

The Toll of Intent: Looking at the Genocidal Impact of Israel's Assault on Gaza



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“Gaza is the city of evil [...] We will turn all the places where Hamas is organized and hiding into cities of ruins. I say to the residents of Gaza - get out of there now. We will act everywhere and with all our strength.”

Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel



“The unequivocal goal of the war we are in the midst of is ... the complete dismantling of [military and] civilian capabilities.”

Bezael Yoel Smotrich, Israeli Finance Minister

“[The] only humane solution for Gaza is the mass deportation of its inhabitants.”

Itamar Ben-Gvir, Minister of National Security of Israel



“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 act accordingly.”

Yoav Gallant Former Minister of Defense of Israel



Executive Summary

Beginning to understand the human cost of Israel's current occupation of Gaza is necessary for proposing policy towards Israel and Palestine. The situation on the ground in Palestine should guide our strategy for supporting Palestinians in rebuilding their lives and communities. It also helps us hold Israel accountable for the impact of its crimes in Gaza.

This report compiles the growing evidence of the scale of horror experienced by Palestinians in Gaza, along with the human lives lost due to Israel's crimes. It synthesizes existing literature on the death toll in Gaza, within the context of the emerging consensus that Israel's attacks on Gaza constitute genocide.² To do this, we conducted a review of grey literature produced by the United Nations, thinktanks, and prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Throughout, we update previous calculations to the current date and conflict context. We also provided a range of potential indirect death totals based on the different death ratio scenarios outlined in the literature on violent civil conflict.

Key findings

- As of Oct 19, 2025, direct deaths in Gaza are estimated between 64,600-96,100 based on differing analysis of the Gaza Ministry of Health's (GMOH) official count of 68,500. The case is extremely strong for the GMOH number to be understood as the floor.
- With certainty we can project that Israel's attacks will kill at least 193,800 or 8% of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza before October 7, 2023; with over 120,100 or 5% already having been killed based on conservative estimates.
- Projections that posit that Israel's actions will kill roughly 480,800 or 20% of the pre-October 7th, 2023 population of Gaza are highly plausible and should be utilized in policymaking and planning.
- Higher ratio scenarios suggest the possibility of over 682,000 – 961,600, or 28-40%, of Palestinians in Gaza eventually being killed as a result of Israel's operations. These scenarios should be planned for.
- The most extreme "worst-case" scenario of Israel's attacks projects an eventual loss of life equal to roughly 67% of Gaza's pre-Oct 7th, 2023 population. Confidence is much lower for projections like these and they should be approached with the utmost caution and forbearance.
- In all projections, the vast majority of deaths have occurred because of Israel's attacks on the social determinants of health in Gaza. These so-called "indirect deaths" will continue for years, with approximately 38% of total deaths occurring within a five-year timespan after fighting stops. Some of these deaths are preventable and should serve the basis for policy and

planning.

- The case that Israel has committed genocide is strong and supported by a growing body of grey and scholarly literature from the UN and NGOs. The case is especially strong within the historical context of Israel's settler colonial pursuit of annexation of all of historic Palestine, with the full intention of removing the vast majority of Palestinians from that land through ethnic cleansing or genocide.

Summary of Recommendations

Given its legal obligations, we recommend that the Government of Canada:

1. Officially recognize that Israel has perpetrated genocide in Gaza.
2. Support South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the ICJ.
3. Accept Palestinians evacuating from Gaza into Canada through all migration streams.
4. Publicly defend the multilateral institutions from attacks by Israel and the US.
5. Conduct independent war crimes investigations in conduct of Canadians in Gaza.
6. Stop the remaining flow of Canadian-made weapons to Israel.
7. Impose escalating economic sanctions on Israel until it ends the illegal occupation of the State of Palestine.
8. Provide leadership in rebuilding Gaza's public health and population health systems.

Given Canada's legal obligations, we recommend that all Parliamentarians:

1. Recognize Israel's actions in Gaza as a genocide by passing motions in Parliament.
2. Publicly declare that Israel has committed genocide and call for immediate escalating sanctions.
3. Vote in favour of Bill C-233, the *No More Loopholes Act*.



“It's an entire nation out there that is responsible. It's not true, this rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved. It's absolutely not true.”

Isaac Herzog, President of Israel

“Nakba to the enemy now! This day is our Pearl Harbor. We will still learn the lessons. Right now, one goal: Nakba! A Nakba that will overshadow the Nakba of 48. A Nakba in Gaza and a Nakba for anyone who dares to join!..”

Ariel Kallner, Member of the Israeli Knesset (Likud)



“There should be 2 goals for this victory: 1. There is no more Muslim land in the Land of Israel... After we make it the land of IL, Gaza should be left as a monument, like Sodom...”

MK Amit Halevi, Member of the Israeli Knesset (Likud)

“I don't care about Gaza. I literally don't care at all. They can go out and swim in the sea. I want to see dead bodies of terrorists around gaza.”

May Golan, Minister for the Advancement of the Status of Women in Israel



Introduction

The Canadian public discourse on the death toll and impact of Israel's ethnic cleansing campaign in Gaza is constrained by a lack of attention to the scale of the devastation caused by Israel's operations. Our analysis demonstrates that the scope of Israel's destruction should be understood to be decidedly genocidal. There is no other way to cause the annihilation witnessed in Gaza, except to desire and plan for how to destroy Palestinian society so completely. Additionally, it is crucial for civil society to fully absorb the violence experienced by Palestinians in Gaza and the level of anti-Palestinian racism present in Israel to justify this murderous rampage. This reality will circumscribe the potential routes to justice and peace.

To make this case, this report synthesizes the growing evidence of the horror experienced by Palestinians in Gaza, along with the human lives lost due to Israel's crimes. In our first section, we summarize the literature on the war crimes targeting the social determinants of health committed by Israel that have produced the potential for such staggering projected indirect death tolls among Palestinians in Gaza. In the second section we synthesize the literature on the direct death toll in Gaza, where we present three different direct death counts, 1) WINEP, the most conservative count, 2) the official Gaza Ministry of Health death toll, and 3) the 41% undercount death count. To do this, we conducted a review of scholarly and grey literature produced by the United Nations, thinktanks, and prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the human toll in Gaza. These three different death counts are then used in our third section to apply the literature on indirect deaths in violent conflict to project an indirect death toll projection for Gaza. Throughout, we update previous calculations to the current date and conflict context. Ultimately, we provide an estimate for total number of Palestinians killed by Israel based on the literature. In our fourth and final section, we synthesize the emerging consensus that Israel's attacks on Gaza constitute genocide,³ and apply these to the question of death tolls and Israel's occupation strategy. We end by reviewing Canada's responsibilities under the genocide convention triggered by the reality of Israel's actions.

By looking at the scope and scale of Israel's violence against the entire Palestinian society we cannot conclude anything other than Israel is trying to intentionally wipe it off the map. If this isn't a case of genocide, then that term has lost its meaning, resonance, and importance in international law. It is our hope that by demonstrating the scope and scale of the violence in Gaza we can either finally get the Canadian government to act with urgency or finally take off its mask of civility and reveal the deadly anti-Palestinian racism still embedded within the halls of power. We know that the Canadian public will demand accountability from leaders in Canada and Israel if they truly understand the human cost of this terrible ongoing tragedy. The truth cannot escape the light.



“We needed to go through that to realize that the Palestinians are an unnecessary group? That what they need is a Nakba 2?”

Naveh Dromi, Journalist, remarks made on Israel’s Channel 14 on October 8, 2023.



“The civilians are not "clean", our revenge is on them, we're coming to charge the price from them.”

Yinon Magal, Journalist, remarks made on Israel’s Channel 14 on October 11, 2023.



“I spoke about a million bodies not as a goal, I said that if, in order to finally eliminate the military capabilities of Hamas, including Sinwar and Deif, we need a million bodies, then let there be a million bodies.”

Roy Sharon, Journalist



Israel should “invade Gaza and expel its citizens” with the intention of building new settlements, which he says would be the “only” way to protect Israeli children.

