sup>[4]</sup> <u>urbicide</u>
<b>Deaths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70,900 direct deaths (recorded figure, December 2025)<sup>[b]</sup></li> <li>186,000 estimated by Khatib et al. 2024<sup>[11]</sup></li> <li>463 famine deaths (confirmed, November 2025)<sup>[12][13]</sup></li> <li>c. 10,000+ famine deaths (estimated)<sup>[14]</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Injured</b>	At least 171,100 <sup>[5][15]</sup>
<b>Perpetrator</b>	<u>Israel</u>
<b>Litigation</b>	<u><i>South Africa v. Israel</i></u> <u><i>Nicaragua v. Germany</i></u>

On 7 October 2023 Hamas led an attack into Israel from Gaza,<sup>[73][74][75]</sup> killing at least 1,139<sup>[76][77][d]</sup> people, most of them civilians.<sup>[84]</sup> The attack included grave acts of violence, including sexual violence.<sup>[78]</sup> During the attack, Palestinian militant groups abducted 251 people from Israel to the Gaza Strip.<sup>[85]</sup> Israel responded with a highly destructive<sup>[86]</sup> bombing campaign followed by an invasion of the Gaza Strip on 27 October.<sup>[87]</sup>

Hamas officials said the attack was a response to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the blockade of Gaza, Israeli settler violence against Palestinians, restrictions on the movement of Palestinians, and the detainment of thousands of Palestinians, many without charges, whom Hamas sought to release by taking Israeli hostages.<sup>[88][89][90]</sup> Numerous commentators have identified Israeli occupation as a cause of the war.<sup>[91]</sup> Several human rights organisations, including Amnesty International,<sup>[92]</sup> B'Tselem,<sup>[93]</sup> and Human Rights Watch,<sup>[94]</sup> have likened the Israeli occupation to apartheid; Israel's supporters dispute this characterisation.<sup>[95][96]</sup> A July 2024 advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice affirmed the occupation as illegal and said it violated the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.<sup>[97]</sup>

During the first 48 hours of Israel's retaliatory attack, IDF chief Herzi Halevi reported that the IDF attacked 1,000 targets. According to his wife, he told her that "Gaza will be destroyed". Reportedly, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu subsequently said he wanted 5,000 targets to be attacked, even though the IDF had not confirmed 5,000 enemy targets. Artificial intelligence was used to generate a list of targets, in many cases based on unconfirmed or outdated intelligence. About 10,000 Palestinians were killed in a month, including entire families. Shmuel Lederman called this "as criminal as it gets".<sup>[98]</sup>

The Israeli government has said that the military actions it has undertaken are in response to the October 7 attacks and sought to destroy Hamas, overthrow its governance of the Gaza Strip, and free Israeli hostages. It has denied that its military operations constitute genocide.<sup>[56][49][57]</sup> Multiple commentators argue that part of the motive is retaliation for the 7 October attacks.<sup>[99][100][101]</sup> Nimer Sultany argues that anti-Palestinianism is also a motive.<sup>[102]</sup>

## Definitions of genocide and legal challenges

The 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention defines genocide as acts committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group", and as such, "causing harm, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children".<sup>[103][104]</sup> The International Court of Justice has never held a state liable for genocide.<sup>[105]</sup> The legal threshold for genocidal intent remains a major barrier to prosecution.<sup>[105]</sup>



A September 2023 United Nations map of Gaza, showing its border barrier and checkpoints into Israel and Egypt and Israel's Maritime Exclusion Zone, illustrating the geographic scope of the preexisting blockade and the physical constraints on movement and access.

The original definition coined by Raphael Lemkin was broader than that used by the Genocide Convention and included cultural and social destruction. In contrast, orthodox scholarly definitions emphasise actions targeting a group's physical survival.<sup>[106][107]</sup> No minimum number of victims<sup>[108][109][110]</sup> or intended victims<sup>[111]</sup> is required to establish the crime, nor is complete destruction of the group.<sup>[112]</sup> In the Rohingya genocide case, several states contended that the ICJ should "adopt a balanced approach that recognizes the special gravity of the crime of genocide, without rendering the threshold for inferring genocidal intent so difficult to meet so as to make findings of genocide near-impossible."<sup>[113]</sup>

## Genocidal intent and incitement

Experts affirm that statements by Israeli political and military leaders<sup>[114][115][116]</sup>—coupled with eliminationist media rhetoric and Israel's conduct in Gaza—indicate genocidal intent and incitement against the Palestinian people in Gaza.<sup>[116]</sup> Israeli officials and journalists<sup>[114][117][118]</sup> have made verbal statements that dehumanise Palestinians and incite, justify, or praise atrocities against them as a group.<sup>[119][120]</sup> Genocidal intent is also evidenced by the scale and systematic nature of actions that exceed any legitimate military objective<sup>[121][116]</sup>—including the extensive targeting of children,<sup>[56][116]</sup> widespread sexual violence,<sup>[122]</sup> destruction of cultural heritage,<sup>[123][124][125]</sup> and imposition of life-destroying conditions<sup>[126][127]</sup>—together with the persistence of these practices despite awareness of their catastrophic effects.<sup>[128][129]</sup>

Both a United Nations commission of inquiry and Amnesty International documented a "pattern of conduct" by Israeli authorities, concluding that genocidal intent is the "only reasonable inference" that can be drawn from the evidence.<sup>[133][134]</sup> Other organisations that have attributed genocidal intent to the actions or statements of Israeli officials include a United Nations panel<sup>[117][135]</sup> and Genocide Watch.<sup>[136][137]</sup> As part of Defense for Children International – Palestine v. Biden, the historian Barry Trachtenberg said that the rhetoric used by Israeli officials underlies the consensus among genocide historians that the situation in Gaza constitutes genocide.<sup>[120]</sup> Navi Pillay, the chair of the UN commission of inquiry, compared the statements of Israeli politicians to the genocidal incitement during the Rwandan genocide.<sup>[138]</sup>

In September 2025, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, president Isaac Herzog, and former defence minister Yoav Gallant were found by a United Nations commission of inquiry to have engaged in "direct and public incitement to commit genocide".<sup>[139]</sup> Israeli leaders' repeated references to Amalek — the biblical enemy of Israelites whose annihilation is commanded by God — have been considered evidence of genocidal intent by many critics,<sup>[140][141]</sup> including South Africa.<sup>[142][143]</sup>



Palestinians under the rubble after Israeli bombing of the Gaza Strip

"I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly."<sup>[e]</sup>

– Yoav Gallant, Minister of Defense of Israel, on 9 October 2023<sup>[130][131][132]</sup>

# Onset

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B'Tselem, the South African case against Israel, and some scholars who argue Israel is committing genocide argument give 7 October as its start date.<sup>[144][145][146]</sup> According to B'Tselem, "The genocidal assault on the residents of Gaza, and on all Palestinians as a group, cannot be understood without acknowledging the impact of the 7 October attack on Israeli society. The shock, fear and humiliation elicited by the attack, and the societal upheaval it triggered, served as a driving force for a shift in government policy toward the Palestinians—from oppression and control to destruction and annihilation."<sup>[78]</sup> Martin Shaw and A. Dirk Moses argue that this "front-loaded violence" makes it harder to argue that the genocide began after the initial Israeli attack on Gaza.<sup>[147][148]</sup>

On 13 October 2023, the historian Raz Segal said Israel was committing a "textbook case of genocide". He was one of the first scholars to do so.<sup>[149]</sup> Others argue that the war was initially legitimate and the genocide started later, in 2024 or 2025.<sup>[147][148]</sup> In September 2024, a UN Special Committee concluded, "the policies and practices of Israel during the reporting period [i.e. October 2023 to July 2024] are consistent with the characteristics of genocide."<sup>[150]</sup>

## Genocidal acts

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### Direct killings

UN experts and human rights organisations have characterised Israel's actions in Gaza as extermination,<sup>[151]</sup> a crime against humanity that involves "the act of killing on a large scale". During the first two months of bombing, Israel dropped 25,000 tonnes of explosives on the Gaza Strip. Many of these were unguided bombs dropped in densely populated areas, obliterating entire neighbourhoods.<sup>[152]</sup> Since 7 October 2023, the IDF has been accused of extrajudicial killing of unarmed Palestinians<sup>[153][154]</sup> and healthcare personnel.<sup>[155]</sup> Israeli soldiers have killed Palestinian civilians, with a December 2023 UN report stating that they allegedly shot them in front of their families.<sup>[156]</sup> In January 2024, Israeli soldiers shot at civilians waving white flags, killing one.<sup>[156][157]</sup> Doctors have identified numerous Palestinian children with single gunshot wounds to the head and chest, consistent with intentional targeting by Israeli forces.<sup>[158]</sup>

In April 2024, mass graves were found containing over 300 corpses,<sup>[159][160]</sup> allegedly including older people, women and wounded,<sup>[160]</sup> and others with their hands tied.<sup>[160]</sup> The IDF said accusations that it caused the killings were "baseless and unfounded",<sup>[161]</sup> and that during its operation "in the area of Nasser Hospital, in accordance to the effort to locate hostages and missing persons, corpses buried by Palestinians in the area of Nasser Hospital were examined."<sup>[162]</sup> It added, "Bodies examined, which did not belong to Israeli hostages, were returned to their place."<sup>[162][163]</sup>

At least 14,000 Palestinians had been killed in Gaza by December 2023.<sup>[164]</sup> In late 2024, a study limited only to those fatalities confirmed by at least three independent sources, and only from November 2023 to April 2024 (about 8,100 people), corroborated previous reports by the UN and news outlets that 70% of fatalities were women and children.<sup>[165][f]</sup> As of 31 August 2024, data from the Ministry of Health (only for those of the dead who were fully identified, about 34,000 people at the time) showed that 60% of



Clockwise from top:

A newborn baby killed as a result of an Israeli airstrike · Palestinians injured by an Israeli airstrike in Deir el-Balah, Gaza Strip · Video interviews conducted with several survivors of October 2023 Israeli airstrikes · An injured child receives treatment at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital after Israeli airstrike in the Nuseirat refugee camp, Gaza Strip

those killed were women, children, and the elderly.<sup>[167]</sup> Eleven months later (31 July 2025) the number of those of the dead who were fully identified reached 60,199, 52.6% of whom were women, children, and the elderly.<sup>[168][169][g]</sup>

By 14 January 2024, over 23,900 Gazans had been confirmed killed.<sup>[170]</sup> By 10 May, deaths had topped 35,000, a third of them unidentified, with over 10,000 more estimated to be buried under the rubble.<sup>[171]</sup> Within the first three weeks, the Israeli assault killed more children in Gaza than were killed worldwide across all conflict zones in any year since 2019.<sup>[172][173]</sup> Over 52,000 people had been wounded by December 2023,<sup>[174][175]</sup> and by May 2024 this number had risen to over 77,700.<sup>[176][177]</sup>

As of 10 October 2025, the Gaza Health Ministry reports that at least 67,194 Gazans were killed, which is between 3% and 4% of Gaza's total population.<sup>[178]</sup>

*+972 Magazine* and *Local Call* reported that the IDF decided early in the war to authorise killing up to 15 to 20 civilians per low-ranking militant, while for a senior militant killing more than 100 civilians was authorised. An intelligence officer said that Israel was not interested in killing Palestinian operatives in a military context only, but preferred to bomb them in their family homes, saying "It's much easier to bomb

a family's home" where they are easier to target.<sup>[179]</sup> Another intelligence officer said that in targeting junior militants, Israel used only dumb bombs, which can destroy entire buildings, to not "waste expensive bombs on unimportant people".<sup>[180]</sup>

