

Menna Hamouda has been displaced from Beit Lahia, northern Gaza, to Deir al-Balah. She had dreamed of establishing an art center to display her paintings in order to reach international standards, but her home and studio were bombed and were completely destroyed. Therefore, she has decided to complete her paintings on the wall of the shelter school where she currently lives with her displaced family. Credit: Renee Levant

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What you don't learn in Switzerland

The aim of this newsletter is to improve information about events in Palestine and Israel, with a focus - but not only - on the German-speaking part of Switzerland. For this purpose, articles from English-language online newspapers, online portals, publications, etc., are quoted in abbreviated form.

References provide a link to the original article and / or publication medium. The edited articles have been shortened and may not fully reflect the opinions of the authors. Martin Luzi Büechi (MLB)

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Palestine-Talk with Rana Salman from Bethlehem

I got to know the Palestinian Rana Salman at a conference organized *by Ina autra senda-Swiss Friends of Combatants for Peace* at the Progr in Bern, where she and her Israeli colleague Yair Bunzel talked about their experiences in peace work in Israel/Palestine. She is part of a younger generation of Israeli and Palestinian women who no longer want to leave the responsibility for their common future in the hands of men alone. These women want to actively participate in the dialog about the "day after the war", when Israel and Palestine will once again have to deal with the question of how they can live side by side.


Rana with Yair Bunzel at the Progr, Bern Mrach 3, 2024. Photo MLB

The Israeli human rights lawyer May Pundak* summed it up in an interview with the New York Times: *"If you have - sorry - 60-year-old white, male, Jewish generals trying to write down what a good solution looks like, and there are no Palestinians in the room, that just won't cut it".* MLB

* listen to May Pundak's interview together with Rana Salman **at CNN.** May Pundak is Executive Director of the Israeli branch of ***"A Land for All".*** She is a lawyer and a feminist activist.

Rana Salman's family is originally from Haifa, but her grandparents were expelled from their home during the Nakba in 1948 and fled to Nablus. Rana was born in Jerusalem in 1984 but has lived and grew up in Bethlehem. She has a bachelor's degree in English language and literature from Bethlehem University and a diploma as a tour guide. Rana Salman has been the Palestinian co-director of Combatants for Peace (CFP) since 2020. Prior to joining CFP, Rana was co-founder and Head of Project Management of Peace By Piece Tours, a tour company offering educational and political tours in Israel and Palestine. In this capacity, she has spent much of the last 10 years leading international groups on alternative tours and fact-finding missions in the region. Rana has also worked as a freelance translator and writer. Her goal is to connect people and see lives transformed.



Rana Salman, Bern, March 4, 2024. Photo MLB

When asked about the current situation in Bethlehem, she says: *"Life has become very difficult. First there was the lockdown because of Covid and now the total blockade after October 7. It is no longer possible to plan projects, there is no more stability in everyday life because the income from the important tourism sector has completely disappeared".* Rana also speaks of the crisis in Palestinian civil society because there is no longer a functioning Palestinian leadership. The appointment of the new Prime Minister Muhammad Mustafa will do nothing to change this: *"the credibility of the PA has sunk to zero since the murderous Gaza war".*

The people have lost confidence in Abbas and no longer believe in a fair peace process. This is because the tried and tested pattern still prevails in Israel, whereby high-ranking Israeli officials draw up the terms of a peace agreement, often with American partners, but without the involvement of a credible representative of the Palestinian people. Rana says she is deeply skeptical about U.S. involvement, given the U.S. bias against Israel. CFP itself has not committed itself to any particular blueprint for a peace agreement, although the movement advocates for a two-state solution or any solution that both parties agree on.

But the old patriarchal system in Palestinian society is also reaching its limits and is becoming obsolete; the men simply haven't noticed it yet. In the current catastrophic economic situation, fathers are finding it increasingly difficult to provide for the family income alone and are dependent on the support of women. Rana says: Women are still in the traditional role of mother and housewife and therefore enjoy a lot of respect in the family. This respect enables them to bring new values into the family and the upbringing of children, but this does not show on the surface and does not appear on the outside.

Women are also taking on more responsibility outside the family, including in CFP. They are proud to reach the organizational milestone of having an all-women team of CEOs at CFP. It is strengthening to have women at the heart of movement, leading the organization forward and showing both communities that women's voices are crucial through times of conflict, war, and crisis.