Hallel Biton Rosen, Journalist



Israel's Siege on Gaza

Beyond the obvious deaths from bullets and bombs, the astronomical projected indirect death tolls identified in the key findings of our analysis are the probable impact of Israel's strategy in Gaza. The scale of Israel's destruction of Gaza, combined with the population's inability to flee due to restrictions on exits, has made mass death unavoidable for Palestinians. The cumulative impacts of Israel's policies suggest not only a blatant disregard for human life and international humanitarian law, but also an intentional strategy to make life in Gaza uninhabitable in the present and foreseeable future. Israel thus coerces Palestinians into an illusion of choice: die in Gaza, a nearly uninhabitable killing zone, or 'voluntarily migrate' with no right of return through Israeli channels, thus vacating the land for Israeli conquest.⁴ The indirect death toll in Gaza is the result of Israel's systemic and targeted strategy of siege and bombardment to destroy the social determinants of health across Gaza.

These policies include:

1. Imposing food insecurity, controlling access, and blockading all essential items
 - The UN reported on October 1, 2025 that the entire population of Gaza faced "crisis," "emergency" or "catastrophic" levels of food insecurity.⁵ According to estimates by the World Peace Foundation, as of August 2025 at least 10,000 people have died of famine.⁶
 - For 11 full weeks, from March 2, 2025 to May 18, 2025, Israel's blockade of Gaza was absolute, with no supplies of any kind (even food and medicine) entering.⁷
 - Although the United Nations states that levels of famine in Gaza require that there be a minimum of 600 aid trucks entering Gaza daily,⁸ Israel's own figures indicate that since October 2023, it has permitted a daily average of under 150 aid trucks.⁹
 - Israel has blocked the importation of therapeutic food necessary to feed Palestinians whose nutritional systems can no longer process ordinary food.¹⁰
 - Israel attempted to ban the UN and international NGOs from providing aid and shift aid flows to a militarized aid model under the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). The violent actions of GHF contractors scared aid seekers away by conducting massacres at aid sites.¹¹ Additionally, Israel deployed military units around aid sites that intimidated and killed aid seekers.
 - As of August 2025, only 1.5% of Gaza's cropland was both accessible and undamaged.¹² More in **Figure 1**.

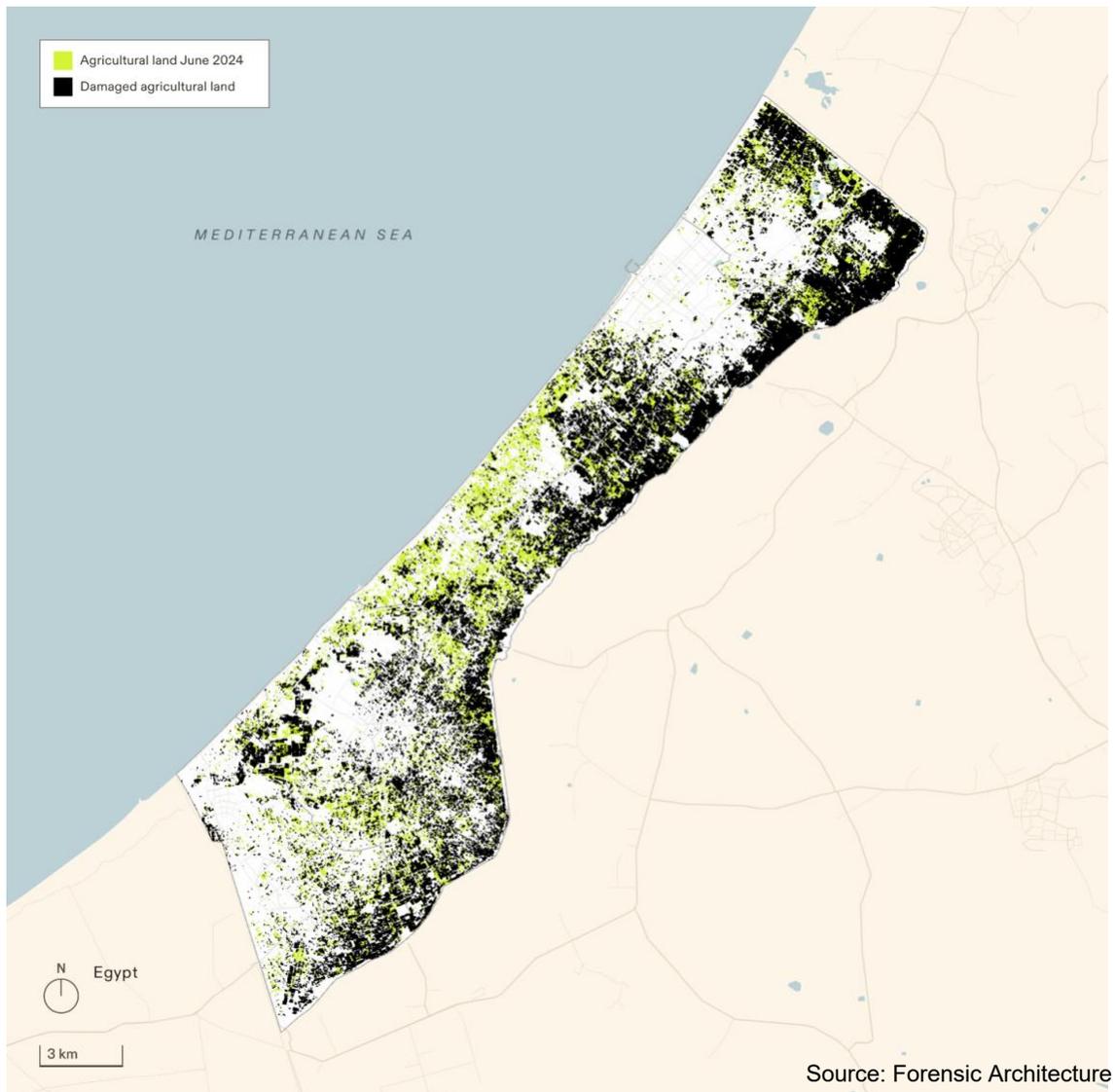


Figure 1: Israel’s attack on agricultural lands

2. Destroying essential infrastructure such as water treatment and desalination plants, medical facilities, and power generation facilities:
 - As of February 2025, more than 80% of water and sanitation infrastructure had been damaged or destroyed, 85% of sewage pumping stations had been destroyed, and water supply was down 93% in two of Gaza’s five governorates.¹³ Satellite imagery showed that Israel destroyed the solar panels of at least four of Gaza’s six wastewater treatment plants with military bulldozers.¹⁴ As a result, in October 2025, one million people have access to fewer than six litres of daily drinking water, which the UN describes as the “emergency minimum.”¹⁵
 - As of May 2025, at least 94% of Gaza’s hospitals were damaged or destroyed and only 2,000 hospital beds were available in the entire territory.¹⁶ As of

September 2025, researchers determined that only four of 25 essential medicines (e.g., insulin) were generally available in healthcare facilities.¹⁷ In a recent study in the *British Medical Journal*, foreign medical personnel reported “operating on emergency room floors without anesthesia or sterile tools.”¹⁸ The lead author of this report said that despite their experience in other combat zones, the vast majority of personnel described injuries in Gaza as “the worst thing that they’ve ever seen.”¹⁹ See **Figure 2**.