In March 2024, *Haaretz* reported that some Israeli commanders had set up "kill zones" in which soldiers were commanded to kill anyone on sight, even if they were unarmed.<sup>[181][182]</sup> According to an Israeli officer, "in practice, a terrorist is anyone the IDF has killed in the areas in which its forces operate."<sup>[181][h]</sup>

In June, the Associated Press found that Israel's campaign in Gaza was killing entire bloodlines of Palestinians to a "degree never seen before".<sup>[184]</sup> According to testimony given to the Israeli Knesset, Israeli soldiers driving armoured bulldozers had been ordered to "run over terrorists, dead and alive, in the hundreds".<sup>[185]</sup>

The proportion of women and children among the dead is disputed,<sup>[186][187]</sup> but the names, gender, and age of 60,000+ of the victims are known and published.<sup>[188]</sup> On 7 May 2024, total deaths quoted by the UN were 34,735, of which 24,686 are fully identified: 52% women and children, 8% elderly of all genders, and 40% men.<sup>[186]</sup> In November 2024, the UN published an analysis covering 8,119 fatalities that were verified by at least three independent sources, between November 2023 and April 2024, with 70% of them women and children.<sup>[189]</sup> As of 31 August 2024, per the Gaza Ministry of Health, the number of fatalities had risen to 40,691, 34,344 identified by name: 17,652 (51%) women and children, 2,955 (9%) elderly of all genders (defined as those aged 60 or older), and 13,737 (40%) men.<sup>[190][167][191]</sup> A year later (31 July 2025), per the Gaza Ministry of Health, the number of fatalities identified by name reached 60,199: 28,728 (48%) were women and children, 2,928 (5%) were elderly of all genders (defined as those aged 65 or older), and 28,543 (47%) were men. A minimum of 18,457 children had been killed since October 2023.<sup>[188]</sup> In November 2024, the Gaza Health Ministry reported that 1,410 Gazan families had been completely erased from the civil registry as a result of Israeli bombings.<sup>[192]</sup> Data collection has become increasingly difficult for the Gaza Health Ministry due to the destruction of infrastructure.<sup>[171]</sup> The ministry has had to supplement its usual reporting based on hospital dead with other sources of information,<sup>[171]</sup> including reports by the media and first responders as well as families and widows, who must formally register their husbands' deaths to qualify for government assistance.<sup>[193]</sup> Professor Mike Spagat found an urgent need for a transparent methodology to reconcile its top-line death numbers—34,535 as of 30 April 2024—with its detailed breakdowns, including only those of the dead who were fully identified, summing to 24,653 on the same date.<sup>[31]</sup> By August 2025, this gap between the number of victims and the number of fully identified victims became smaller (about 62,000 vs. about 60,000), as more victims were identified.<sup>[194]</sup> The ministry's figures for the total number killed have been contested by Israeli authorities but accepted as accurate by Israeli intelligence services, the UN, and the World Health Organization.<sup>[171]</sup> More recently, *The Guardian* has reported that a classified IDF database registered 8,900 killed militants. This and GHM's data imply a civilian death rate of 83%, which exceeds that of any conflict since 1989 except the Rwandan genocide, the Siege of Mariupol, and the Siege of Srebrenica.<sup>[195]</sup> The IDF denied this, saying the figures were inaccurate and inconsistent with its data.<sup>[196]</sup>

A 2025 paper on the Gaza war estimated 64,260 deaths from traumatic injury between October 2023 and 30 June 2024, and likely exceeding 70,000 by October 2024, with 59.1% being women, children and the elderly. It concluded that the GHM undercounted trauma-related deaths by 41% in its report, and also noted that its findings "underestimate the full impact of the military operation in Gaza, as they do not

account for non-trauma-related deaths resulting from health service disruption, food insecurity, and inadequate water and sanitation.<sup>[197]</sup> A comparable estimate for traumatic injury deaths was around 80,000 for January 2025.<sup>[198]</sup> A February study in *The Lancet* estimated that life expectancy in the Gaza Strip between October 2023 and September 2024 decreased by 34.9 years, excluding indirect deaths. The study also used census and registration data to assess the reliability of the Gaza Health Ministry's death count, and found no substantial errors.<sup>[199]</sup>

In May 2025, finance minister Bezalel Smotrich claimed that Israel was targeting Hamas's civilian workers, saying, "We're eliminating ministers, bureaucrats, money handlers—everyone who holds up Hamas's civilian rule."<sup>[200]</sup> Killing civilian members of Hamas is in itself illegal.<sup>[201]</sup>

Starting in June 2025, IDF soldiers said they were ordered to shoot at crowds of Palestinians near Gaza Humanitarian Foundation aid sites,<sup>[202]</sup> killing over 1,000 people.<sup>[203]</sup> Amnesty International alleged Israel was trying to restrict aid to starve and inflict genocide upon the Palestinians.<sup>[204]</sup>

In November 2025, a study by the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research estimated that the total number of violent deaths in Gaza was between 100,000 and 126,000, of which 27% were children under 15 years old, and 24% women.<sup>[205][206][207]</sup>

## Indirect deaths

Rasha Khatib, Martin McKee, and Salim Yusuf published an estimate of the number of deaths, directly or indirectly caused by the conflict, that as of July 2024 had already occurred or would occur in the coming months and years. Indirect Palestinian deaths from disease are expected to be much higher due to the intensity of the conflict, destruction of healthcare infrastructure, lack of food, water, shelter, and safe places for civilians to flee, and reduction in UNRWA funding. They estimated that the total conflict-related deaths in Gaza will likely be four to 16 times higher than the reported death toll. By multiplying the reported deaths by five, they argued that "186,000 or even more deaths could be attributable to the current conflict in Gaza".<sup>[171]</sup> Spagat wrote that their estimate "lacks a solid foundation and is implausible",<sup>[208][209]</sup> but it was "fair to call attention to the fact that not all of the deaths are going to be direct violent ones", and has called the death toll in Gaza "staggeringly high".<sup>[186][209]</sup> Donald Bloxham also notes that most deaths have been "indirect deaths" in various wars and that the "systematic obstruction of supplies into Gaza" is an Israeli policy, which makes calling these deaths "indirect" incorrect.<sup>[210]</sup>



Mother cries for her 4-year-old daughter, who died due to malnutrition and lack of treatment

An October 2024 letter by US healthcare workers who had served in Gaza since 7 October 2023 tried to estimate the number of Gazans who had died of starvation based on publicly available IPC reports.<sup>[211]</sup> It said the most conservative estimate was that at least 62,413 people in Gaza had died from starvation, most of them young children; this estimate was based on the assumption that catastrophic (level 5) food insecurity results in a death rate of at least 2 deaths per 10,000 people per day.<sup>[i]</sup> The physicians also

estimated that at least 5,000 people had died from lack of access to care for chronic diseases.<sup>[212][213][214]</sup> The indirect death estimates in two studies reviewed by *The Economist* implied that the life expectancy in Gaza has fallen by 35 years, rivalling the Rwandan genocide in absolute terms.<sup>[215][216]</sup>

## Starvation and blockade



Clockwise from top:

A four-year-old Palestinian girl who died due to malnutrition and lack of treatment · Displaced Palestinians gather to receive food from a charity in Deir el-Balah, Gaza Strip · Displaced Palestinians receive food from charitable Tekiya during Ramadan in Deir el-Balah, Gaza Strip

In February 2024, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International both released statements declaring Israel had failed to comply with the ICJ's 26 January ruling to prevent genocide by blocking aid from entering Gaza.<sup>[53][52][217]</sup> A Refugees International report found that Israel had "consistently and groundlessly impeded aid operations within Gaza".<sup>[218]</sup> The historian Melanie Tanielian argues that starvation and blockade should be foregrounded as methods of genocide alongside mass bombing.<sup>[219]</sup> In an April report, B'Tselem called the unfolding famine "the product of a deliberate and conscious Israeli policy".<sup>[220][221]</sup>

In October 2023, the World Food Program warned of Gaza's dwindling food supply,<sup>[222]</sup> and in December, alongside the UN, it reported that more than half of Gaza's population was "starving", fewer than one in ten were eating every day, and 48% were suffering "extreme hunger".<sup>[223][224][225]</sup> Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki referred to "Israel's deliberate use of starvation as a weapon of war against the people it occupied"; an Israeli official called the charge "blood-libellous" and "delusional".<sup>[226]</sup> In December 2023, Human Rights Watch found that Israel was using starvation as a weapon of war by deliberately denying access to food and water.<sup>[227]</sup> In January 2024, UN experts accused Israel of "destroying Gaza's food system and using food as a weapon against the Palestinian people".<sup>[228]</sup> In February 2024, finance minister Bezalel Smotrich personally blocked US-funded shipments of flour from entering Gaza, in violation of promises Israel had made to the US government.<sup>[229]</sup>

In early 2024, the United Nations special rapporteur on the right to food Michael Fakhri said that Israel is "culpable" of genocide because "Israel has announced its intention to destroy the Palestinian people, in whole or in part, simply for being Palestinian" and because Israel was denying food to Palestinians by halting humanitarian aid and "intentionally" destroying

small-scale fishing vessels, greenhouses and orchards in Gaza ... We have never seen a civilian population made to go so hungry so quickly and so completely, that is the consensus among starvation experts. Israel is not just targeting civilians, it is trying to damn the future of the Palestinian people by harming their children.<sup>[230]</sup>

After the ICJ ruling, the number of aid trucks Israel allowed into Gaza dropped by 40%.<sup>[231]</sup> In the ICJ's March reaffirmation of provisional measures, the court highlighted the "unprecedented levels of food insecurity experienced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip over recent weeks, as well as the increasing risks of epidemics",<sup>[232]</sup> acknowledging that since the Court's January order there had been a "lack of Israeli compliance" resulting in "the catastrophic living conditions" deteriorating further.<sup>[233]</sup>

In March 2024, 12 Israeli human rights organisations signed an open letter accusing Israel of failing to abide by the ICJ ruling to prevent genocide by facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid.<sup>[234][235]</sup> In April the UN special rapporteur on the right to health Tlaleng Mofokeng said Israel was "killing and causing irreparable harm against Palestinian civilians with its bombardments", adding, "They are also knowingly and intentionally imposing famine" and accusing Israel of "genocide".<sup>[236]</sup>

In October 2024, Israel had reportedly adopted a modified version of the Generals' Plan.<sup>[237][238][j]</sup> The proposed plan included orders for all residents of northern Gaza to leave within a week; a full siege on water, food, and fuel; and then the arrest or killing of all who remained.<sup>[240][241]</sup> By mid-October 2024, Israel had ordered the evacuation of northern Gaza and prevented the entry of humanitarian aid for almost two weeks.<sup>[242][243]</sup> According to Stephen Devereux, avoidable deaths due to starvation as a result of Israeli policies "almost certainly constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity".<sup>[244]</sup>

On 21 November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the former defence minister Yoav Gallant, asserting that the two "bear criminal responsibility for the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare".<sup>[245][246][247]</sup>