At the same time, it is often more challenging for Palestinian women to join peace groups such as CFP, which also have Israeli members, due to their role being defined by a conservative, male-dominated society. This is because there is a fear among many Palestinians that participation in such joint projects will be accused of normalization of the occupation. However, after October 7th, CFP has noticed that more young women are joining their programs guided by their own desires for personal and professional development. *We hope that new generation of women is inspired to be change-makers and peace-builders as we believe that women play a vital and powerful role in conflict transformation.*

More about Rana's life in an interview at **Forbes**, an American Business Magazine, New Jersey, USA.

Let's name it: not just Islamophobia, but Anti-Palestinianism

The Intercept

From Joe Biden on down, liberals [in the USA] denounce anti-Muslim bias to avoid mentioning the scourge of hate against Palestinians. Hani Sabra, March 18, 2024



An overflow crowd listens from outside as community members filled the Prairie Activity and Rec Center for a vigil for 6-year-old Palestinian American Wadea Al-Fayoume on Oct. 17, 2023, in Plainfield, Ill. Photo: Scott Olson/Getty Images

Wadea al-Fayoume was an adorable 6-year-old Muslim boy - killed by his landlord in his suburban Chicago home on October 14, with 26 stab wounds. Politicians, especially prominent liberals, have responded to these and other violent attacks with somber statements condemning Islamophobia. To mark the start of Ramadan, President Joe Biden reminded Americans that *"Islamophobia has absolutely no place in the United States.*" On the surface, these appear to be substantive, positive moves taken by officials who appear genuinely concerned about a rise in anti-Muslim violence since October 7.

It's politically safer to speak generically about "countering Islamophobia" than to confront the phenomenon that has gripped America even tighter since October 2023: anti-Palestinianism. Obscuring the victims' Palestinian identity allows liberal politicians to profess decency and nod to identity politics. Biden, for instance, dispatched his administration's top-ranking Muslim, Dilawar Syed, to al-Fayoume's memorial service. Dilawar is not of Palestinian heritage, or even Arab.

That Palestinians shouldn't, can't, or don't exist is a common refrain of pro-Israel figures. The Zionist motto of *"a land without a people for a people without a land"* has been around for more than a century and a half. Avoiding anti-Palestinianism is not just incorrect; it also has

Wadea al-Fayoume war ein liebenswerter sechs-jähriger muslimischer Junge, der am 14. Oktober in seinem Haus in einem Vorort von Chicago von seinem Vermieter mit 26 Messerstichen getötet wurde. Politiker, insbesondere prominente Liberale, reagierten auf diese und andere gewalttätige Angriffe mit besorgten Erklärungen, in denen sie Islamophobie verurteilten. Zu Beginn des Ramadans erinnerte Präsident Joe Biden Amerika daran, dass *"Islamophobie in den Vereinigten Staaten absolut keinen Platz hat"*. Darum wurden von der Verwaltung - aufrichtig besorgt über den Anstieg von antimuslimischer Gewalt seit dem 7. Oktober - Massnahmen ergriffen, die oberflächlich gesehen positiv und substanziell sind.

Denn es ist politisch sicherer, allgemein vom *"Kampf gegen Islamophobie"* zu sprechen, als sich mit dem Phänomen auseinanderzusetzen, das Amerika seit dem 7. Oktober noch stärker im Griff hat: dem ***Antipalästinismus.*** Das Verschweigen der palästinensischen Identität der Opfer erlaubt es liberalen Politikern und Politikerinnen, Anstand zu demonstrieren und Identitätspolitik zu unterstützen. Biden zum Beispiel schickte den ranghöchsten Muslim seiner Regierung, Dilawar Syed, zur Gedenkfeier für al-Fayoume. Dilawar ist weder Palästinenser noch Araber

Es ist eine weit verbreitete Behauptung von Pro-Israel-Persönlichkeiten, dass Palästinenser und Palästinenserinnen nicht existieren sollten, könnten oder dürften. Das zionistische Motto *"ein Land ohne Volk für ein Volk ohne Land"* gibt es schon seit mehr als anderthalb Jahrhunderten. Die Vermeidung von Antipalästinismus ist nicht nur falsch, sondern hat auch schädliche Nebenwirkungen. Durch die fehlende Anerkennung wird der israelisch-palästinensische Konflikt als ein Kampf zwischen Juden und Muslimen dargestellt. Die beunruhigenden jüngsten Fälle von antipalästinensischer Gewalt in den USA durch diese Brille zu betrachten, ist ahistorisch, reduktiv und töricht.