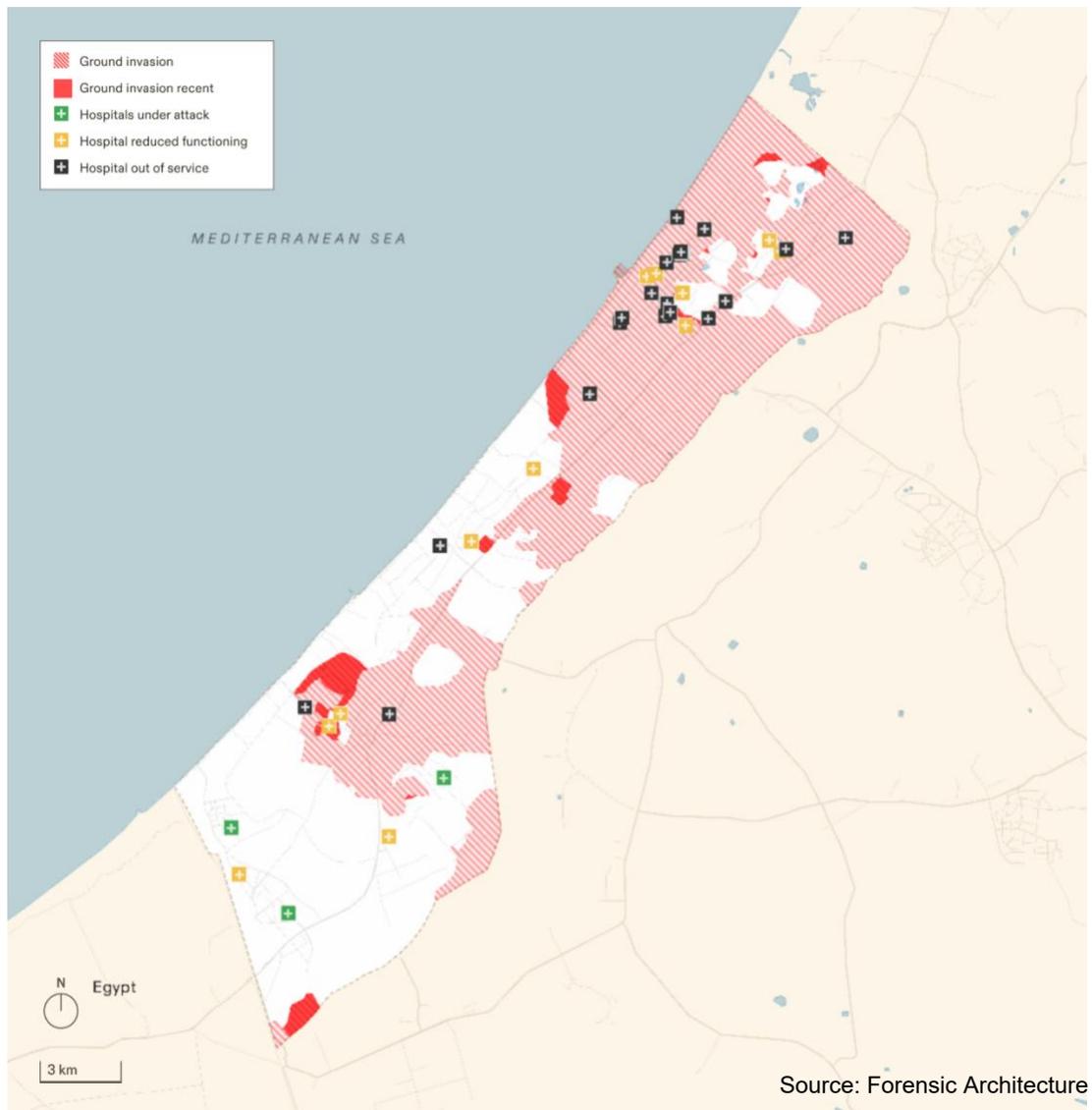


Figure 2: Israel’s attack on hospitals

3. Destroying Gaza’s housing stock and other civilian structures through aerial bombardment and planned demolitions, forcing displacement
 - As of February 2025, 62% of Gaza’s housing stock had been destroyed,²⁰ leaving 1.2 million Palestinians unhoused.²¹

- With 88% of Gaza falling within an Israeli military zone or under a displacement order, as of July 2025, its population had been forced into fewer than 45 km², about the size of Charlottetown, PEI.²²
- As of August 2025, 192,812 structures (78% of those in Gaza) have been damaged or destroyed.²³ Much of that destruction has occurred outside of combat operations, with thousands of buildings (including entire towns) calmly bulldozed²⁴ by civilian contractors paid up to \$2,000 per demolished structure.²⁵ See **Figure 3**.

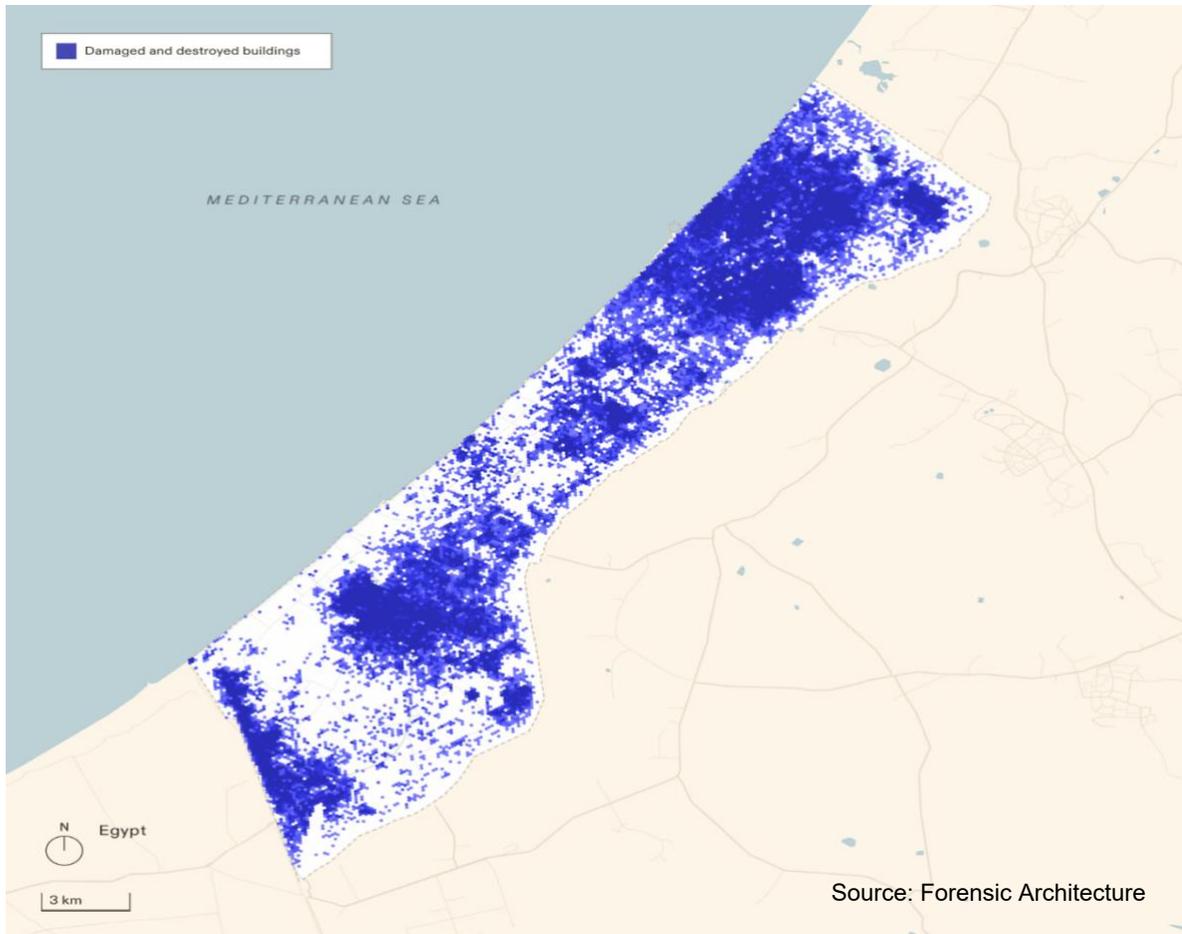


Figure 3: Israel’s attack on infrastructure

4. Israel has targeted Hamas’ civil authority in Gaza to sow disorder among the population by empowering local militias to oppose Hamas and disrupt Palestinian society.
 - Israel has allowed looters to operate with impunity in Israeli controlled areas of Gaza and has been asked by the US to stop targeting police officers and other civilians in its bombardment.²⁶
 - Israel has armed opposition factions and clans in Gaza to oppose Hamas and stir up additional civil disorder. One factional group armed by Israel is Abu Shabab and they have been linked by the UN to looting of aid.²⁷