Israel lifted restrictions on aid into Gaza in January–February 2025 during the first stage of the January ceasefire. But on 2 March, Israel announced that all humanitarian aid would be blocked indefinitely unless Hamas agreed to alter the terms of the ceasefire deal, which Hamas refused to do.<sup>[248][249]</sup> Within four days, food supplies in Gaza had rapidly depleted while the price of food had more than doubled. Aid agencies such as Oxfam and UNICEF warned of mass starvation if the aid freeze continued. Oxfam policy lead Bushra Khalidi predicted "the total collapse of systems that sustain life".<sup>[250]</sup> Lawyer Salah Abdel-Ati said Israel's actions were illegal under the Geneva Conventions, which prohibits the destruction or withholding of essentials such as food in combat zones.<sup>[251]</sup>

In May 2025, after blocking the import of all food, medicine, and fuel for two and a half months,<sup>[252]</sup> Netanyahu announced that Israel would allow "minimal humanitarian aid" into Gaza due to international pressure.<sup>[200]</sup> Israel has proposed using private companies to distribute aid to the south of Gaza only. The plan is backed by the US, which has created the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) to deliver aid without "Hamas stealing, looting or leveraging this assistance for its own ends". The United Nations aid

chief Tom Fletcher criticised the plan, saying it "forces further displacement" and "makes aid conditional on political and military aims".<sup>[253]</sup> Numerous Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces while approaching GHF aid distribution points.<sup>[254]</sup>

In August 2025, it was reported that Israel planned to surge aid to other parts of Gaza while cutting off all aid to Gaza City to force residents to evacuate while Israel takes over the city.<sup>[255]</sup> As of August 2025, projections show the entire population is experiencing "high levels of acute food insecurity", with about 641,000 people experiencing catastrophic levels.<sup>[39]</sup> The IPC confirmed famine is taking place in the Gaza Governorate.<sup>[39][256]</sup>

Two weeks after the October 2025 ceasefire came into effect, dozens of NGOs, including the Norwegian Refugee Council and Doctors Without Borders, announced that Israel was arbitrarily blocking their shipments of aid to Gaza. World Health Organisation head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "the situation still remains catastrophic because what's entering is not enough" and "there is no dent in hunger because there is not enough food".<sup>[257][258]</sup>

## Deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure



Clockwise from top:

An aerial view showing destruction in Rafah after Israeli forces withdrawal and as the ceasefire took hold, Gaza Strip · Damage following an Israeli airstrike on the El-Remal area in Gaza City on 9 October 2023. · Smoke and flames billow after Israeli forces struck a high-rise tower in Gaza City

Mark Levene and Elyse Semerdjian locate the mass destruction of infrastructure within Israel's Dahiya doctrine, implemented against Gaza since 2006, with Levene calling it urbicide and a tool of genocide.<sup>[259][260]</sup> In October 2024, Forensic Architecture concluded, "Israel's military campaign in Gaza is organised, systematic, and intended to destroy conditions of life and life-sustaining infrastructure".<sup>[261]</sup>

In July 2025, The Guardian reported that "about 70% of the structures in Gaza are either completely destroyed or severely damaged". Israel was reportedly paying contractors up to 5,000 shekels per building demolished.<sup>[262]</sup> In February 2025 it was reported that at least 15 children had died of

hypothermia over the winter due to Israel's destruction of housing and power facilities.<sup>[263]</sup> In May 2025, Netanyahu said, "we are destroying more and more homes, and Gazans have nowhere to return to. The only inevitable outcome will be the wish of Gazans to emigrate outside of the Gaza Strip."<sup>[264]</sup>

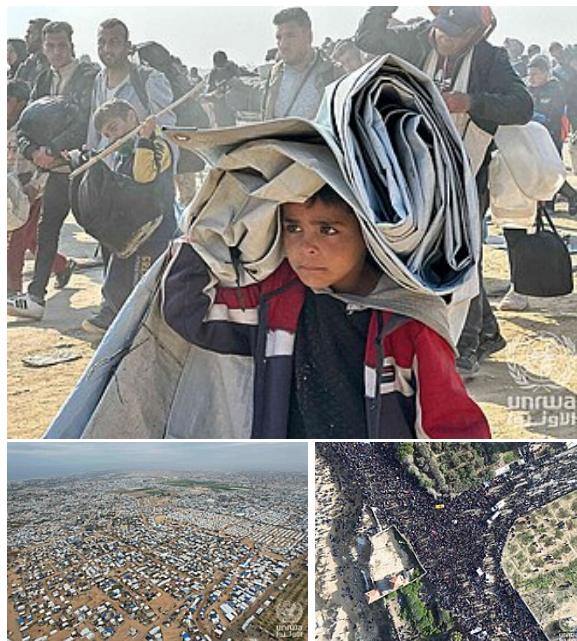
In a December 2024 report, Human Rights Watch accused Israel of committing acts of genocide in Gaza by targeting water and sanitation infrastructure and depriving Palestinians of adequate access to water. The report alleges that Israel intentionally damaged solar panels powering treatment plants, a reservoir, and warehouses, while blocking repair materials and fuel for generators, cutting electricity supplies, and attacking workers.<sup>[265][266]</sup> According to B'Tselem, Israel has destroyed 84% of Gaza's water facilities,<sup>[267]</sup> while in a report authored and published by the World Bank, European Union, and United Nations it was reported that 89% of Gaza's water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities had been destroyed or damaged.<sup>[268]</sup> UN Special Rapporteur Pedro Arrojo-Agudo called these attacks "an important part of a genocidal strategy."<sup>[269]</sup>

Rafah, a city in the southern Gaza Strip, has been razed;<sup>[270]</sup> this has been mostly carried out by bulldozing and controlled demolitions of buildings, rather than by aerial bombardment.<sup>[271]</sup> In July 2025, the BBC reported that Israel had engaged in controlled demolitions of civilian infrastructure, potentially in violation of the Geneva Convention.<sup>[272]</sup> The BBC reported an IDF spokesperson saying, "Hamas and other terrorist organizations conceal military assets in densely populated civilian areas. The IDF identifies and destroys terrorist infrastructure located, among other places, within buildings in these areas."<sup>[272]</sup> In November 2025, the BBC reported that Israel had demolished over 1,500 more buildings in Gaza since the ceasefire with Hamas.<sup>[273]</sup> A spokesperson for the IDF said it was acting "in accordance with the ceasefire framework" as the demolitions occurred behind the Yellow Line, in the portion of Gaza under Israeli military control, which comprises 53% of Gaza.<sup>[273]</sup>

## Forced displacement

On 6 October 2024, Israel designated northern Gaza as a combat zone and ordered the civilian population to evacuate.<sup>[274][275]</sup> Both Israeli military analysts and the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights alleged that this was the first stage of the "Generals' Plan", a policy proposed by the former Israeli general Giora Eiland to force Palestinians out of Gaza.<sup>[276]</sup>

Human Rights Watch reports that Israel's systematic forced displacement of Palestinians in Gaza amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Since October 2023, Israel's evacuation orders have displaced 1.9 million people—nearly Gaza's entire population—through unclear, inconsistent directives, often issued amid bombings, leaving civilians with no safe routes or destinations. Humanitarian zones were repeatedly attacked, while Israel blocked aid, leading to starvation, destroyed infrastructure, and uninhabitable conditions. Senior Israeli officials openly declared intentions to reduce Gaza's territory and push Palestinians out, reinforcing policies of ethnic cleansing and permanent displacement.<sup>[277][278][36]</sup> The UN Human Rights Office said that Israel may be causing the "destruction of the Palestinian population in Gaza's northernmost governorate through death and displacement."<sup>[279]</sup> South Africa and others have criticised the Gaza Strip evacuations as a key component of the genocide.<sup>[280]</sup> B'Tselem mentions statements by Israeli high-ranking officials that a "central objective of the war" was ethnic cleansing.<sup>[264]</sup>



Clockwise from top:

Return of displaced people via Al-Rasheed Street after ceasefire, January 2025, Gaza Strip · An aerial photo of displaced Palestinians waiting in northern Nuseirat to return to their homes in Gaza · An aerial view of Al-Mawasi area where displaced Palestinians live in tents, Gaza Strip

## Attacks on healthcare and preventing births



Top to bottom:

Destruction of UNRWA el-Sheikh Radwan health centre, February 2024 · Palestinian Red Crescent Personnel inspect a destroyed ambulance in Deir el-Balah, Gaza Strip

In November 2023 in *The Lancet* and in February 2024 in *BMJ Global Health*, multiple doctors detailed how the targeting of Gazan health infrastructure and medical personnel, coupled with rhetoric used by Israeli politicians, amounts to genocide.<sup>[281]</sup> Legal scholars have supported this assessment.<sup>[282][182]</sup> Gaza's healthcare system faced humanitarian crises as a result of Israel's assault: hospitals began shutting down by 23 October as they ran out of fuel.<sup>[283]</sup> When hospitals lost power, multiple premature babies in NICUs died.<sup>[284][285][286]</sup> Israeli airstrikes have killed numerous medical staffers, and ambulances and health institutions have been destroyed.<sup>[287]</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières reported that scores of ambulances and medical facilities were damaged or destroyed,<sup>[288][289]</sup> and that its own staff were killed.<sup>[290][291]</sup> The Gaza Health Ministry said the healthcare system had "totally collapsed".<sup>[292]</sup> In April 2024, UN special rapporteur on the right to health Tlaleng Mofokeng said, "The destruction of healthcare facilities continues to catapult to proportions yet to be fully quantified."<sup>[236]</sup>

As of February 2025, at least 160 healthcare workers from Gaza are believed to be detained by Israel, with another 24 missing after being taken from Gaza hospitals. Al-Shifa hospital director Mohammed Abu Salmiya, detained for seven months and released without charges, detailed the abuses he faced and said that in Israeli prisons "no day passes without torture".<sup>[293]</sup>

In March 2025, a UN investigation concluded that Israel had committed genocidal acts in Gaza by systematically destroying its reproductive healthcare facilities while imposing a siege preventing necessary medications for deliveries, pregnancies, and neonatal care, causing "irreversible" harm to Palestinians' reproductive prospects in Gaza. The commission also found that Israeli forces intentionally destroyed Gaza's main in-vitro fertility clinic, Al-Basma IVF Centre, which served 2,000 to 3,000 patients a month. Israel destroyed about 4,000 embryos and 1,000 specimens of sperm and unfertilised eggs in the attack.<sup>[294][295]</sup> No evidence that the building was used for military purposes was found. The commission concluded that the destruction of the clinic "was a measure intended to prevent births among Palestinians in Gaza, which is a genocidal act".<sup>[296][297][298]</sup> UN experts reported that they had found that Israel had systematically destroyed women's health care facilities and used sexual violence as a war strategy, thereby carrying out genocidal acts against Palestinians.<sup>[297][298]</sup>

## Destruction of cultural, religious and educational sites

Amnesty International notes that "while the destruction of historical, cultural and religious property or heritage is not considered a prohibited act under the Genocide Convention, the ICJ has established that such destruction can provide evidence of intent to physically destroy the group when carried out deliberately."<sup>[299]</sup> The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention has said that Israel's deliberate destruction of cemeteries in Gaza indicates genocidal intent because it enacts the "erasure of a people's...historical presence".<sup>[124]</sup>

Since 7 October 2023, the IDF has been accused of using excessive force against dozens of schools;<sup>[300][301]</sup> theft;<sup>[302]</sup> desecration and mutilation of deceased Palestinians;<sup>[155]</sup> and making no, or an inadequate, distinction between Hamas forces and civilians.<sup>[303]</sup> The targeting of cultural and educational sites have also been cited as genocidal acts, as has the use of white phosphorus.<sup>[1k][305]</sup>