Diese gefährliche sektiererische Sichtweise negiert auch die palästinensischen Christen und Christinnen. Sie setzen sich ebenso leidenschaftlich für ihre Befreiung ein wie palästinensische Muslime. Ebenso wie nicht-palästinensische Amerikaner und Amerikanerinnen – einschliesslich arabischer Amerikaner und Amerikanerinnen anderer nationaler Herkunft, Afro- jüdische und asiatische Amerikaner und Amerikanerinnen, nicht-muslimische LGBTQ+-Leute und unzählige andere, die Seite an Seite mit ihren palästinensischen Landsleuten gestanden haben. Israelische Bomben

damaging side effects. The lack of acknowledgment casts the Israeli–Palestinian conflict as a battle between Jews and Muslims. It is ahistorical, reductive, and foolish to view the troubling recent instances of anti-Palestinian violence in the U.S. through this lens.

This dangerous sectarian narrative also negates Palestinian Christians. They are just as passionate about their liberation as Palestinian Muslims. As are non-Palestinian Americans - including Arab Americans of other national origins, African Americans, Jewish Americans, Asian Americans, non-Muslim LGBTQ+ folks, and countless others - who have stood shoulder to shoulder with their Palestinian compatriots. Israeli bombs don't distinguish between Palestinian Muslims and Christians.

machen keinen Unterschied zwischen muslimischen und christlichen palästinensischen Menschen.



Students from Hunter College during a pro-Palestinian demonstration at the entrance of their campus in New York on Oct. 12, 2023. Photo: Michael Nigro/Pacific Press/Light Rocket via Getty Images

The consequences of settler violence and forced displacement on the health and wellbeing of Palestinian communities in Area C

Physicians for Human Rights



For over five years, we've been flooded with reports chronicling settler violence. However, this worn-out term obscures a grim reality: life beside settler outposts and farms entail daily exposure to oppressive and coercive mechanisms, systemic discrimination, and a continuous sense of insecurity and fear. Our latest position paper explores how constant exposure to such routine violence is detrimental to the health of Palestinians, highlighting the social and psychological repercussions. The latest position paper explores how constant exposure to such routine violence is detrimental to the health of Palestinians: Physicians for Human Rights, March 28, 2024

Armed Israeli settlers near the outpost of Malachei HaShalom, West Bank. (Oren Ziv)

Since October, Israel has escalated its land expropriation efforts in Area C of the occupied West Bank, along with the expulsion of dozens of Palestinian shepherding communities. Consequently, these communities have been severed from their traditional ways of life and means of livelihood, depriving them of crucial water sources and grazing lands essential for their livestock. Between 2021 and 2023, six communities were expelled, and following the escalation of

Seit Oktober hat Israel die Enteignung von Land im Gebiet C des besetzten Westjordanlandes und die Vertreibung dutzender palästinensischer Hirtengemeinschaften verstärkt. Dadurch wurden diese Gemeinschaften von ihrer traditionellen Lebensweise und ihren Lebensgrundlagen abgeschnitten, was sie um wichtige Wasserquellen und Weideflächen für ihr Vieh brachte. Zwischen 2021 und 2023 wurden sechs Gemeinschaften vertrieben, und nach der Eskalation der Siedlergewalt seit Oktober sind weitere sechzehn Gemeinschaften vertrieben worden.

settler violence since October, a further sixteen communities have been displaced.

Violence as a social determinant of health: These West Bank communities have been subjected to combined settler-military violence, which has included the blocking of roads; stone attacks targeting vehicles, residences, and shepherds; raids on homes, villages, and agricultural lands; setting fire to fields and olive groves; tree uprooting; and even assaults involving Molotov cocktails and live ammunition. This routine violence instills a perpetual state of fear and insecurity, which, beyond the immediate physical harm, leaves lasting psychological and emotional scars. These wounds extend beyond individual physical and emotional suffering, impacting the collective by eroding social cohesion, disrupting community structures, and diminishing the sense of belonging crucial for maintaining personal and communal resilience.