- ACLED’s analysis points toward significant intracommunal violence precipitated by the power vacuum created by Israel’s elimination of Hamas.²⁸ **Figure 4** shows the various locations of armed groups and clans challenging Hamas’ dominance in Gaza, especially in important population centres and key border crossings.²⁹

Intra-Palestinian violence in Gaza showing locations of clans

7 October 2023 - 10 October 2025

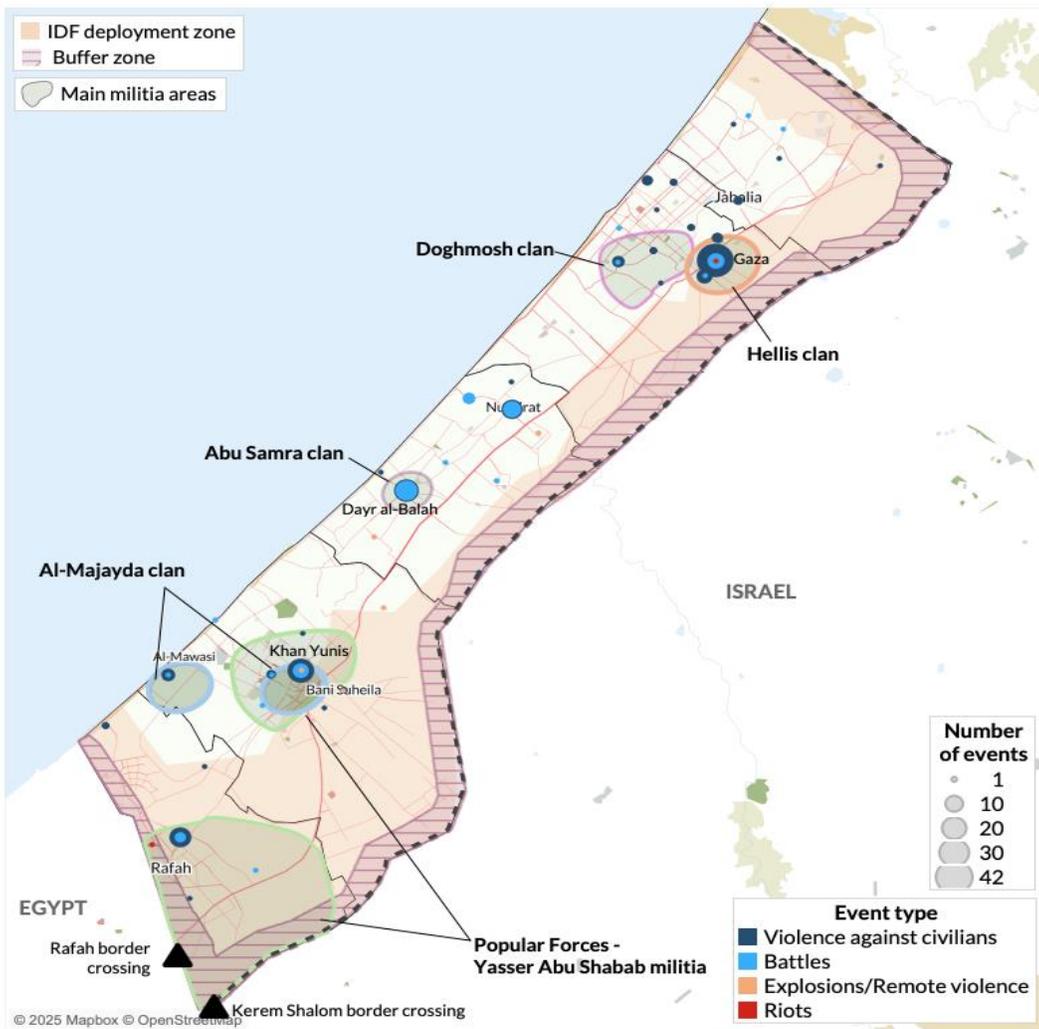
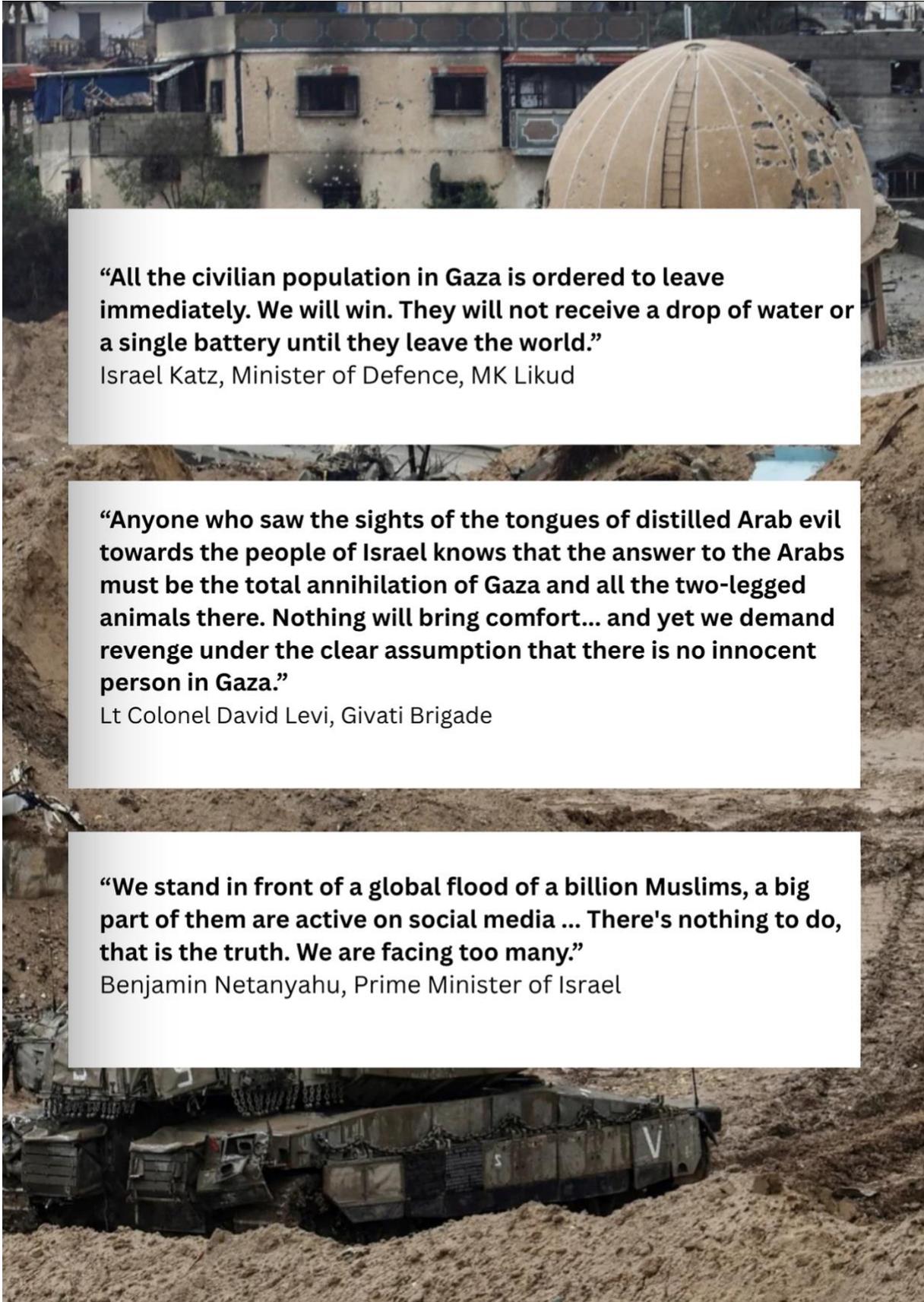


Figure 4: Intracommunal Violence in Gaza

From our synthesis of the analysis available on Israel’s activity in Gaza, we contend that Israel’s strategy has been to maximize death based on altering the basic conditions for civil life to flourish in Gaza. Much of Gaza has not just been devastated, but outright annihilated. Nothing that sustains human life has been spared by Israel’s campaign of destruction. These practices have

led to the massive projections for indirect death detailed in the sections below and are the basis for the rationale of applying the higher ratios in the literature on indirect death. Civil breakdown has been made inevitable by Israel's war strategy.



