



On the brink of another Nakba, the international community must act urgently to stop Israel's ethnic cleansing in Gaza and its attempts to redraw the geography of the region.

INVITATION TO A PRESS BRIEFING

We may be only days away from a new Nakba, the 'catastrophe' that saw the forced displacement and exile of three-quarters of the Palestinian people as Israel was established. With 1.4 million Palestinians already internally displaced in Gaza, and pressure mounting in the south, forced displacement into Egypt is imminent. An immediate and complete cessation of all hostilities is necessary to prevent another Nakba from happening.

We, a group of international lawyers and human rights professionals invite you to a press briefing to underscore the demand for immediate action to prevent another Nakba from happening and to provide historical, legal, and political background to the unfolding catastrophe.

Date: **Monday, 6 November 2023**

Time: **1 pm GMT, 2 pm CET, 3 pm Palestine and 4 pm Jordan**

Format: Online

Registration link: https://dialogueedge.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwsfuuuqzIqHNAadZICf_d6mEjc8Xt9Mdq

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Info: For more information, please contact rsaifi@ardd-jo.org

¹We form part of an ad hoc working group set up after 7 October 2023 to monitor and address the ongoing ethnic cleansing primarily in the Gaza Strip but also in the West Bank. Members of the group work for Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ardd-jo.org), the Community Action Center (Al Quds University), and Al Mezan Center for Human Rights whilst others participate in their personal capacity.



On the brink of another Nakba

Over the past several days, it has become increasingly clear that Israel's real intention for the current onslaught in Gaza, beyond revenge, is to achieve the forced displacement of as many of Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinian population as possible into Egypt.

Two policy papers have recently come to light, the [first](#) by a think tank closely linked to Israeli PM Netanyahu's Office and headed by ex-national security officials, and the [second](#) from the office of the Israeli Minister of Intelligence that discuss in considerable detail plans to ethnically cleanse many if not all of the Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Egypt.

The Israeli leadership is downplaying their significance. However, in the recent request of the Biden Administration to Congress for \$105bn in support for Israel and Ukraine, explicit reference is made to [funding](#) for the "potential needs of Gazans fleeing to neighboring countries" which, along with other media reports ([here](#) and [here](#)) suggests that displacement of large numbers of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip has been discussed and agreed among Israel's security cabinet and the Biden Administration. The plans amount to an attempt to redraw the geography of the region.

Beyond words, Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip since 7 October 2023 have all the hallmarks of a prelude to mass displacement. Already battered by an illegal medieval 16-year-old blockade which according to the UN has made the territory essentially uninhabitable since 2020, Gaza's population has come under an even tighter blockade – preventing the entry of water, food, electricity, fuel, and other necessities – the most intensive bombardment ever, resulting in 8,525 fatalities and 21,543 injuries as of 31 October, 67 percent of whom are said to be children and women.

On 13 October, Israel [ordered](#) Palestinians in the north of the Gaza Strip, including humanitarian personnel, to move south of Wadi Gaza. This order has been repeated numerous times since and remains in force. As of 30 October, more than 1.4 million people were internally displaced with 672,000 sheltering in 150 UNRWA schools. The average number of IDPs per shelter is over three times their intended capacity.

Despite the call for evacuation, Israel has continued bombing all parts of the Gaza Strip, including the south. Since 21st October, small quantities of humanitarian supplies – excluding fuel – have come in through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, though current amounts are a fraction of what is needed to prevent further deterioration in the humanitarian situation. The Israeli war cabinet decided on October 18th that it would allow water, food, and medical supplies through Egypt, [only to the southern districts](#) of the Gaza Strip, explicitly excluding the north.



The situation in the south of the Gaza Strip is becoming increasingly dire because of the ongoing bombardment and mass influx from the northern parts of Gaza. On 29 October, thousands of people broke into several UNRWA warehouses and distribution centers in the middle and southern areas of the Gaza Strip, taking wheat flour and other basic survival items like hygiene supplies. According to the [UNRWA](#) Director in Gaza, “This is a worrying sign that civil order is starting to break down after three weeks of war and a tight siege on Gaza. People are scared, frustrated and desperate.”.

Calls by desperate Palestinians for the crossing in Rafah to be opened are getting louder by the day. Against this backdrop, it is increasingly likely that Palestinians in the coming days and weeks may push their way through the Rafah border, as they did in [2008](#). Unlike what happened then, this time Israel is not expected to allow the refugees to return.

While all eyes are on Gaza, there is another mass displacement underway in the West Bank: nearly [2,000](#) Palestinians have been displaced by settler violence since 2022, 43% since 7 October 2023. Rising settler violence supported by the Israeli army and state authorities is driving Palestinian families away from their homes: the most recent example is the displacement of the entire population of the [Zanuta village](#) in the South Hebron hills, due to settlers attacking and terrorizing families.

Immediate action is needed to prevent another Nakba from happening

We firmly reject the ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population and call for:

- The immediate and complete cessation of all hostilities.
- The immediate revocation of all ‘evacuation’ orders and the unhindered and safe return of all internally displaced Palestinians to their homes.
- The immediate, continuous, sufficient, and unhindered provision of essential goods and services to civilians in all areas of the Gaza Strip, including but not limited to water, food, medical supplies, fuel, and electricity.
- The immediate, full, sustained, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access for UNRWA and other UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners, the ICRC and all other humanitarian organizations.
- And to urgently establish a mechanism to ensure the protection of the Palestinian civilian population, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Please attend our press briefing and help us uncover the truth and take action to prevent another Nakba from happening.