On 18 April 2024, UN experts in Geneva condemned Israel for its "scholasticide" in Gaza, finding that it had destroyed more than 80% of schools and killed 5,000 students, 261 teachers, and dozens of professors.<sup>[43]</sup>



Clockwise from top:

A mosque in Gaza destroyed in an Israeli airstrike, 20 February 2025. · The wreckage of the [Rashad Shawa Cultural Center](#) · A mosque in Khan Younis, 8 October 2023

Amnesty International identified at least four instances in which there was "no imperative military necessity" for the deliberate destruction of Gazan cultural and religious sites:<sup>[306]</sup> the destruction of the Al-Mughraqa campus of [Al-Azhar University](#), the Al-Zahra campus of [Israa University](#), the Al-Dhilal mosque and Bani Suheila cemetery in Khan Younis, and the Al-Istiqlal mosque in Khan Younis.<sup>[307]</sup> Amnesty International pointed to the attitudes and behaviour of Israeli soldiers involved in the demolitions of these sites in videos posted on social media as evidence that these actions demonstrated genocidal intent. Amnesty International also noted the overall volume of destruction of Gazan cultural, historical and religious sites, including Gaza's central archives.<sup>[308]</sup>

As of January 2025, Israel had destroyed 815 mosques and 19 cemeteries during the Gaza war.<sup>[309]</sup>

In June 2025, UN experts published a report saying Israel had committed the crime against humanity of extermination for "killing civilians sheltering in schools and religious sites". According to the report, Israel has destroyed over 90% of educational buildings in Gaza.<sup>[310]</sup>

## Serious bodily and mental harm, and sexual violence

The number of injured since 7 October 2023 due to Israeli military actions is greater than 170,000,<sup>[5][15]</sup> and Gaza has the most child amputees per capita worldwide.<sup>[37]</sup> In the same period over 1,000 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank.<sup>[311]</sup> Israel has been accused of indiscriminate mass detentions<sup>[312][313]</sup> and has been documented making threats of mutilation,<sup>[314]</sup> death, arson, and rape,<sup>[315]</sup> and torturing Palestinians detained without charges.<sup>[316]</sup> By March 2024, an estimated 17,000 children were "wounded children, no surviving family" (WCNSF), a new medical term.<sup>[317][158]</sup>

In August 2024, the UN OHCHR reported receiving testimony from Palestinians imprisoned at Sde Teiman detention camp about rape and sexual assault perpetrated on detainees.<sup>[3]</sup> The Lemkin Institute considers this and similar reports to be indicative of "Sexualized Violence During Genocide", or sexual violence being used to destroy a group.<sup>[318]</sup>



**Top to bottom:**

Yamen was injured in his leg during his sixth displacement in Jabalia refugee camp, and he was forced to flee while wounded. • A Palestinian refugee carries his injured grandchildren from the Israeli bombing of Nuseirat Camp, Gaza Strip

As of 25 August 2024, the UN estimates that most of Gaza's 2.2 million people are confined to roughly 15 square miles ( $39 \text{ km}^2$ ), causing a critical lack of basic services, like clean water, and diseases spreading widely, such as Hepatitis C.<sup>[319]</sup>

Amnesty International reported that the pattern of abuses inside Israeli prisons "underscores the systematic dehumanization and mental and physical abuse of Palestinians in Gaza and may also be taken into account with a view to inferring genocidal intent from pattern of conduct."<sup>[320]</sup> According to the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, gender-based and sexual violence were committed "to dominate, oppress and destroy the Palestinian people in whole or in part."<sup>[321]</sup> According to a UN committee, the Gaza war has resulted in disabilities for more than 21,000 children as of September 2025.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Ecocide

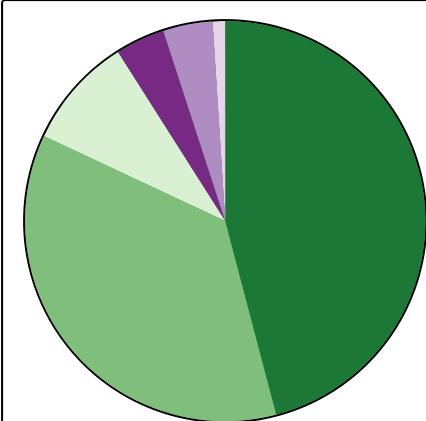
Israel's bombing in Gaza caused severe environmental devastation, destroying vegetation, water, sanitation, and waste infrastructure and contaminating air, soil, and water. The UN and environmental groups report damage consistent with "ecocide", citing massive debris, untreated sewage, and toxic pollution. These conditions have triggered disease outbreaks, respiratory illnesses, and long-term health risks.<sup>[322][4][323]</sup> Multiple commentators have argued that deliberate ecocide is a central component of Israel's genocide in Gaza.<sup>[324][325][326]</sup> Scholars have argued that the destruction of the environment sustaining a population including its water, land, and food systems constitutes a genocidal act, as it inflicts conditions of life calculated to destroy the group, in whole or in part.<sup>[1][328][329]</sup>

## Academic and legal discourse

There is a growing consensus among genocide and Holocaust scholars, international legal experts, human rights organisations, and governments that Israel's actions in Gaza constitute genocide. Israel and its supporters deny the accusation.<sup>[331][332][330]</sup>



## Relationship to the Nakba, the broader Palestinian genocide accusation, and Israeli ideology



Answers to the question "How would you define Israel's military campaign in Gaza?" among Middle East scholars in a January–February 2025 survey<sup>[330]</sup>

- Genocide (46.0%)
- Major war crimes akin to genocide (36.0%)
- Major war crimes but not akin to genocide (9.00%)
- Unjustified actions but not major war crimes (4.00%)
- Justified actions under the right to self-defence (4.00%)
- I don't know (2.00%)

Some scholars say the Gaza genocide is merely the latest stage of a "slow-motion genocide" of Palestinians that began with the Nakba and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians upon Israel's founding in 1948.<sup>[333][334][335]</sup>

According to B'Tselem and others, the Gaza genocide is occurring in the context of over 75 years of Zionist settler colonial violence and Jewish supremacy targeting Palestinians.<sup>[78][336]</sup> Multiple genocide scholars argue that settler colonialism is an important motive for Israel's actions.<sup>[337]</sup> Raz Segal and B'Tselem also highlight the increasing influence of Jewish supremacy in Israeli politics,<sup>[338][78]</sup> while reports by Francesca Albanese and Amos Goldberg highlight the project of Greater Israel.<sup>[339][340][341]</sup>

## Genocide and Holocaust studies

In May 2025, [NRC](#) wrote that leading scholars in [genocide studies](#) are "surprisingly unanimous" that Israel is committing genocide.<sup>[342]</sup> Some scholars of [Holocaust studies](#), such as [Norman J. W. Goda](#) and [Jeffrey Herf](#), have said that Israel is not committing genocide.<sup>[343]</sup> Others, such as Israeli professors [Raz Segal](#) and [Shira Klein](#), have argued that Israel's actions should be analysed as a case of genocide,<sup>[342][344][345]</sup> citing, among other things, attacks on infrastructure, food, and water as genocidal.<sup>[346]</sup> [Omer Bartov](#), professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at [Brown University](#) and an [Israel Defense Forces](#) veteran, has said: "intent has been publicly expressed by numerous officials and leaders. But intent can also be derived from a pattern of operations on the ground, and this pattern became clear by May 2024".<sup>[347]</sup> [Amos Goldberg](#) and [Daniel Blatman](#), historians of the Holocaust and genocide studies at the [Hebrew University of Jerusalem](#), noted that "most acts of genocide are perceived by their perpetrators as acts of self-defense against their victims" and the Gaza war "falls into this category."<sup>[348]</sup>

On 31 August 2025, the [International Association of Genocide Scholars](#) (IAGS), the world's biggest academic association of genocide scholars, passed a resolution saying that Israel has committed genocide in Gaza.<sup>[18][19][349]</sup>

## Legal and human rights experts

In December 2023, former International Criminal Court chief prosecutor [Luis Moreno Ocampo](#) told [Al Jazeera](#) that the siege of Gaza was a form of genocide due to Israel's imposing conditions that would lead to the deaths of Palestinians.<sup>[350]</sup> In December, in correspondence published in *The Lancet*, multiple specialists in international medicine and humanitarian aid reiterated warnings of the risk of genocide, while detailing how Israel's blocking of humanitarian support and aid were leading to unnecessary deaths, and how the death rate would continue to worsen. They called on signatories to the Genocide Convention to enforce a ceasefire on Israel.<sup>[351]</sup> Nimer Sultany argues that, by mid-2024, a growing consensus among legal scholars suggested that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza.<sup>[352]</sup> Multiple public declarations from journals and academic organisations have warned of a potential genocide and declared opposition to an ongoing genocide.<sup>[137][353][354]</sup>

In January 2024, a number of prominent Israelis, represented by the human-rights lawyer [Michael Sfard](#), sent Israel's attorney general and state prosecutor an open letter detailing examples of "the discourse of annihilation, expulsion and revenge".<sup>[355]</sup> The signatories said the Israeli judiciary was ignoring incitement to genocide in Gaza.<sup>[355]</sup> In January 2024, the American political scientist and international relations scholar [John Mearsheimer](#) wrote that, while he had believed during the first two months of the war that Israel was "guilty of serious war crimes", once the [2023 Gaza war ceasefire](#) ended, it "became clear" to him "that Israeli leaders were in fact seeking to physically destroy a substantial portion of Gaza's Palestinian population".<sup>[356]</sup> [William Schabas](#), an expert in [international criminal law](#),<sup>[357]</sup> said that South Africa's case was the strongest of all recent genocide cases at the [International Court of Justice](#), citing the destruction of Gazan infrastructure and statements by Israeli politicians that Gazans are "human animals" and that Israel would deny them electricity, water, and medical care.<sup>[358][359][360]</sup>

On 26 January 2024, the ICJ issued a preliminary ruling finding that the rights asserted in [South Africa's filing](#) were "plausible", and an order requiring that Israel take all measures in its power to prevent acts of genocide, prevent and punish incitement to genocide, and allow basic humanitarian services into Gaza.<sup>[47][361]</sup> Judge ad hoc [Aharon Barak](#) dissented from the majority's view that genocide-related rights were "plausible", writing that South Africa had not demonstrated genocidal intent on Israel's part.<sup>[362]</sup>

On 15 May 2024, a report by the University Network for Human Rights, Boston University School of Law, Cornell Law School, University of Pretoria, and the Yale Law School found that "Israel has committed genocidal acts".<sup>[332][363]</sup> In a May 2024 interview, Human Rights Watch co-founder Aryeh Neier detailed how Israel's blocking of aid and the subsequent starvation of Gaza's population is indicative of genocide.<sup>[364]</sup>

On 1 June 2024, professor of international law Daniel-Erasmus Khan said there was no clear evidence of a special intent among Israeli leadership.<sup>[365]</sup> A June 2024 report by the University Network for Human Rights and Boston University School of Law found that "Israel has committed genocidal acts".<sup>[332]</sup> In an August 2024 op-ed, Eli Rosenbaum, a lawyer and former director of the United States Department of Justice's Office of Special Investigations, wrote that Israel's actions in Gaza were not genocidal since it was aiming to "prevent genocide" by Hamas.<sup>[366]</sup>