The belongings and remains of homes of Palestinian families in Ein Samia, West Bank. (Oren Ziv)

The continuous violence and inadequate response to it have resulted in the permanent displacement of these communities, accompanied by the loss of grazing lands and water sources. Consequently, residents have been left without a means of income or anyone to take responsibility for their economic security. This has also led to the disruption of traditional ways of life and cultural practices deeply linked to these communities' connection to the land.

Amid their forced displacement, the communal cohesion that endured through decades of Israeli occupation is now unraveling. Community members are being severed from their social networks, which previously provided them with a sense of belonging and security.



Members of the Kaabana Bedouin tribe in Wadi Kelt.Credit: David Bachar

Gewalt als soziale Determinante der Gesundheit: dieser Gemeinden im Westjordanland sind einer kombinierten Gewalt von Siedlern und Militär ausgesetzt, die sich in der Blockade von Strassen, Steinwürfen auf Fahrzeuge, Wohnhäuser und Hirten, Überfällen auf Häuser, Dörfer und landwirtschaftliche Flächen, dem Inbrandsetzen von Feldern und Olivenhainen, dem Entwurzeln von Bäumen und sogar in Angriffen mit Molotowcocktails und scharfer Munition äussert. Diese alltägliche Gewalt führt zu einem ständigen Zustand der Angst und Unsicherheit, der über die unmittelbaren körperlichen Schäden hinaus bleibende psychologische und emotionale Narben hinterlässt. Diese Wunden gehen über das individuelle körperliche und emotionale Leid hinaus und wirken sich auf das Kollektiv aus, indem sie den sozialen Zusammenhalt untergraben, die Gemeinschaftsstrukturen stören und das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl schwächen, das für die Aufrechterhaltung der persönlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Widerstandsfähigkeit entscheidend ist.

Die anhaltende Gewalt und die unzureichende Reaktion [der verantwortlichen Behörden] darauf haben zu einer dauerhaften Vertreibung dieser Gemeinschaften geführt, die mit dem Verlust von Weideflächen und Wasserquellen einhergeht. Infolgedessen haben die Bewohner weder eine Einkommensquelle noch jemanden, der für ihre wirtschaftliche Sicherheit verantwortlich ist. Dies hat auch zu einer Unterbrechung traditioneller Lebensweisen und kultureller Praktiken geführt, die eng mit der Bindung dieser Gemeinschaften an das Land verbunden sind.

Im Zuge der Zwangsumsiedlung zerfällt nun der kommunale Zusammenhalt, jahrzehntelang aufrechterhalten durch die Wehrhaftigkeit gegen die israelische Besatzung. Die Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft werden von ihren sozialen Netzwerken getrennt, die ihnen zuvor ein Gefühl der Zugehörigkeit und Sicherheit vermittelten.

“Ecocide” in Gaza: the scale of environmental destruction amounts to a war crime

The Guardian and Forensic Architecture

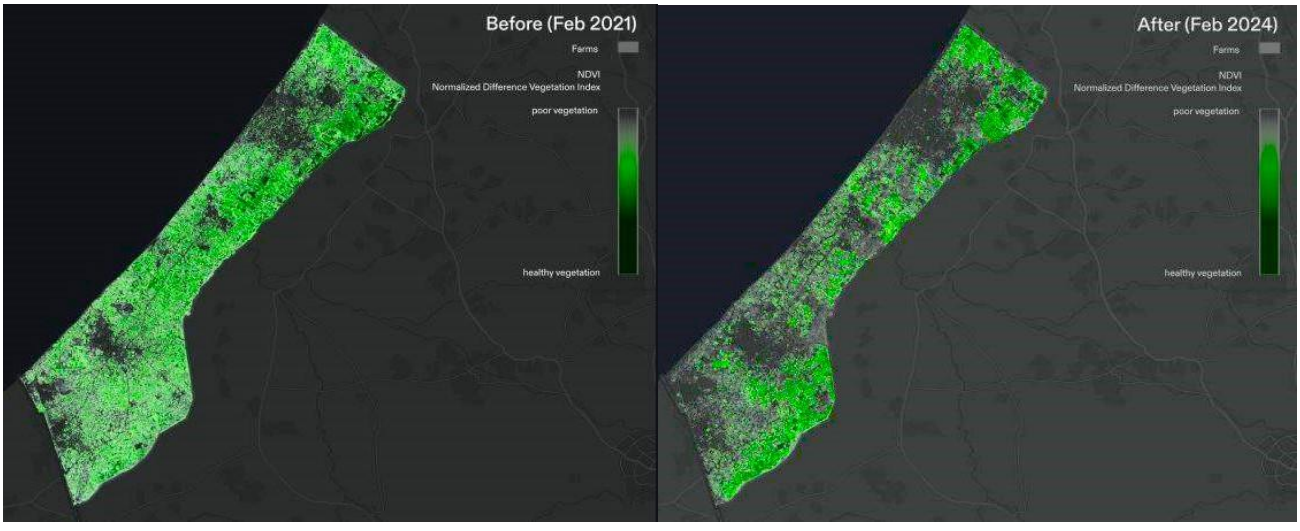
Satellite analysis revealed to the Guardian shows farms devastated and nearly half of the territory’s trees razed. Alongside mounting air and water pollution, experts say Israel’s onslaught on Gaza’s ecosystems has made the area unlivable. Kaamil Ahmed, Damien Gayle and Aseel Mousa in Gaza; March 29, 2024