“All the civilian population in Gaza is ordered to leave immediately. We will win. They will not receive a drop of water or a single battery until they leave the world.”

Israel Katz, Minister of Defence, MK Likud

“Anyone who saw the sights of the tongues of distilled Arab evil towards the people of Israel knows that the answer to the Arabs must be the total annihilation of Gaza and all the two-legged animals there. Nothing will bring comfort... and yet we demand revenge under the clear assumption that there is no innocent person in Gaza.”

Lt Colonel David Levi, Givati Brigade

“We stand in front of a global flood of a billion Muslims, a big part of them are active on social media ... There's nothing to do, that is the truth. We are facing too many.”

Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel

Direct civilian deaths in Gaza

Understanding the human toll in Gaza begins, but does not end with looking at the direct violent deaths. Since October 7, 2023, Gaza's Ministry of Health (GMOH) has reported 68,200³⁰ direct deaths from Israeli military operations and attacks by their proxies like Abu Shabab's (Popular Forces) and other clan militia.³¹ In July 2025, it released a list of Palestinians killed in Gaza to date, identified by name, age, sex and identification number (which are recorded in Israel's Population Registry).³² While pro-Israel groups have repeatedly claimed that the GMOH figures are unreliable, NATO members and Israel rely on the GMOH data, and their intelligence services view the figures as generally accurate.³³ For example, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), a pro-Israel think tank, released a report critical of the GMOH numbers. Yet WINEP's own report indicated that the daily death rate was 312 Palestinians between Oct-Dec 2023, then a daily death rate of 59 Palestinians between Jan 2024-Jan 2025. WINEP's numbers would project to a death toll of roughly 64,600 as of Oct 7, 2025.³⁴ This is very close to the GMOH's own list. Additionally, Airwars, a watchdog NGO organization focused on civilian harm, conducted a matching study of over 3000 deaths from open-source data with the GMOH data and found 75% of the deaths found in open-source data matched the GMOH list,³⁵ demonstrating the reliability of the GMOH list.

Despite the reliability, the official GMOH figure is understood by many analysts to be more than likely an undercount because it only includes the identified dead. According to the GMOH in Jan 2024, their list excluded: 1) the Palestinians that the United Nations believed who were buried under the rubble;³⁶ 2) unidentified persons who arrived at hospital; 3) unidentified persons whose bodies were released by Israel; 4) those buried by their families without passing through a hospital; and 5) casualties in northern Gaza have stopped being reported since the information system was disabled in Nov 2023.³⁷ Furthermore, a paper published in the leading medical journal *The Lancet* estimated in February 2025 that the GMOH had underreported direct mortality by 41 percent.³⁸ Based on the scenario that deaths are undercounted by 41%, the current number of Palestinians directly killed by Israel is projected to be over 96,100. That calculation aligns almost exactly with the conclusions of an additional medical study, published in *medRxiv* by Michael Spagat et al., wherein they estimated roughly 75,000 violent deaths had occurred as of January 5, 2025.³⁹

The reason the higher estimates seem plausible is because the Israeli operation in Gaza was the most intense and destructive air campaign witnessed in the 21st century, according to Airwars. Airwars claims that, "at least 5,139 civilians were killed in Gaza in 25 days in October 2023. This is nearly four times more civilians reported killed in a single month than in any conflict Airwars has documented since it was established in 2014."⁴⁰ The direct violent death count is plausibly so high because of the unprecedented nature of Israel's rules of engagement in Gaza. Since October 2023, the IDF has engaged in nearly 21,900 conflict events in Gaza, including more than 11,110 air and drone strikes, over 6250 shelling and missile attacks, and 1500 armed clashes.⁴¹ Importantly, Israel has used AI to generate target lists, increased the acceptable number of civilian dead per-fighter killed,⁴² and encouraged a culture of lawlessness and murderousness among the Israeli military.⁴³

While GMoH does not distinguish between civilians and combatants, pro-Israel sources, like WINEP and Henry Jackson Society, have tried to question the numbers by pointing out that a plurality of the dead are so-called “fighting age men” (49%).⁴⁴ This suggestion that all fighting age men are legitimate targets is a shameful attack on their legal status as civilians. Moreover, leaked intelligence indicates that the Israeli military itself estimated that, as of May 2025, fewer than 9,000 of the dead were members of the military wings of Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This amounts to 17% of the total violently killed based on the official death toll at the time.⁴⁵ It should be assumed that the remaining balance of 83 percent were therefore civilians. This points to a disproportionate toll on Palestinian civilians and systemic violations of humanitarian law. Applying those same percentages to the current official figure would suggest that Israel has now directly killed at least 56,600 Palestinian civilians in Gaza. In models where mortality is 41% higher than GMoH figures, this would project to be at least 79,700 civilians directly killed by Israel in Gaza with roughly 51% of those killed being children, women, and elderly men. These direct death counts serve as the basis for developing projections of the true impact of Israel’s actions.

“On the first night we had to take down 50,000 Gazans, blood revenge. Cabinet discussions later, humanitarian later, prisoners and missing persons later. The first check - blood revenge. This is what Ben Gurion knew.”[

Eliyahu Yossian, Award winning Israeli researcher



“The whole Gaza Strip needs to be empty. Flattened. Just like in Auschwitz. Let it be a museum for all the world to see what Israel can do. Let no one reside in the Gaza Strip for all the world to see.”

David Azoulay, Mayor of Metula

"Gaza must be erased!!! Erased!!! Including everything, without leaving a spec of dust from the place from which humanoid animals such as these people are coming out. Period."

Doron Ben-David, Actor



“You may think you’re being merciful to a child, but you’re not - you’re being vicious to the ultimate victim this child will grow up to kill - erase every memory of ‘amalek’ - meaning men women and children do not have the right to exist.”

Yaron Reuven, Rabbi and Tiktoker

Calculating Indirect Deaths in Gaza

Generally, the number of direct deaths in conflict zones from violence is surpassed by indirect deaths. Indirect deaths are those resulting from deliberate military actions and intentional policies of the occupying power, but not simply due to direct violent attack.⁴⁶ The deaths include those caused by lack of food and potable water, deprivation of medical care, and other preventable causes. In sum, indirect deaths represent the deaths caused by the erosion of the social determinants of health in, and around, a conflict zone.⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch notes that “it is evident that the number of deaths is likely significantly higher than what has been reported by Gaza’s Ministry of Health (GMOH), and that deaths that have resulted from disease, malnutrition, dehydration, and other complications resulting from a lack of clean water and sanitation have largely gone unreported as they are not included in the GMOH’s official death toll.”⁴⁸ As we will argued earlier, Israel’s occupation strategy is to deliberately create the conditions for mass indirect death in Gaza by eliminating the civilian infrastructure that provides for the social determinants of health of Palestinians, and that is why calculating indirect death is so significant. This is also why international humanitarian law bans these dangerous practices; from centuries of brutal experience, we all know these actions are what causes mass death in war.