In October 2024, Professor Conor Gearty called Israel genocidal, pointing to the continued attacks on schools and hospitals and the lack of internal investigations by Israeli authorities into potential crimes.<sup>[367]</sup> Some scholars, particularly those associated with Third World approaches to international law, have argued that the international community's failure to treat Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide and respond accordingly has harmed the principles of the international order and international law itself, and exposed the deficiencies of international governance.<sup>[368][369][370]</sup> José Manuel Barreto argues that "the Palestinian genocide has unveiled the deep colonial structure of the international legal order" and identifies events in Gaza with the history of genocides in the colonised world, which he says the Westphalian system has historically failed to prevent.<sup>[369]</sup>

In December 2024, Amnesty International published a report accusing Israel of committing genocide.<sup>[371][372][373]</sup> After the Amnesty report, Human Rights Watch also said Israel had committed "genocidal acts" and that Israeli officials statements may indicate genocidal intent.<sup>[374]</sup>

In April 2025, the barrister Michael Mansfield said there was "no question" that genocide was occurring.<sup>[375]</sup> In May 2025, Luigi Daniele, a lecturer at Nottingham Law School, noted a link between the IDF's justification for its conduct in Gaza and the Rapid Support Forces rationale in the Sudanese civil war, saying it "reveals the emergence of a template to commit mass extermination and even genocide".<sup>[376]</sup> In May 2024 the scholar Nimer Sultany supported Forensic Architecture's assessment that Israel had weaponised international humanitarian law into "humanitarian violence".<sup>[377]</sup> This was supported in July by Professor Neve Gordon and the anthropologist Nicola Perugini, who argued that Israel used "the law itself as a tool legitimizing genocide".<sup>[378]</sup>

In June 2025, Ambos and scholar Stefanie Bock wrote that it has become more difficult to deny genocidal intent.<sup>[379]</sup>

In July 2025, 1,300 professionals and academics in public health, health care, and the social sciences signed a letter acknowledging the Gaza genocide.<sup>[380]</sup> According to professor Ernesto Verdeja, even by "the most inflexible interpretation of genocide, Gaza qualifies as genocidal".<sup>[381]</sup> In July 2025, *Le Monde* reported that legal experts remained divided on the question, with some agreeing that Israel was committing genocide and others viewing the charge as unsubstantiated.<sup>[59]</sup> Bartov wrote that the silence of many scholars of the Holocaust and Holocaust commemoration institutions and their disbelief that Israel could commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, or genocide threatens universalist interpretations of Holocaust studies and Holocaust commemoration and may lead to a decline

in the relevance of Holocaust education.<sup>[382][383]</sup> Journalist Colin Jones interviewed lawyers affiliated with the US military and concluded that they see Gaza as a test case for what military conduct might be acceptable in a hypothetical war between the US and a peer power such as China.<sup>[384]</sup>

In August 2025, according to Mia Swart, a growing consensus was emerging "in international legal circles that Israel is committing genocide".<sup>[385]</sup> Craig Mokhiber, a retired UN human rights lawyer, wrote, "Never, in the modern era, have we seen such a clear-cut, article-by-article violation of the United Nations Genocide Convention, so broad a consensus in the identification of the crime".<sup>[386]</sup>

## Other scholars

In March 2024, the Middle East Studies Association condemned the "accelerating scale of genocidal violence being inflicted on the Palestinian population of Gaza", saying that Israel's conduct constituted cultural genocide.<sup>[387]</sup> Surveys of 758 Middle East scholars by the Brookings Institution indicated a growing consensus that Israel's military campaign in Gaza was genocide.<sup>[388][389][330]</sup>

In 2025, John Spencer, chair of urban warfare studies at the Modern War Institute at the United States Military Academy, argued that Israel had not demonstrated genocidal intent, based on what he called "evidence of what Israel is doing to preserve infrastructure, civilian life, to provide services".<sup>[390]</sup>

Robert Satloff of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy criticized the IAGS genocide resolution for its sourcing and for lacking independent research, noting that it passed with the support of "only one-fifth ... of the organization's membership", though he wrote that his "critique of the IAGS resolution should not be misread as endorsement of Israeli strategy and tactics in Gaza or indifference to the terrible human toll in this conflict".<sup>[391]</sup>

## Legal proceedings

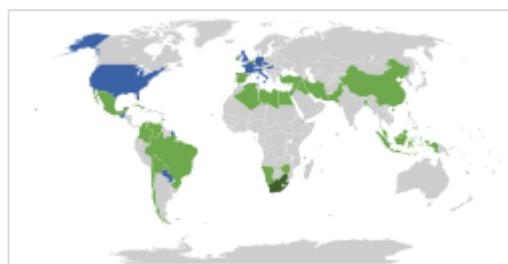
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### International Court of Justice application

In December 2023, South Africa instituted proceedings at the International Court of Justice pursuant to the Genocide Convention, accusing Israel of committing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity against Palestinians in Gaza.<sup>[392][46][393]</sup> South African president Cyril Ramaphosa compared Israel's actions to apartheid.<sup>[394]</sup> Several international organisations and other nations supported South Africa's suit.<sup>[395][396]</sup>

In its application, South Africa argued that Israel's actions "are genocidal in character because they are intended to bring about the destruction of a substantial part of the Palestinian national, racial and ethnical group".<sup>[46][397]</sup> South Africa requested that the ICJ issue an interim order requiring Israel to "immediately suspend its military operations in and against Gaza".<sup>[46][397]</sup>



Stances of states on South Africa v. Israel:

- South Africa
- Countries that have supported South Africa's case
- Countries that have opposed South Africa's case
- Israel

On 26 January 2024, the ICJ issued a preliminary ruling finding that the rights asserted in South Africa's filing were "plausible" and issued an order requiring that Israel take all measures in its power to prevent acts of genocide, prevent and punish incitement to genocide, and allow basic humanitarian services into Gaza.<sup>[47][361]</sup> Later that year, South Africa asked the ICJ to order additional measures against Israel,<sup>[398]</sup> and in May, the court issued what some experts considered to be an ambiguous order but which was widely understood as requiring Israel to immediately halt its offensive in Rafah.<sup>[399]</sup> Israel rejected this interpretation and continued its offensive.<sup>[50]</sup>

The Israeli government spokesman Eylon Levy rejected the allegations "with disgust"<sup>[393]</sup> and accused South Africa of cooperating with Hamas,<sup>[392]</sup> calling South Africa's claims "blood libel".<sup>[400]</sup> On 2 January 2024, Israel decided to appear before the ICJ in response to South Africa's case, despite a history of ignoring international tribunals.<sup>[397]</sup> On 13 January, Netanyahu said, "No one will stop us. Not The Hague, not the Axis of Evil, no one."<sup>[401]</sup> Israeli officials accused the court of antisemitic bias.<sup>[402][403]</sup> Israel asserted that it had taken all possible measures to safeguard civilians during its military campaign in Gaza.<sup>[404][405]</sup> Some left-wing Israeli politicians, including Ofer Cassif, supported South Africa's case.<sup>[406]</sup>

International Court of Justice Vice President Julia Sebutinde was one of the 17 judges ruling on provisional measures in South Africa's genocide case against Israel. She voted against all the provisional measures, and was the only permanent judge to vote against any of the measures.<sup>[407][408]</sup> In her dissenting opinion, Sebutinde wrote, "multiple concrete actions were taken by Israel to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid for the civilian population of Gaza."<sup>[409]</sup>

## International Criminal Court

In May 2024, Khan applied for arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant, saying he had reasonable grounds to believe they bore criminal responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Gaza.<sup>[410]</sup> The list of crimes did not include genocide, which is legally distinct from extermination.<sup>[411]</sup> The warrants were issued in November 2024.<sup>[247]</sup>

As part of a December 2024 report accusing Israel of genocide, Amnesty International called on the ICC "to urgently consider the commission of the crime of genocide by Israeli officials since 7 October 2023 in the ongoing investigation into the situation in the State of Palestine".<sup>[412][413]</sup> Also in December 2024, the Israeli law professor Omer Shatz filed a complaint with the ICC naming eight Israeli political and media figures he believed were responsible for incitement to genocide.<sup>[414]</sup> On 1 October 2025, a complaint was filed with the ICC accusing Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and other officials of genocide for their support of Israel.<sup>[415][416]</sup> The US and Israel have politically pressured and imposed sanctions on the ICC due to its positions during the war.<sup>[417]</sup>

## Other proceedings

In November 2023, the Center for Constitutional Rights sued US President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin,<sup>[418][419][87]</sup> alleging that Israel's "mass killings", targeting of civilian infrastructure, and forced expulsions amount to genocide,<sup>[143][418]</sup> and that the US was capable of deterring Israel from committing these acts due to the countries' close relationship.<sup>[143]</sup> A federal judge dismissed the case in January 2024, ruling that the US Constitution prevented his court

from determining foreign policy, but writing that "as the ICJ has found, it is plausible that Israel's conduct amounts to genocide".<sup>[420]</sup> The judge also commented that he would have preferred to have issued the injunction and urged Biden to rethink US policy.<sup>[421][422][418]</sup>

In February 2024, lawyers representing Palestinians in Germany filed a criminal complaint against politicians including Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Economic Minister Robert Habeck, and Finance Minister Christian Lindner for "aiding and abetting" genocide in Gaza.<sup>[423][424]</sup> The Public Prosecutor General dismissed the complaint due to lack of reasonable suspicion.<sup>[425]</sup> The lawyers filed a similar complaint against current and former German government members in September 2025.<sup>[425][426]</sup>

In March 2024, the Nicaraguan government initiated proceedings against Germany at the ICJ under the Genocide Convention concerning Germany's support for Israel in the Gaza war.<sup>[427][428]</sup> It sought provisional measures of protection, including resumption of suspended German funding of the UNRWA and cessation of military supplies to Israel.<sup>[428]</sup>

In March 2024, Birchgrove Legal referred Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Foreign Minister Penny Wong, Opposition Leader Peter Dutton, and others to the ICC as accessories to genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, citing the defunding of UNRWA, the provision of military aid, and "unequivocal political support" for Israel's actions during the Gaza war.<sup>[429][430]</sup>

In November 2025, the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in Turkey issued arrest warrants for 37 Israeli suspects on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity. Officials named in the Turkish indictment included Netanyahu, security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, defence minister Israel Katz (who had replaced Gallant), and IDF chief of staff Eyal Zamir.<sup>[431]</sup>

## Responsibility of third states and other entities

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All UN states that are signatories to the Genocide Convention are obliged "to employ all means reasonably available to them, so as to prevent genocide so far as possible" and must not provide "means to enable or facilitate the commission of the crime".<sup>[432]</sup> Multiple scholars argue that the inaction of the international community to confirmed atrocities in Gaza expose the irrelevance and weakness of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine.<sup>[433][434][435]</sup> Many Western countries, especially the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom, have supported Israel by offering diplomatic, military, and intelligence support.<sup>[436]</sup>

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine said, "States may be complicit in failing to prevent genocide if they do not act in compliance" with the International Court of Justice's orders or if they directly aid or assist in "the commission of genocide".<sup>[437]</sup> Other journalists and scholars have written that the actions of the US and other Western countries implicitly give permission for genocide.<sup>[438][439]</sup> In January 2024, the former UNRWA spokesperson Chris Gunness said that the US and UK are complicit in genocide against Gaza.<sup>[440]</sup> In March Oxfam released a statement detailing its intention, alongside several other non-governmental organisations,<sup>[441]</sup> to sue Denmark to prevent arms sales to Israel, warning that by selling arms Denmark is "complicit in violations of international humanitarian law ... and a plausible genocide".<sup>[441][442]</sup>