The full extent of the damage in Gaza has not yet been documented, but analysis of satellite imagery provided to the Guardian shows the destruction of about 38-48% of tree cover and farmland. Olive groves and farms have been reduced to packed earth; soil and groundwater have been contaminated by munitions and toxins; the sea is choked with sewage and waste; the air polluted by smoke and particulate matter.

Researchers and environmental organisations say the destruction will have enormous effects on Gaza’s ecosystems and biodiversity. The scale and potential long-term impact of the damage have led to calls for it to be regarded as ***“ecocide”*** and investigated as a possible war crime. He Yin, an assistant professor of geography at Kent State University in the US, analysed satellite imagery showing that up to 48% of Gaza’s tree cover had been lost or damaged between 7 October and 21 March, 2024. Independent satellite analysis by *Forensic Architecture* (FA), a London-based research group that investigates state violence, found similar results.

Das volle Ausmass der Schäden im Gazastreifen ist noch nicht dokumentiert, aber die Analyse von Satellitenbildern, die dem Guardian zur Verfügung gestellt wurden, zeigt die Zerstörung von etwa 38-48 % des Baumbestands und des Ackerlands. Olivenhaine und Bauernhöfe sind nur noch ein Haufen Erde; Boden und Grundwasser sind durch Munition und Giftstoffe verseucht; das Meer ist mit Abwässern und Abfällen verdreckt; die Luft ist durch Rauch und Feinstaub verschmutzt.

Forschende und Umweltorganisationen sagen, dass die Zerstörung enorme Auswirkungen auf die Ökosysteme und die Artenvielfalt im Gazastreifen haben wird. Das Ausmass und die potenziellen langfristigen Auswirkungen der Schäden haben zu Forderungen geführt, diese als ***"Ökozid"*** zu bezeichnen und als mögliches Kriegsverbrechen zu untersuchen. He Yin, Assistenzprofessor für Geografie an der Kent State University in den USA, analysierte Satellitenbilder, die zeigen, dass zwischen dem 7. Oktober und dem 21. März 2024 bis zu 48 % des Baumbestands in Gaza verloren gegangen oder beschädigt worden sind. Eine unabhängige Satellitenanalyse von *Forensic Architecture* (FA), einer in London ansässigen Forschungsgruppe, die staatliche Gewalt untersucht, kam zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen.



NDVI analysis shows areas covered with vegetation. Map (left) shows plant life in Gaza in February 2021, and map (right) shows plant life in February 2024. Cloud free mosaics of Sentinel-2 satellite data between 20 January and 8 February of 2021 and 2024 is used as the bases of this NDVI study. (Forensic Architecture)

Before 7 October, farms and orchards covered about 170 sq km, or 47% of Gaza's total land area. By the end of February, FA estimates from satellite data that Israeli military activity had destroyed more than 65 sq km, or 38% of that land. As well as cultivated land, more than 7,500 greenhouses formed a vital part of the territory's agricultural infrastructure. Almost a third have been destroyed entirely, according to FA's analysis, ranging from up to 90% in the north of Gaza to about 40% around Khan Younis

Samaneh Moafi, FA's assistant director of research, describes the destruction as systematic. Researchers used satellite imagery to document a repeated process in multiple locations, she says: after initial damage from aerial bombardment, ground troops arrived and dismantled greenhouses completely, while tractors, tanks and vehicles uprooted orchards and fields of crops. *"What's left is devastation*," says Moafi. "*An area that is no longer livable*."