Indirect death counts are based on modeling the excess mortality over baseline, and the literature on indirect conflict deaths is well established academically and methodologically, especially by the Geneva Declaration Secretariat (GDS). In their 2008 meta-study, the GDS posit that while the ratio may vary widely depending on the conflict’s context, recent violent conflicts generally cause between three and fifteen indirect deaths for each direct death recorded. Further, they argue a ratio of 4:1 indirect deaths to violent deaths is a safe estimate with a high confidence rating.⁴⁹ Differences in the ratio of direct to indirect deaths depends on the level of development before the conflict starts, the length of the hostilities, the intensity of fighting, access to basic care and services, and humanitarian relief efforts.⁵⁰

While figures for indirect deaths in Gaza must necessarily remain projections, some assessments based on past conflicts have been made:

- In July 2024, a study in *The Lancet* determined that, based on the then-current total of 37,396 direct deaths, 186,000 was a “not implausible” figure of indirect deaths.⁵¹ A similar multiplier (5:1) today would yield 341,000 indirect deaths.
- In October 2024, a letter from a group of 99 American medical personnel who had served in Gaza to then-President Joe Biden included a “conservative” estimate of 62,413 deaths from malnutrition and disease.⁵²
- Although Gaza’s population stood at approximately 2.4 million before October 7, 2023,⁵³ in February 2025 President Donald Trump announced plans to forcibly expel its inhabitants and referred to a total of “1.7 or 1.8 million” Palestinians. As experts have noted, the discrepancy suggests a far higher death toll than reported by the Ministry of Health.⁵⁴ We could thus infer from this that Trump may have been briefed that a range of 600,000-700,000 Palestinians could have been killed or fled from Gaza.

According to the 2008 meta-study on indirect deaths from violent conflict, the modeling of indirect deaths varies significantly based on the multiplier used. Several modern conflicts, such as Angola, Congo, and South Sudan, have resulted in a ratio of roughly 9:1 indirect deaths to direct deaths.⁵⁵ If the proportion is similar in Gaza, then the GMoH's death registry results in a rough projection of 613,800 indirect deaths, or over 865,400 indirect deaths if the official figure is indeed a 41% undercount. The 865,400 indirect deaths projection would represent over 35% of Gaza's prewar population in of itself. The highest ratio identified in the meta study - of 15.7:1, in Sierra Leone⁵⁶ - would yield over 1.07 million projected indirect deaths (or nearly 1.51 million or 62% of the pre-war Gaza population, assuming an undercount scenario). Those figures represent the most extreme worst-case scenario seen in modern warfare. That said, the scale of destruction in Gaza is so significant that the worst-case scenarios ought to be entertained and tested. Israel's operations in Gaza have been characterized by unprecedented leveling of the territory, constant attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, the inability of most civilians to freely leave Gaza, and Israel's use of shocking rules of engagement. Israel has brazenly and systematically destroyed the conditions for life in Gaza, leading to the possibility of catastrophic indirect death counts projected above.

Nonetheless, it seems more likely than not that the ratio in Gaza is on the high end of the range. While only field research could determine whether the extreme figures are indeed plausible, even the meta-study's "reasonable average estimate" of 4:1⁵⁷ would make Israel responsible for a total of over 272,800 to 384,600 indirect deaths of Palestinians. This means that Israel's policies in Gaza, based on a reasonable projection, will kill between 341,000-480,800 Palestinians or equivalent of at least 14-20% of Gaza's pre-October 7th, 2023 population.

The reasons that these are projections rather than simply estimates of the already dead is because the indirect deaths will not stop the day Israel finally ceases bombardment of Gaza. The Palestinian death toll from Israel's genocide will continue to climb even as the amount of violent direct deaths decline. This is because the annihilation of the social determinants of health in Gaza will take decades to fully repair and stop excess mortality over baseline.⁵⁸ The United Nations Environmental Programme predicts that chronic disease from exposure to heavy metals and other toxins, left behind by Israeli ordinance, will affect the Palestinian population's health for decades.⁵⁹

Past conflicts provide a roadmap of Gaza's future. For example, the International Rescue Committee's series of mortality surveys in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) found that over 2.1 million deaths (of the 5.4 million deaths) occurred after the formal end of war in 2002. The study period ended in 2007, thus there could have been even more indirect deaths that occurred.⁶⁰ The over decade-long blockade of Gaza, the two-year restrictions of humanitarian supplies, and the total destruction of civilian infrastructure foreshadow a similarly grim future for Gaza. It is possible that 38% of the deaths are still to come in a period of five years after the cessation of hostilities, if the DRC case were to serve as a model of post-conflict mortality. If the Trump peace plan were to hold and violence ended today, this could still translate into a future indirect death toll of at least 129,500 – 365,400 yet to come based on the direct death count used (68,200 vs 96,100) and death ratio used (4:1 to 9:1) used to forecast future deaths. These death projections are all explainable if the reader understands the strategy implemented by Israel to

starve and displace the Palestinian population of Gaza, and this is what we turn to in our next section.

Table 1 displays the different projections of the total death toll in Gaza based on two different factors in the estimates: 1) the three different direct death counts, with the “Conservative” projection being based on data from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), while the “Undercount” projections are based on the list of dead from the Gaza Ministry of Health (GMOH), finally the “Full Count” projections are based on the literature proposing that the GMOH numbers are a 41% undercount; 2) the four different direct to indirect death ratios chosen from the literature to show the full range of possible projections. Additionally, the table provides both the “estimated current deaths” and the potential death toll 5 years after the cessation of hostilities. Lastly, the table provides the percentage of the pre-October 7th, 2023 population estimated to have been killed already, and the projected percentage killed five years after the cessation of hostilities.

Table 1: Different Projections of Gaza Deaths Tolls

Projection Name	Direct Deaths	Projected Indirect Deaths	Deaths Ratio Used	Total Projected Deaths	Estimated Current Deaths	Current estimated percentage killed	Projected Percentage Population Killed
Conservative	64,600	129,200	1:2	193,800	120,156	5%	8%
Reasonable Undercount	68,200	272,800	1:4	341,000	211,420	9%	14%
Reasonable Full Count	96,100	384,400	1:4	480,500	297,910	12%	20%
High Ratio Under Count	68,200	613,800	1:9	682,000	422,840	18%	28%
High Ratio Full Count	96,100	864,900	1:9	961,000	595,820	25%	40%
Extreme Undercount	68,200	1,070,740	1:15.7	1,138,940	706,142	29%	47%
Extreme Full Count Case	96,100	1,508,770	1:15.7	1,604,870	995,019	41%	67%

Data Sources: WINEP, GMOH, Lancet

In sum, the projections above lead us to reasonably conclude that as of Oct 19, 2025 the Gaza Ministry of Health’s (GMOH) official count of 68,500 should be understood as the floor and the literature pointing towards a much higher direct death count. With certainty we can project that Israel’s attacks will kill at least 193,800 or 8% of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza before October 7, 2023; with over 120,100 or 5% already having been killed based on those same most conservative projections. Other more reasonable projections posit that Israel’s actions will kill roughly 480,800 or 20% of the pre-October 7th, 2023 population of Gaza are both highly plausible and must be utilized in policymaking and planning for Gaza’s reconstruction. Higher ratio projections that suggest the possibility of over 682,000 – 961,600, or 28-40%, of Palestinians in Gaza eventually being killed as a result of Israel’s operations should be planned for but also

approached with caution. Even more extreme projections should be approached with forbearance.

“Hate the enemy. Hate the monsters. Any vestige of internal bickering is a maddeningly stupid waste of energy. Invest this energy in one thing; Erasing all of Gaza from the face of the earth. That the Gazan monsters will fly to the southern fence and try to enter Egyptian territory. Or they will die and their death will be evil. Gaza should be erased.”

Galit Distel Atbaryan, Member of the Israeli Knesset (Likud), former Minister of Information

“Instead of funneling money to rebuild Gaza or to the failed UNRWA, the international community can assist in the costs of resettlement, helping the people of Gaza build new lives in their new host countries. Gaza has long been thought of as a problem without an answer.”

Gila Gamliel, Minister of Intelligence

**“We will destroy Hamas without mercy - I want revenge”
“That the beach of Gaza will be the blood of terrorists and I am not ashamed to say that.”**

Almog Cohen, Minister Otzma Yehudit

The Genocide Test

Israel's practices shine the light on a purposeful intent to destroy Palestinian society and it is on this basis that we should examine the question of genocide. The legal definition of genocide lists five different acts that are committed, "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, racial, ethnic or religious group, as such."⁶¹ The first three acts listed in the Genocide Convention are: killing its members; causing them serious bodily or mental harm; and deliberately inflicting living conditions calculated to cause its physical destruction. Israel's commission of such acts is as well-documented as any atrocity could be; they have been livestreamed to the world for two years.