UN Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory chair Navi Pillay has said that states that provide weapons to Israel, including the US, are complicit in genocide.<sup>[443]</sup> A UN Special Committee wrote, "Failing to act now ... will tear apart the very foundation of the international rule of law we have collectively built to protect peace, security, and the well-being of all. Our inaction today is setting a perilous precedent for tomorrow."<sup>[17]</sup>

## United States

The United States has been a key provider of diplomatic and material support before and during the Gaza war.<sup>[444][445]</sup> It pays for around 15% of Israel's military budget and is its largest supplier of arms; it provided more than \$22.8 billion to the war effort in its first year.<sup>[446]</sup> According to the Quincy Institute, the destruction of Gaza is "in large part, the result of unconditional U.S. assistance and diplomatic cover".<sup>[447]</sup>

Both the Biden and Trump administrations have denied genocide in Gaza;<sup>[448]</sup> Biden's support of Israel earned him the nickname "Genocide Joe".<sup>[449]</sup> In February 2025, Trump proposed an American takeover of Gaza and displacing the people living there, though he no longer supports this.<sup>[448]</sup> According to an August opinion poll, half of US voters believe Israel is committing genocide in Gaza and 60% oppose further military assistance.<sup>[450]</sup> Six members of the US Congress have recognised the genocide: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, Summer Lee, Marjorie Taylor Greene, Becca Balint and Bernie Sanders.<sup>[451]</sup>

## United Kingdom

The British government does not give weapons to Israel directly but rather issues licences for British companies to sell them.<sup>[452]</sup> On 12 December 2023 Human Rights Watch said that selling weapons to Israel could make the UK complicit in war crimes. UK law says licences cannot be granted when there is a clear risk the items might be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law.<sup>[453]</sup> James Denselow of Save the Children UK said, "By failing to push for a permanent end to the fighting or speak out against the weaponisation of aid, Rishi Sunak and his government are complicit in the horror that is unfolding."<sup>[454]</sup> In December 2023, Scottish First Minister Humza Yousaf condemned the UK's abstention from a draft UN resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, saying this would lead to the deaths of more children.<sup>[455]</sup>

In April 2024, Guy Goodwin-Gill, a professor of international law at Oxford University, said: "There is a serious risk of genocide, as the International Court of Justice has found. If the UK, with that knowledge in mind, carries on exporting arms to Israel, there is a risk that



Pro-Palestine rally in Austin, Texas, United States, 2023



Protester holding a sign claiming the UK Labour Party leader Keir Starmer (image blurred due to copyright) supports genocide

those arms will be used in the conduct of aggressive activities and in the conduct of genocide."<sup>[456]</sup> The same month, hundreds of lawyers and legal academics published a legal opinion warning that the government risked complicity in genocide by continuing to arm Israel.<sup>[457][458]</sup>

On 2 September 2024, Foreign Secretary David Lammy announced he was suspending approximately 30 arms export licences to Israel after a government review concluded there was a high risk these exports were being used for severe violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>[459]</sup> At the time of the suspension, Israel had around 350 arms export licences in the UK.<sup>[460]</sup>

On 3 September 2025, the Scottish Government announced a ban on funding to "arms companies whose products or services are provided to countries where there is plausible evidence of genocide being committed", including Israel.<sup>[461]</sup> The Scottish Parliament also voted for a boycott of Israel and any companies providing it military support.<sup>[462]</sup>

### **Lawsuit over export licences**

The human rights groups Al-Haq and Global Legal Action Network took legal action against the British government in December 2023, saying that the government risked violating the Genocide Convention by granting export licences for the sale of military equipment to Israel.<sup>[463]</sup>

In May 2025, a hearing began at the High Court of Justice to determine whether the UK had violated arms export control laws by continuing to supply Israel with components for F-35 fighter jets even after other licences were suspended. At the hearing, government lawyers argued that UK-made parts enter a global spares pool rather than being shipped directly to Israel, where it is "generally not possible to determine who the end user would be" and that suspending them "would have a critical impact on international peace and security, including NATO's defence and deterrence".<sup>[464][465]</sup>

On 30 June 2025, the court dismissed the claim, holding the "F-35 carve out" lawful; it added that some aspects of the challenge were "not for a domestic court to decide" and that the carve-out's "true nature" was that the UK would "not cease to participate in the F-35 Programme", even though some UK components would ultimately reach Israel.<sup>[466]</sup>

## **Germany**

In October 2023, political analyst Lena Obermaier argued that Germany is complicit in Israel's war crimes against Gaza.<sup>[467]</sup> She detailed how most of Germany's most prominent news outlets have "been silent on Israeli genocidal policies". She also highlighted police suppression of pro-Palestine protests<sup>[468]</sup> as evidence of state complicity.<sup>[467]</sup> According to Germany's Federal Commissioner for the Fight against Antisemitism, accusing Israel of genocide is antisemitic.<sup>[469]</sup> Publicly accusing Israel of genocide can lead to arrest in Germany, even when the accusers are Jewish or Israeli.<sup>[470][471]</sup> In February 2024 a criminal complaint was filed in German courts accusing various senior politicians of complicity in genocide.<sup>[423]</sup> In March, Nicaragua sued Germany for complicity at the ICJ.<sup>[427]</sup>

## **European Union**

The European Union was accused of potential complicity after it did not suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement. Secretary General of Amnesty International Agnès Callamard said the EU was giving Israel a "green light" to continue its genocide and was at "risk of complicity in Israel's

actions".<sup>[472]</sup><sup>[473]</sup> The Rights Forum said the decision was "shameless complicity in genocide".<sup>[474]</sup>

## Egypt

Egypt has been accused of complicity in genocide for its enforcement of the blockade on Gaza and refusal to open the Rafah Border Crossing.<sup>[475]</sup><sup>[476]</sup> In April 2025, Cage and five other African advocacy organisations filed a complaint with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.<sup>[477]</sup> Egypt is not permitted to turn people away at its borders if doing so would expose them to life-threatening conditions or collective punishment, as this would violate its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention Against Torture.<sup>[478]</sup><sup>[479]</sup> Egypt was also accused of complicity with Israel for its crackdown on the Global March to Gaza.<sup>[480]</sup>

Egypt has said that its closure of the Rafah crossing is done in opposition to Israeli plans to displace Palestinians.<sup>[475]</sup> Egypt rejected an Israeli proposal for Gaza to be returned to Egypt for up to 15 years<sup>[481]</sup> and formally supported South Africa's genocide case against Israel.<sup>[482]</sup>

## Italy

On 7 October 2025, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said in an interview with *RAI – Radiotelevisione italiana* that a pro-Palestinian advocacy group had reported her, Defence Minister Guido Crosetto, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, and Leonardo director Roberto Cingolani to the International Criminal Court for alleged complicity in the genocide.<sup>[483]</sup><sup>[484]</sup> The complaint, which was signed by 50 people, including law professors, lawyers, and several public figures, was filed on 1 October. It accused Meloni's government of complicity for supplying arms to Israel and urged the ICC to evaluate whether a formal investigation into the allegation could be initiated.<sup>[485]</sup> As of May 2025, Italy was the third-largest supplier of weaponry to Israel, representing around 1% of Israel's weaponry imports.<sup>[486]</sup><sup>[487]</sup> Despite the Italian government's claims that weaponry supplement to Israel had been interrupted, Leonardo, one of Italy's biggest arms companies, confirmed that the Italian government and Italian companies still export arms to Israel.<sup>[488]</sup> Francesca Albanese directly called Italy an accomplice in the Gaza genocide.<sup>[489]</sup>

## Private sector and media

Multiple corporations have been accused of profiting from the Gaza genocide.<sup>[490]</sup><sup>[491]</sup> Executives from Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, and RTX Corporation have described the war in Gaza as a source of increased profits.<sup>[492]</sup><sup>[493]</sup>

On 20 June 2024, UN experts warned that continued arms transfers to Israel could amount to violations of international law and risk state and corporate complicity in potential genocide. They called for an immediate halt to all weapons transfers to Israel, including by such major arms manufacturers as BAE Systems, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Caterpillar. They also warned institutions investing in these companies, such as Bank of America, BlackRock, Citigroup, and Wells Fargo.<sup>[494]</sup>

In June 2025, a UN expert's report named Alphabet, Amazon, Microsoft, and IBM as "central to Israel's surveillance apparatus and the ongoing Gaza destruction", and Palantir as a source of AI tools for the Israeli military.<sup>[495]</sup> The report also named Allianz, Barclays, BlackRock, and BNP Paribas for

underwriting and purchasing Israeli government bonds, which the UN said are the main source of financing for Israel's military expenditures.<sup>[496]</sup> Scholars, journalists, media analysts and human rights advocates have accused various media outlets of complicity through media imperialism.<sup>[497]</sup>

## Political discourse

### World leaders and governments

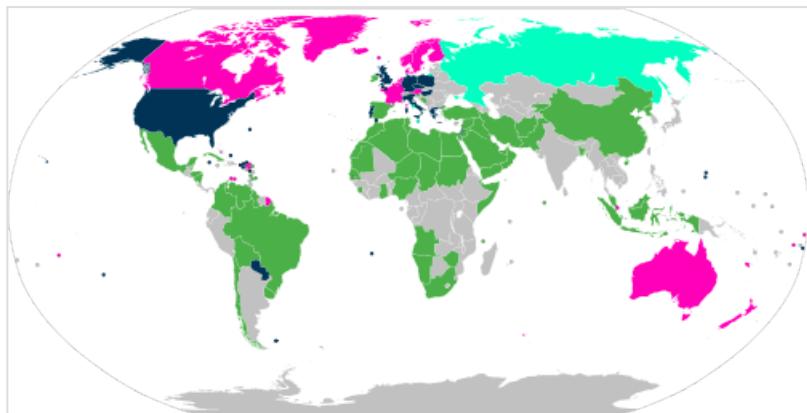
Several Western governments (notably the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany) reject calling Israel's actions in Gaza a genocide.<sup>[498][499][500]</sup> Belgium, Norway, and Canada have said they will abide by or await the ICJ's judgment rather than take a definitive stance.<sup>[501][502][503]</sup>

A large group of states, especially in the Islamic world, most of Africa, Latin America, and some European countries, explicitly describe Israel's actions as genocide and/or have joined or supported South Africa's ICJ case.<sup>[504]</sup> These include Ghana,<sup>[505]</sup> Turkey,<sup>[506]</sup> Malaysia,<sup>[507]</sup> Egypt,<sup>[508]</sup> Brazil,<sup>[509]</sup> Chile,<sup>[510]</sup> Colombia,<sup>[511]</sup> Spain,<sup>[512]</sup> Ireland,<sup>[513]</sup> and Slovenia.<sup>[514]</sup> On November 7, 2025, Turkey issued arrest warrants for genocide against Netanyahu and 36 colleagues.<sup>[515]</sup>

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Arab League, and the African Union have collectively endorsed the characterisation of Israel's actions as genocide and called for accountability and measures such as ending arms transfers.<sup>[516]</sup> In January 2025, the Hague Group convened in Bogotá with the aim to uphold international rulings on Gaza, end arms shipments to Israel and build a pathway to broader recognition of Palestinian statehood.<sup>[517]</sup>