Vor dem 7. Oktober bedeckten landwirtschaftliche Betriebe und Obstplantagen etwa 170 km² bzw. 47 % der Gesamtfläche des Gazastreifens. Ende Februar schätzte die FA anhand von Satellitendaten, dass die israelischen Militäraktionen mehr als 65 km² oder 38 % dieser Fläche zerstört hatten. Neben dem Ackerland bildeten mehr als 7'500 Gewächshäuser einen wichtigen Teil der landwirtschaftlichen Infrastruktur des Gebiets. Laut FA-Analyse wurde fast ein Drittel komplett zerstört, von bis zu 90 Prozent im Norden des Gazastreifens bis zu etwa 40 Prozent in der Region um Khan Younis.

Samaneh Moafi, stellvertretende Forschungsdirektorin der FA, beschreibt die Zerstörung als systematisch. Mit Hilfe von Satellitenbildern hätten die Forschenden einen sich wiederholenden Prozess an verschiedenen Orten dokumentiert, sagt sie: nach anfänglichen Schäden durch Luftangriffe rückten Bodentruppen an und zerstörten Gewächshäuser vollständig, während Traktoren, Panzer und Fahrzeuge Obstplantagen und Felder mit Kulturpflanzen entwurzelten. *"Was bleibt, ist Verwüstung"*, sagt Moafi. *"Ein Gebiet, das nicht mehr bewohnbar ist."*

"Scholasticide" in Gaza: intentional and systematic destruction of Palestinian educational institutions

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor and AURDIP

More than 2'200 North American professors accuse Israel of 'Scholasticide'*: We, the under-signed, write to condemn Israel's systematic targeting of academics, students, educational institutions and cultural heritage sites in Gaza, in violation of international human rights, humanitarian and criminal law. These attacks are deeply personal. Some of us have taught Palestinian students, or collaborated with faculty from academic institutions in Gaza who have been killed or injured or who have seen their institutions destroyed. We mourn what these losses mean for world knowledge and culture, and for the future of the Palestinian people, and we stand in solidarity with our Palestinian colleagues and students and all others who deplore this scholasticide.* April 7, 2024



Israa University is destroyed by Israeli forces in a controlled demolition in Gaza city in January 2024. Wafa News Agency

Detailing the impacts of Israeli attacks on university education, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor reports that: *"Three university presidents have been killed in the Israeli attacks, along with more than 95 university deans and professors. Meanwhile, 88,000 students have been deprived of receiving their university education.*

Der Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor berichtet über die Auswirkungen der israelischen Angriffe auf die Hochschulbildung: "*Drei Universitätspräsidenten wurden bei den israelischen Angriffen getötet, ebenso wie mehr als 95 Professorinnen und Professoren. In der Zwischenzeit wurde 88'000 Studierende die Möglichkeit genommen, eine Universitätsausbildung zu erhalten.*

All 12 universities in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged. The International Monetary Fund estimates that the war on Gaza has cost the education sector $720 million. On 11 October 2023, Israeli airstrikes destroyed the Islamic University in Gaza City – one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the besieged Strip. On 17 January 2024, the Israeli military used a controlled explosion to destroy Al-Isra University. Before doing so, Israel had converted the university into military barracks and then a temporary detention center.

Israel's attacks have also devastated children's education. To date, nearly 6,000 school-age children have been killed, and another 10,000 have been wounded. Some 964 teachers and school administrators have been killed and 960 injured. As of January 2024, 378 schools in Gaza, accounting for 76% of the school buildings in the Strip, had been damaged; 117 of these have sustained major damage or have been completely destroyed. All schools run by UNRWA have closed, and more than 625,000 students and 23,000 teachers have been affected by school closures



English teacher Tariq Al-Annabi holds a class in an outdoor UN-run school in Rafah, Gaza Strip, on Nov. 26, 2023, during a temporary ceasefire. (AP Photo/Hatem Ali)



A child stands amid the rubble of a school hit during an Israeli strike in Rafah in November 2023. AFP

Alle 12 Universitäten in Gaza wurden zerstört oder beschädigt. Der Internationale Währungsfonds schätzt, dass der Krieg gegen Gaza den Bildungssektor 720 Millionen Dollar gekostet hat. Am 11. Oktober 2023 zerstörten israelische Luftangriffe die Islamische Universität in Gaza-Stadt - eine der ältesten Hochschuleinrichtungen in dem belagerten Streifen. Am 17. Januar 2024 zerstörte das israelische Militär die Al-Isra-Universität durch eine kontrollierte Explosion. Zuvor hatte Israel die Universität in eine Militärkaserne und dann in ein vorübergehendes Gefangenenlager umgewandelt.