It is important to underscore that what constitutes a genocide is *not* simply a function of the death toll. As Canada itself has argued before the International Court of Justice, "the number of victims killed is not determinative ... The Genocide Convention does not require that ... there should be a focus on the numbers of victims killed."⁶² While many recognized genocides involve very large numbers of people killed, others - such as the 1995 Srebrenica genocide, in which Bosnian Serb forces killed over 8,000 Bosnian Muslims - do not.⁶³ The intention to destroy the ability of a group to exist as a group is a core tenet of genocide law.

On one hand, this leads us to return to look at the percentage killed: in the GMoH data this reveals at least 2.8% of the population being violently killed,⁶⁴ and 11.2% having died from indirect factors (4:1 ratio). While the 41% undercount scenario reveals 3.9% of the population violently killed and 16% indirectly killed (4:1 ratio). Reasonable worst-case scenarios point towards 4% violently killed and 36% dying indirectly (9:1 ratio). The most conservative estimates place the total loss of life at 8% (WINEP death toll and 2:1 ratio) of the population, while the upper end of the reasonable projections estimate a 40% total loss of life in Gaza. Alarming, full application of the literature on violent conflict leaves open the possibility of an extreme projection where there will be a total loss of life representing 67% of the Palestinian population of Gaza (93,000 direct death scenario with 15:1 ratio applied). Given the above, based on the literature and information available we can project with strong likelihood that between 8-20% of the population will die because of Israel's operations. With at least 5-12% having been killed already by Israel's actions to date.

On the other hand, the definition of genocide asks us to fully assess the impact on the group to exist as a society. Israel has targeted civil infrastructure and aimed to make Gaza unlivable for those Palestinians who survive. The results of Israel's genocidal intent can be measured not simply by death figures, but can also be observed through the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure. Without this infrastructure there are no institutions to live a Palestinian life in Palestine. The group cannot exist as a group as such.

The world's leading human rights authorities have concluded Israel has indeed acted with the necessary intention, i.e. to destroy Palestinians as a national group, at least in part. As early as October 13, 2023, Israeli genocide scholar Raz Segal pointed to statements of the country's political leaders to call its actions "a textbook case of genocide."⁶⁵ Moreover, in January 2024, the International Court of Justice granted South Africa's request for provisional measures against Israel to "protect against further, severe and irreparable harm to the rights of the Palestinian

people under the Genocide Convention.”⁶⁶ Numerous other authorities have determined that Israel is indeed committing genocide, including:

- The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.⁶⁷
- The United Nations Office of Human Rights Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel.⁶⁸
- Human rights and humanitarian organizations such as Human Rights Watch,⁶⁹ Amnesty International,⁷⁰ Doctors Without Borders,⁷¹ the International Federation for Human Rights,⁷² and Israeli groups B’Tselem⁷³ and Physicians for Human Rights - Israel.⁷⁴
- The International Association of Genocide Scholars.⁷⁵

In general, each cites some combination of three factors:

1. The pre-existing context before October 7, 2023

Context is essential in order to fully understand the events of the past two years. Factors such as the deliberate expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 and again in 1967, the conception of the Palestinians as a demographic and cultural threat and their general dehumanization, almost 60 years of what Amnesty International called “one of the most brutal, military occupations in modern times,”⁷⁶ the decades-old siege of Gaza and Israel’s repeated military assaults on the territory in 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2021 created what B’Tselem terms “long-term political and social processes that generated the preconditions for Israeli genocide in the Gaza Strip.”⁷⁷

None of this has happened in a historical vacuum, rather this is taking place within the context of the Zionist movement’s ongoing explicit pursuit of a Jewish ethnostate in historic Palestine through settler colonialism - most acutely observed in the illegal occupation, deployment of apartheid policies, and annexation of the West Bank.⁷⁸ Taking as much of historic Palestine and expelling as many Palestinians as possible has always been the goal of the entire Zionist movement, both before and since the founding of the state of Israel. This episode in the ongoing Nakba cannot be detached from the long-term political goals of Israel’s Likud party and its followers to prevent a Palestinian state, and the messianic goals of Israel’s far-right factions to capture all of the West Bank and transform it into so-called “Judea and Samaria.”

2. Israel’s actions in Gaza over the past two years

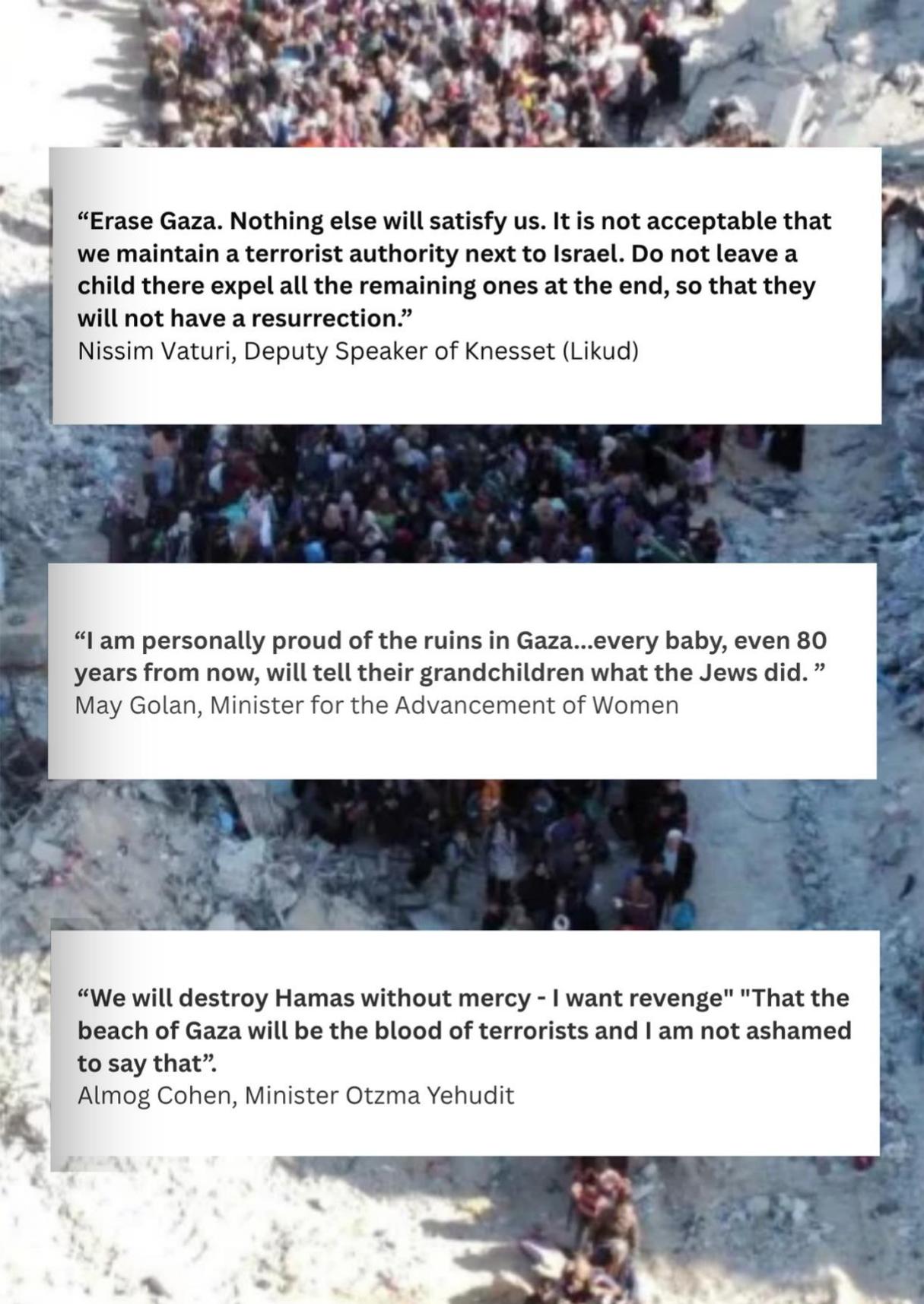
There is no reasonable doubt as to whether Israel has deliberately committed multiple acts described in the Genocide Convention. Importantly, expert opinions reject Israeli claims that these actions were not aimed at civilians but guided by military necessity.⁷⁹