### Non-governmental organisations and intergovernmental organisations

Numerous non-governmental organisations and intergovernmental organisations have accused Israel of genocide. Among the first to warn of a risk of genocide, in mid-October 2023, were Genocide Watch and the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention.<sup>[518][519]</sup> Several Palestinian human rights groups, including Defence for Children International (DCI),<sup>[520]</sup> Al-Haq, Al Mezan, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, have filed lawsuits alleging a genocide.<sup>[521]</sup> Some Israeli human rights organisations, such as B'Tselem<sup>[522]</sup> and Physicians for Human Rights–Israel, released reports calling Israel's campaign in Gaza a genocide.<sup>[23][523][524]</sup> International human rights groups condemning Israel's genocide include



Positions of national governments on whether Israel is committing genocide in the Gaza war

- Agree
- Disagree
- Unclear
- Defer to the ruling in the ICJ case South Africa v. Israel
- No data

the International Federation for Human Rights,<sup>[24]</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor,<sup>[525]</sup> Amnesty International,<sup>[412][526][20]</sup> the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights,<sup>[527]</sup> and Human Rights Watch.<sup>[266]</sup> In October 2024, Oxfam and 37 other humanitarian organisations warned that Israel was failing to comply with the Genocide Convention as it wiped Northern Gaza "off the map".<sup>[528]</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has also found that Israel is committing genocide.<sup>[529][530][531]</sup> The American activist group Jewish Voice for Peace has stated that Israel is committing genocide.<sup>[532][533][534]</sup>

In September 2025, the UN Human Rights Council's Independent International Commission of Inquiry issued a report concluding that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The Commission found reasonable grounds to determine that Israeli authorities and security forces have committed, and continue to commit, four of the five genocidal acts defined under the 1948 Genocide Convention: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm; deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction in whole or in part; and imposing measures intended to prevent births.<sup>[16][535]</sup>

## Cultural discourse

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Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza has been a contentious topic in cultural discourse. Celebrities, athletes, public intellectuals, activists, cultural institutions and ordinary people have weighed in on the events in Gaza, as well as on the cultural and societal implications of viewing those events through the framework of genocide.<sup>[536]</sup>

### Public opinion in Israel and abroad

Multiple surveys have found broad support among Jewish Israelis for the government's policies toward Gaza.<sup>[537][538][539]</sup> An August 2025 Accord Center poll found that 76% of Jewish Israelis agreed with the statement "there are no innocent people in Gaza".<sup>[540]</sup> A May 2025 survey found that 82% supported expelling Gazans, while 56% favoured also expelling Palestinians from Israel.<sup>[537]</sup> Another August 2025 poll found that 79% of Jewish Israelis were untroubled by reports of famine in Gaza.<sup>[538]</sup> According to the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, "the vast majority of Israelis agree with...[Israel's] plan and clearly will support anything to see it realized – from apartheid to extermination."<sup>[541]</sup>

A September 2025 AP-NORC poll found that the number of Americans who believe that Israel's military actions in Gaza have "gone too far" was increasing.<sup>[542]</sup>

## Impact

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British sociologist Martin Shaw has called the Gaza genocide "the genocide that changed the world" because of mass mobilisation against genocide. He also highlights some political victories by Israel, but "at huge cost to its global legitimacy and that of the West".<sup>[544]</sup> Israeli journalist and author Gideon Levy wrote an article in Haaretz insisting that the people of Gaza will never forget the massacres, bombardments, destruction, and trauma.<sup>[545]</sup>

Some scholars, particularly those associated with Third World approaches to international law, have argued that the international community's failure to treat Israel's actions in Gaza as a genocide and respond accordingly has harmed the principles of the international order and international law and exposed the deficiencies of international governance.<sup>[368][369][370]</sup> José Manuel Barreto argues that "the Palestinian genocide has unveiled the deep colonial structure of the international legal order", placing the Gaza genocide in a long list of colonial genocides the international system has tolerated.<sup>[369]</sup> Mark LeVine argues that Israel's actions have destroyed respect for international law and weakened the taboo against large-scale violence in response to perceived threats.<sup>[546]</sup> Dutch lawyer and professor of international law André Nollkaemper has said that the United States' rejection of international law is a unique feature of the Gaza war.<sup>[547]</sup> The journalist Colin Jones interviewed lawyers affiliated with the US military and concluded that they see Gaza as a test case for what military conduct might be acceptable in a hypothetical war between the US and a peer power such as China.<sup>[384]</sup>



Millions of people around the world protested Israel's actions, many of them explicitly calling for the recognition and cessation of genocide.<sup>[543]</sup>

## See also

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- [Allegations of genocide in the October 7 attacks](#) – Characterization of massacres by Hamas
- [Casualties of the Gaza war](#)
- [Comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany](#)
- [Effect of the Gaza war on children in the Gaza Strip](#)
- [Gaza genocide denial](#)
- [Gaza Strip mass graves](#) – Mass graves found during the Gaza War
- [Gaza–Israel conflict](#) – Part of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict
- [Human rights violations against Palestinians by Israel](#)
- [Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip](#) – Israeli military operation since 2023
- [Israeli war crimes in the Gaza war](#) – Violations of laws of war
- [List of genocides](#)
- [Palestinians as animals in Israeli discourse](#)
- [Timeline of the Gaza war](#)

## Notes

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- a. This start date is the beginning of the war. Sources disagree on when the genocide started, see [Background](#).

- b. Overall deaths since October 7th per the Gaza Health Ministry,<sup>[5]</sup> which has been deemed reliable by independent organisations.<sup>[6][7][8][9]</sup> The Ministry's public totals are aggregate and include both civilians and combatants.<sup>[9][10]</sup>
- c. Amnesty International,<sup>[20]</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières,<sup>[21]</sup> B'Tselem,<sup>[22]</sup> Physicians for Human Rights–Israel,<sup>[23]</sup> International Federation for Human Rights.<sup>[24]</sup>
- d. A small number of these deaths (it is unclear exactly how many) were a result of friendly fire, including civilians killed by Israeli military fire while attempting to prevent their abduction by armed Palestinians and combatants killed as a result of the Hannibal Directive.<sup>[78][79][80]</sup> There are up to 15 known civilian deaths from these causes: up to 13 in Be'eri, one from helicopter gunfire on a vehicle carrying a hostage,<sup>[81]</sup> and one in Kibbutz Alumim.<sup>[82]</sup> According to Ynet, there was an "immense and complex quantity" of friendly-fire incidents on the part of IDF during the 7 October attack, accounting for a fifth of the 105 military deaths then recorded.<sup>[83]</sup>
- e. Hebrew: "הוריתי להטיל מצור מוחלט על רצועת עזה. לא יהיה חשלג, לא יהיה מזון, לא יהיה דלק הכל סגור. אנחנו נלחמים בחירות אדם ואנחנו נהגים בהתאם"
- f. Per the Gaza Health Ministry and Government Information Office by 3 January 2024, over 22,300 people had been confirmed dead.<sup>[166]</sup>
- g. 47.4% were non-elderly men, 30.7% were children, 17.1% were non-elderly women, 3.0% were elderly men and 1.9% were elderly women.
- h. In the original Hebrew article the Haaretz reporter used the term "Extermination Zones" (שטחי ההשמדה)<sup>[183]</sup> instead of the English version term "Kill Zone".
- i. Per the IPC manual, the starvation death rate does not necessarily have to be that high (does not have to be at least 2 deaths per 10,000 people per day) to declare catastrophic (level 5) food insecurity. However, it does need to be that high to declare famine.
- j. Some Israeli officials denied the plan had been adopted; however, an official familiar with the situation stated that some aspects of the plan were already in progress.<sup>[239]</sup>
- k. The use of white phosphorus against military targets located among civilians is contrary to Protocol III of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, of which Israel is not a signatory.<sup>[304]</sup>
- l. Article II of the Genocide Convention defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group" through acts such as **(a)** murder, **(b)** inflicting serious bodily or mental harm, **(c)** inflicting conditions of life calculated to destroy the group, **(d)** imposing measures intended to prevent births, and **(e)** forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>[327]</sup>
- m.
  - Amnesty International
  - Mellemlfolkeligt Samvirke
  - Al-Haq

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  - Maad 2024: "The violence of the ongoing conflict, the lack of drinking water, food and healthcare, the destruction of hospital infrastructures and the displacement of the population are inevitably leading to further deaths. A letter published in July in *The Lancet* medical journal estimated that this conflict could cause the deaths of 186,000 Palestinians."
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■ Lederman 2025, p. 1: "Roughly since mid-2024, there seems to have emerged a broad agreement among genocide scholars—at least those who have expressed their views on the matter—that this is indeed the case ... What followed seems to be a similar broad agreement emerging among legal scholars that this is indeed a genocide, and even those who are still hesitating find the genocide charges much more convincing."  
■ Shaw 2025b, p. 3: "By the end of 2024, when Amnesty International published a comprehensively evidenced and legally argued case,<sup>17</sup> the consensus that Israel was committing genocide was becoming overwhelming"  
■ Gessen 2024: "Trachtenberg testified to a consensus opinion among historians of genocide that what is happening in Gaza can indeed be called a genocide, largely because the intent to cause death on a massive scale has been so clear in the statements of Israeli officials"  
■ Bouranova 2024: "The opposition is political, as there is consensus amongst the international human rights legal community, many other legal and political experts, including many Holocaust scholars, that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza."  
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81. "Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel – Advance unedited version (A/HRC/56/26)" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20240613074028/https://www.un.org/unispal/document/coi-report-a-hrc-56-26-27may24/>). United Nations. 27 May 2024. Archived from the original (<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/coi-report-a-hrc-56-26-27may24/>) on 13 June 2024.
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98. Lederman 2025, p. 7.
99. Fassin 2024, pp. 1–2; Semerdjian 2024a, pp. 1, 3; Levene 2024, pp. 1–2