Die israelischen Angriffe haben auch die Bildung der Kinder zerstört. Bis heute wurden fast 6'000 Kinder im schulpflichtigen Alter getötet und weitere 10'000 verwundet. Etwa 964 Lehrer und Lehrerinnen und Schulverwalter wurden getötet und 960 verletzt. Im Januar 2024 waren 378 Schulen im Gazastreifen, die 76 % der Schulgebäude im Gazastreifen ausmachen, beschädigt; 117 von ihnen wurden stark beschädigt oder vollständig zerstört. Alle vom UNRWA betriebenen Schulen wurden geschlossen, und mehr als 625'000 Schüler und Schülerinnen sowie 23'000 Lehrpersonen waren von den Schulschliessungen betroffen.

Airdrops Are a Health Hazard, Especially for Malnourished Children!

Children are dying of malnutrition, people risking gunfire to reach aid convoys and surviving on animal fodder and soup made from leaves and grass: a level of hopelessness and food insecurity that could turn a humanitarian disaster into something much worse. On 19 March, the World Food Program (WFP) released these appalling hunger figures, showing that 300,000 people in the northern governorates of Gaza face starvation in the coming weeks! And what does the world do: more or less useless airdrops to soothe their consciences. Thousands of people in Gaza are waiting for aid from the air, but only a few, mainly strong healthy people - in general men - will receive it. Women and children have to go without. But it gets worse: such unorganized airdrops kill people, not only because they can be hit by the dropped aid, but much more so because the food itself can kill. Young children are particularly affected, because the consumption of uncontrolled food by malnourished or even starving people can be life-threatening.



These airdrops are nothing more than a symbol of the failure of aid efforts on the ground and also absolve Israel of its responsibility under international law. Israel is responsible for maintaining the supply of water, food and medical care to the civilian population. In Gaza, the Israeli military should both secure the drop zones and ensure that the food is handed over to the humanitarian organizations responsible for distribution, such as UNWRA or the NGO World Central Kitchen (WCK).

Israel is not only failing to fulfil its responsibility, but on the contrary is obstructing the aid by shooting at the helpers. And what are Israel's accomplices doing? Nothing, and therefore the world, including Switzerland, is complicit in the starvation of the civilian population in Gaza. And Yes, professionally organized airdrops could help, as a WFP report from 2016 shows. MLB

Humanitarian food parcels are dropped over Gaza from a British RAF Plane. Credit: LEAH JONES / AFP

References

- ***Combatants for Peace*** (ist eine von Israelis und Palästinensern gegründete NGO, die sich in Israel und den Palästinensischen Autonomiegebieten in Form von gewaltlosem Widerstand für eine friedliche Lösung des Nahostkonflikts einsetzt): https://cfpeace.org/
- ***The Intercept*** (is an online American nonprofit news organization that publishes articles and podcasts): anti-Palstinianism
- ***Physicians for Human Rights*** (eine nichtstaatliche, gemeinnützige Menschenrechtsorganisation mit Sitz in Jaffa): https://www.phr.org.il/en/
- ***The Guardian*** *(*ist eine britische Tageszeitung, 1821 in Manchester gegründet, im Besitz einer Stiftung; unabhängig*):* https://www.theguardian.com/uk
- ***Forensic Architecture*** (FA is a research agency based at Goldsmiths, University of London. The mandate is to develop, employ, and disseminate new techniques, methods, and concepts for investigating state and corporate violence): https://forensic-architecture.org/
- ***Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor*** (a youth-led independent NGO that advocates for the human rights of all persons across Europe and the MENA region): Scholasticide
- ***AURDIP*** (**A**ssociation des **U**niversitaires pour le **R**espect du **D**roit **I**nternational en **P**alestine is a substantial campaigning voice in France, NGO): North American Academics