3. Statements from Israeli officials openly expressing a desire to eradicate Gaza and its population, along with evidence of Israeli public opinion

Israeli discourse over the past two years has been replete with statements from political and military officials (as well as prominent journalists, entertainers and other public figures)

calling for the wholesale destruction of Gaza and its population,⁸⁰ a small sample of which is included with this report. In addition to the plainly genocidal statements, experts also cite frequent invocations of Palestinians in Gaza as “Amalek”, a widely-understood reference to an ancient enemy of the Israelites whom they were divinely commanded to exterminate so completely that not even livestock would be spared.⁸¹ B’Tselem’s analysis also notes surveys in which a majority of Israelis agreed that, with respect to Gaza, “there are no innocents,” no humanitarian aid should enter, and Palestinians should be forcibly expelled.⁸² In sum, as B’Tselem explains, “The dehumanization and labelling of Gaza’s entire population as responsible for, or supportive of, the crimes committed on 7 October provided moral justification and social legitimacy for harming civilians in the Gaza Strip.”⁸³

While the International Court of Justice has yet to definitively rule on whether Israel’s conduct in Gaza does indeed constitute genocide, Israel’s actions and the words of its leaders are profoundly incriminating and the war crimes are plainly obvious. The case for South Africa’s argument that genocide properly describes what Israel has done is both powerful and compelling. Given these factors synthesized in this paper, Canada’s responsibility to prevent genocide in Gaza is clear when we look at the devastating outcomes of Israel’s actions and the clear instructions from the ICJ provisional orders to cease this behaviour.



“Erase Gaza. Nothing else will satisfy us. It is not acceptable that we maintain a terrorist authority next to Israel. Do not leave a child there expel all the remaining ones at the end, so that they will not have a resurrection.”

Nissim Vaturi, Deputy Speaker of Knesset (Likud)

“I am personally proud of the ruins in Gaza...every baby, even 80 years from now, will tell their grandchildren what the Jews did. ”

May Golan, Minister for the Advancement of Women

“We will destroy Hamas without mercy - I want revenge" "That the beach of Gaza will be the blood of terrorists and I am not ashamed to say that”.

Almog Cohen, Minister Otzma Yehudit

Canada's solemn obligations

Based on evidence of Israel's destruction of Gaza and the Palestinian deaths, both counted and projected, Canada's legal obligations are unambiguous. The *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, to which Canada is a signatory, provides that "genocide, whether committed in times of peace or in times of war, is a crime under international law" that states must both prevent and punish.⁸⁴ Critically, the duty to prevent genocide requires Canada to act before genocide is actually committed, or for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to rule that a state should be held accountable for a genocide after the fact. As a result, Canada remains legally obligated to act before Israel perpetrates further acts of genocide,⁸⁵ regardless of Israel's dubious claims to the right to self-defence,⁸⁶ its ongoing perceived security concerns, or the absence of a definitive ruling from the ICJ.

The Government of Canada has so far refused to name what Israel is doing in Gaza a genocide. When asked in debates, or by media, the Prime Minister,⁸⁷ and his incoming UN Ambassador,⁸⁸ have dodged the question and deferred to fact the UN and ICJ have not definitively ruled on the matter. They take this flawed position despite the obvious deadlock at the UN Security Council, the arrest warrants for forced starvation and other war crimes leveled at Netanyahu and Gallant, and the reality that the multiple UN Human Rights Council functionaries have called it genocide, most prominently the Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and outgoing members of the UN Commission of Inquiry for the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The stated position of the Government of Canada's belies the reality that to prevent genocide it cannot wait for a definitive and unanimous ruling of all UN bodies. The reality of gross systemic war crimes is crystal clear and regardless of a future ruling by the ICJ Canada must act swiftly.

While Canada has recently recognized the State of Palestine and taken steps to sanction some extremist Israeli Ministers and suspend some permits for weapons exports for Israeli use in Gaza, Canada still allows a significant flow of arms to Israel through the US due to the purposeful exclusion of many military exports to the US from regulation under Canada's *Export and Import Permits Act*. Relying on the Americans to decide which Canadian weapons end up in Israel's stockpiles will not vacate Canada's legal obligations to prevent genocide. Furthermore, it violates Canada's obligations under the *Arms Trade Treaty*. Ending the flow of arms to Israel remains one of the key recommendations of the UN Commission of Inquiry to stop Israel's genocide.⁸⁹ Additionally, Canada has continued to express one-sided support and justification for Israel's aggression through its ritualistic condemnations of Hamas and validation of Israel's aim to eliminate and disarm Hamas with no comparable scrutiny or pressure on the Israeli military, despite consistent documented evidence of widespread atrocities and war crimes and obvious human costs of Israel's stated military goals.

Detailed Recommendations

Given its legal obligations, we recommend that the Government of Canada:

1. **Officially recognize that Israel has perpetrated genocide in Gaza**, through executive actions including ministerial directives to all departments to adjust their engagement with Israel and Israeli companies accordingly. Annually recognize the Gaza genocide like others that are commemorated with public statements that focus on validating Palestinian narratives and experience.
2. **Support South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the ICJ**, by removing Canada's intervention opposition to the case and replacing it with one in support. Ensuring that Palestinians have access to global justice forums like any other people.
3. **Accept Palestinians evacuating from Gaza into Canada through all migration streams**, in particular by fixing the Gaza Temporary Visa Program and prioritizing Palestinian asylum claims. Ensure that Palestinians are not discriminated against by IRCC and CBSA's interpretation of the IRPA.⁹⁰
4. **Publicly defend the multilateral institutions from attacks by Israel and the US**, by providing additional funding and personnel to support the ICC (comparable to resources dedicated to Ukraine) to continue to investigate and litigate its case against Israeli leaders for war crimes in Gaza and calling on the US to repeal its shameful sanctions against ICC and UN personnel.
5. **Conduct independent war crimes investigations in conduct of Canadians in Gaza**, including interviewing Canadians and other nationals entering Canada after Israeli military service in Gaza and provide any documentation of their participation in war crimes to other federal agencies involved in the war crimes branch and globally to the ICC and ICJ.
6. **Stop the remaining flow of Canadian-made weapons to Israel**, including by adopting Bill C-233, the *No More Loopholes Act*, as a government-sponsored Bill and passing it to close the remaining loopholes that allow Canadian-made arms to reach Israel by fully adopting the *Arms Trade Treaty*.
7. **Impose escalating economic sanctions on Israel until it ends the illegal occupation of the State of Palestine**, including suspending the *Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement* and adopting a full two-way arms embargo on Israel.⁹¹
8. **Provide leadership in rebuilding Gaza's public health and population health systems**, by dedicating funding, Canadian civilian and military personnel, and resources required to rapidly rebuilding the public health infrastructure in Gaza with a strong focus on population health and the social determinants of health. Develop partnerships and provide training through the capacity building efforts and state-building.



Given Canada's legal obligations, we recommend that all Parliamentarians:

1. Recognize Israel's actions in Gaza as a genocide by passing motions in Parliament.
2. Publicly declare that Israel has committed genocide in Gaza and call for immediate escalating sanctions.
3. Vote in favour of Bill C-233, the *No More Loopholes Act*.



**“Rafah, Deir al Balah,
Nuseirat? Total Extermination!
We'll destroy any semblance of
Amalek from under the sky.”**
Bezalel Yoel Smotrich, Israeli
Finance Minister

**“We will uproot evil so that
there will be good for the entire
region and the world.”**
Isaac Herzog, President

**“We’re facing monsters, monsters who murdered children in front
of their parents ... This is a battle not only of Israel against these
barbarians, it’s a battle of civilization against barbarism”**
Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel

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