100. ■ Mackenzie & Lubell 2023: "Israel has tightened its blockade on and bombarded Gaza for three weeks after the Islamist group Hamas' Oct. 7 assault killed 1,400 Israelis ... Abbas ... said, 'Our people in the Gaza Strip are facing a war of genocide and massacres committed by the Israeli occupation forces in full view of the entire world.'"
- Antonio 2023: "Israeli Ambassador to the Philippines Ilan Fluss rejected the notion that his country is committing genocide in Gaza City, where a two-week war has erupted ... their measures were targeting Hamas members, and they were 'taking all measures to avoid having civilians affected' by attacks. 'We are informing civilians even before attacks: keep away from Hamas' infrastructure and Hamas' facilities,' ... Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, and killed at least 1,400 people, mostly civilians."
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- Smith et al. 2023
- Nichols 2023
- Bishara 2023
101. Abraham 2024: "'There was a completely permissive policy regarding the casualties of [bombing] operations—so permissive that in my opinion it had an element of revenge,' D., an intelligence source, claimed. ... A. also used the word "revenge" to describe the atmosphere inside the army after October 7.'
102. Sultany 2024, pp. 2–3.
103. United Nations 2014.
104. "United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231201103920/https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>). United Nations. Archived from the original (<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>) on 1 December 2023. Retrieved 3 January 2024.
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110. UNHR 2024, pp. 24–25.
111. Stanton, Gregory H (25 May 2025). "Israel's Twelve Tactics of Denial" (<https://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/israel-s-twelve-tactics-of-denial>). Genocide Watch. Retrieved 23 September 2025. "Many who have not read the Genocide Convention think genocide can only be proven if the intent is to destroy a whole people. But the Convention clearly states that intent to destroy part of a people is enough to prove genocide."
112. Ohlin, Jens (15 October 2009). "Attempt to Commit Genocide". In Gaeta, Paola (ed.). The UN Genocide Convention. Oxford University Press. pp. 193–206.  
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113. Jamshidi 2024a, p. 13.
  114. Segal & Daniele 2024, pp. 1–2.
  115. Lederman 2024, pp. 1–2.
  116. Asem, Sondos (14 August 2025). "Israel's war on Gaza: Why do legal experts say it's genocide?" (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-gaza-why-experts-say-genocide-international-law>). *Middle East Eye*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20250819152628/https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-gaza-why-experts-say-genocide-international-law>) from the original on 19 August 2025.
  117. Kulkarni 2023.
  118. B'Tselem 2025, p. 67.
119.
    - UN Commission of Inquiry report 2025, p. 54: "The Commission finds that many statements made by Israeli officials contain dehumanising sentiments that encourage hatred toward Palestinians and violence against Palestinians and are consistent with the pattern of conduct...that point to an intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a group. The Commission considers that these statements by Israeli officials are reasonably interpreted as statements expressing an intent to destroy the Palestinian group in Gaza and they have been acted on as such by Israeli security forces in the Gaza Strip. They are direct evidence of *dolus specialis*."
    - Amnesty International report 2024, pp. 26–35: "Bearing in mind that...the othering and dehumanization of the protected group and that the use of derogatory language...can provide evidence of genocidal intent, Amnesty International examined Israeli officials' use of dehumanizing, racist and derogatory rhetoric against Palestinians.... It reviewed 102 statements made by Israeli government officials, high-ranking military officers and members of the Knesset made between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2024 which dehumanized Palestinians, or called for, or justified, genocidal acts or other crimes under international law against them."
    - Kulkarni 2023: "Army's spokesperson Daniel Hagari, who bragged of dropping 'thousands of tons of munitions'...had no qualms admitting that 'we're focused on what causes maximum damage', rather than 'accuracy'. Referring to Palestinians as 'human animals', Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, who prided in having 'released all the restraints' on the military, had said in the early days of the war that 'we will eliminate everything' in Gaza...Legitimizing the mass killing of civilians in Gaza, Israeli President Isaac Herzog had declared that 'an entire nation out there is responsible' for the October 7 attack on Israel by Hamas, arguing that the 'rhetoric' about innocent civilians is 'absolutely not true.'... 'This practice of casting an entire population as enemies, as legitimate military targets, is a common genocidal mechanism,' Raz Segal, a prominent Jewish Israeli scholar of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, said in his remarks at the panel discussion."
120. Gessen 2024.
  121.
    - Al-Waheidi 2025: "Fyfe, the Washington and Lee University legal scholar, said, 'Genocide can occur within or outside of war. But it is never permissible, even if the war itself is. So war is not a defense...If a military leader intends to gain land and removing a group is the only way to do it, that's not necessarily genocide. But if the only reasonable inference from a siege or campaign is that the group itself is being destroyed as such, then that is genocidal intent...I do not think it is reasonable to claim that the siege is a military objective, given that Hamas is already crippled.'"
    - Gurmendi Dunkelberg 2025, p. 21
    - Jamshidi 2024b
  122. UN Commission of Inquiry report 2025, p. 25: "Whether targeting women, men, boys or girls, sexual violence was conducted not just to degrade and humiliate profoundly the direct victims but to punish the Palestinian group as a whole."

123. Amnesty International report 2024, p. 32:
124. "Statement on Why We Call the Israeli Attack on Gaza Genocide" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231230154434/https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/statement-on-why-we-call-the-israeli-attack-on-gaza-genocide>). *Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention*. 29 December 2023. Archived from the original (<https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/statement-on-why-we-call-the-israeli-attack-on-gaza-genocide>) on 30 December 2023. Retrieved 23 September 2025.
125. "Widescale destruction of cultural heritage in Gaza" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20250818185206/https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2024/01/widescale-destruction-of-cultural-heritage-in-gaza>). *Museums Association*. 30 January 2024. Archived from the original (<https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2024/01/widescale-destruction-of-cultural-heritage-in-gaza>) on 18 August 2025. Retrieved 29 September 2025. "The destruction of cultural heritage, which Palestinians have accused Israel of targeting deliberately, was cited as evidence in South Africa's case to the UN International Court of Justice that the state is committing acts of genocide in Gaza."
126. Amnesty International report 2024, p. 213: "The nature of the conditions of life that Israel imposed on Palestinians in Gaza following 7 October 2023 indicates that the destruction of the group, as such, was their intended outcome. The Israeli authorities decided to impose a total siege on Gaza on 9 October 2023...fully aware that this would necessarily cause and exacerbate malnutrition, hunger, the outbreak of multiple diseases and, ultimately, bring Gaza to the brink of famine. Indeed, Israel must have been aware of the 'objective probability' that these conditions of life would lead to the physical destruction of Palestinians in Gaza, a factor identified as probative of intent."
127. Quigley 2024a.
128. UN Commission of Inquiry report 2025, p. 62: "The Commission finds that the Israeli authorities were aware that, by destroying the healthcare system throughout Gaza, their actions would lead to the destruction of Palestinians as a group... the systematic and complete destruction of the healthcare system in Gaza, the siege-induced deprivation of medical necessities... were part of the intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza by preventing their capacity and possibility to heal, recover and live"
129. Lederman 2025, p. 2: "The case of Gaza...shows us again why the meaning of intent in the Genocide Convention should be reinterpreted...to include the foreseeable consequences of a given policy when its meaning is the genocidal destruction of a group or a severe harm to it as a group—a knowledge-based rather than purpose-based concept of genocide. Such a concept points to...moving away from the focus on obscure mental states of individual perpetrators to the collective process that leads to genocide."
130. "דיניות נקמה יצאה; ייסרל מিতצא'ת פשעי מלחמה בעזה" ([http://web.archive.org/web/20250119111743/http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/press\\_releases/20231010\\_revenge\\_policy\\_in\\_motion\\_israel\\_committing\\_war\\_crimes\\_in\\_gaza](http://web.archive.org/web/20250119111743/http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/press_releases/20231010_revenge_policy_in_motion_israel_committing_war_crimes_in_gaza)) [A policy of revenge is underway; Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza]. *B'Tselem* (in Hebrew). 10 October 2023. Archived from the original ([http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/press\\_releases/20231010\\_revenge\\_policy\\_in\\_motion\\_israel\\_committing\\_war\\_crimes\\_in\\_gaza](http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/press_releases/20231010_revenge_policy_in_motion_israel_committing_war_crimes_in_gaza)) on 19 January 2025. Retrieved 30 September 2025.
131. "Gaza/Palestine: States have a Duty to Prevent Genocide" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20250924011619/https://www.icj.org/resource/gaza-occupied-palestinian-territory-states-have-a-duty-to-prevent-genocide/>). *International Commission of Jurists*. 2023. Archived from the original (<https://www.icj.org/resource/gaza-occupied-palestinian-territory-states-have-a-duty-to-prevent-genocide/>) on 24 September 2025. Retrieved 30 September 2025.

132. Gallant, Yoav (9 October 2023). *horiti lehatil metzur muchlat al aza. anachanu nilchmim bechayot adam, venohagim behitam בחירותי להטיל מצור מוחלט על עזה. אנחנו נלחמים בחיות אדם, ונוהגים בהתאם.* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20251123173104/https://www.facebook.com/reel/2475688039283347/>) [I have ordered a complete blockade of Gaza. We are fighting human beings, and we are acting accordingly.] (in Hebrew). Archived from the original (<https://www.facebook.com/reel/2475688039283347/>) on 23 November 2025. Retrieved 30 September 2025 – via www.facebook.com.
133. Amnesty International report 2024, p. 35: "The evidence presented in the report clearly shows that the destruction of Palestinians in Gaza, as such, was Israel's intent—either in addition to or as a means to achieve its military aims. There is only one reasonable inference that can be drawn from the evidence presented: genocidal intent has been part and parcel of Israel's conduct in Gaza since 7 October 2023, including its military campaign."
134. UN Commission of Inquiry report 2025, p. 64: "On the basis of fully conclusive evidence, the Commission finds that statements made by Israeli authorities are direct evidence of genocidal intent. Additionally, on the basis of circumstantial evidence, the Commission finds that genocidal intent was the only reasonable inference that could be drawn, based on the pattern of conduct of the Israeli authorities. Thus, the Commission concludes that the Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces have the genocidal intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip."
135. Condon & Condon 2024.
136. □ Stanton 2025b  
□ Condon & Condon 2024  
□ Kulkarni 2023
137. "Public Statement: Scholars Warn" 2023
138. Doherty, Ben (3 November 2025). "World must fight Israel's genocide in Gaza like it did apartheid, pioneering South African judge says" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20251105173449/https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/04/world-must-fight-israel-genocide-gaza-like-apartheid-navi-pillay>). *The Guardian*. Archived from the original (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/04/world-must-fight-israel-genocide-gaza-like-apartheid-navi-pillay>) on 5 November 2025. Retrieved 3 November 2025.
139. UN Commission of Inquiry report 2025, pp. 64–67.
140. Bartov 2023; Jones 2024; Levene 2024, pp. 4–5; Coghill 2024
141. □ Marin & West 2024  
□ Bybelezer 2023  
□ Jones 2024  
□ Netanyahu 2023
142. □ Goldenberg 2024  
□ Schmitz 2024  
□ Coghill 2024  
□ Bartov 2023
143. McGreal, Chris (13 November 2023). "US rights group sues Biden for alleged 'failure to prevent genocide' in Gaza" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231121091027/https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/nov/13/biden-lawsuit-alleged-failure-prevent-genocide-israel-palestine>). *The Guardian*. Archived from the original (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/nov/13/biden-lawsuit-alleged-failure-prevent-genocide-israel-palestine>) on 21 November 2023. Retrieved 14 November 2023.

144. Jamshidi 2024a, pp. 1–4: "In its application to the ICJ, South Africa describes Israel's entire campaign inside Gaza since 7 October as genocidal."
145. Semerdjian 2024a, pp. 3–4.
146. B'Tselem 2025, p. 82.
147. Shaw 2025b, p. 3.
148. Moses 2025, p. 12.
149. Klein 2025.
150. OHCHR 2024d, pp. 1, 25–26.
151. ■ Murphy 2025: "U.N. experts said in a report on Tuesday that Israel committed the crime against humanity of 'extermination' by killing civilians sheltering in schools and religious sites in Gaza, part of a 'concerted campaign to obliterate Palestinian life.'"
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## External links

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- "UN panel discussion: 2023 War on Gaza: The Responsibility to Prevent Genocide" (<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1v/k1vpr1yczg>). United Nations. 12 December 2023.
  - "Debunking the Genocide Allegations: A Reexamination of the Israel-Hamas War from October 7, 2023 to June 1, 2025" (<https://besacenter.org/debunking-the-genocide-allegations-a-reexamination-of-the-israel-hamas-war-2023-2025/>) – by Danny Orbach, Jonathan Boxman, Yagil Henkin and Jonathan Braverman
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