

**Committee:** United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

**Agenda:** Measures to ensure humanitarian access and safeguard the human rights of civilians amid the ongoing siege and restrictions on humanitarian infrastructure within the Gaza Strip

**List of Countries:** Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Malaysia, Norway, Palestine, People's Republic of China, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom, United States of America

## I. General Overview



*Figure 1. The United Nations Human Rights Council Emblem*

### 1. Committee Introduction

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) was established in 2006 by the General Assembly. The council has 47 member states to serve for a period of three years. As the United Nations Human Rights Council, this committee works for the mission of strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights and addressing human rights violations across the globe.

In order to achieve its mission, the UNHRC mainly utilizes two main mechanisms: developing international legal frameworks and human rights monitoring. The legal frameworks are based on the International Bill of Human Rights, which contains three major documents:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Furthermore, the UNHRC consistently monitors violations of human rights through two methods: treaty-based and charter-based. Treaty-based monitoring method involves independent expert committees to implement international human rights treaties. Charter-based monitoring relies on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and independent investigations.

While the UNHRC cannot directly impose restrictions on certain countries, the Human Rights Council still has the power to investigate any human rights violations and to prevent such violations from occurring in the future. The UNHRC has annual meetings within the member states and holds special sessions to address urgent human rights violations. During such meetings, the UNHRC is able to produce resolutions and request that applicable countries adopt such resolutions. In addition to adopting resolutions, the UNHRC also has the power to appoint independent experts on specific issues. This helps the council to clearly investigate a certain issue and draw out adequate resolutions.

## **2. Significance of Agenda**

Since the first attack from Hamas, the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip have been struggling with the humanitarian crisis. In the Gaza Strip, over two million residents struggle to obtain access to the basics of living, such as food, water, residential areas, and more. The persistent Israeli restriction on the distribution of aid has caused delays and has exacerbated the malnutrition rate across the Gaza Strip, especially for children, pregnant women, and the elderly. This is not only a current crisis, but it will later become a generational setback, as malnutrition has already weakened the immune system, leading to possible diseases in the future. In addition to malnutrition, the healthcare system has also collapsed. With the destruction of medical facilities and a limited number of healthcare workers, residents in Gaza heavily rely on medical aid, while the insufficient number of medics has forced patients away.

The human rights crisis in the Gaza Strip is not merely restricted to residents in Gaza, but it has a global-scale impact on the protection of human rights. As the conflict between Israel and Hamas is one of the deadliest conflicts, it poses significant risks to media workers. The press infrastructures were destroyed due to the constant targeting from the Israeli military, causing

journalists to be restricted from reporting the truth. This not only violates the journalists' freedom of expression but also deprives global citizens of their right to be aware of the current situation. Furthermore, the ongoing siege restricted Gaza civilians from accessing adequate medical care, leading to worsening health conditions and even death. Such violations in the Gaza Strip challenge international laws, including the fundamental human rights written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and more. As the rights of diverse groups—aid workers, press and journalists, residents—are getting violated throughout the war, the authority and accountability of the international bodies that aim to protect human rights are challenged.

In essence, the ongoing human rights violations in the Gaza Strip have severely affected the lives of civilians in Gaza, limiting access to basic necessities, medical care, and protection from violence. These violations not only threaten millions of civilians, aid workers, and journalists but also severely damage the future restoration capacity of the region. To address this crisis, the UNHRC should devise resolutions to secure humanitarian access and safeguard civilian human rights in the context of the ongoing siege and restricted humanitarian infrastructures in Gaza.

### **3. Key Terms**

#### **Gaza Strip**

The Gaza Strip is a territory located in the Middle East, near Israel and along the Mediterranean Sea. This region is known to have approximately 2.1 million residents as of today—which is a decrease from 2023—that marked 2.23 million. Today, the Gaza Strip is where the major conflict between Israel and Palestinian military groups occurs.

#### **Hamas**

Hamas is a Palestinian Islamist political and military group, and it has had control over the Gaza Strip since the late 2000s. The authority over governance in the Gaza Strip was violently seized after winning the Palestinian election. While Hamas is not an authorized government, this organization strongly opposes Israel and aims to establish an Islamic state in

the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. On October 7, 2023, Hamas suddenly attacked Israelis, taking hostages and murdering civilians. Israel has reacted to this unexpected attack through a large-scale offensive, and conflict between Israel and Palestine over the Gaza Strip continues until today. This ongoing dispute has caused massive civilian casualties and destruction in Gaza.

### **Humanitarian Access**

Humanitarian access refers to the ability of organizations to provide access to humanitarian services — including food, water, medical care, and more — for people in crisis. It is especially challenging to ensure humanitarian access within the Gaza Strip due to the restrictions on aid delivery and violence against aid workers. One of the most common ways to provide humanitarian access, airdrops, is dangerously inadequate in Gaza. Furthermore, aid workers are constantly exposed to danger, including direct targeting of humanitarian facilities and the widespread bombardment, which has resulted in multiple deaths of humanitarian aid workers.

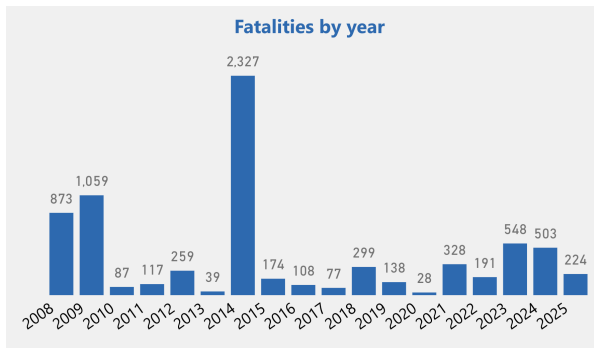
### **Humanitarian Infrastructure**

Humanitarian Infrastructure refers to systems that support civilians to gain access to basic services and aid workers to provide necessary relief in crisis situations. Such infrastructures usually include sanction systems, clinics, refugee camps, and more. However, the ongoing attack in Gaza and the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Palestine have caused severe physical damage and operational collapse of these humanitarian infrastructures.

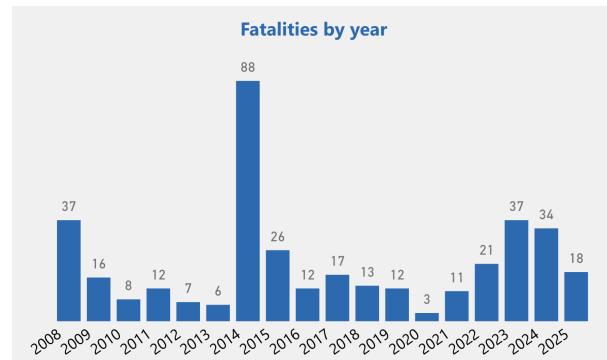
### **Human Rights Violations**

Human rights violations are acts that neglect one's fundamental rights. In the case of populations in the Gaza Strip, repeated violations of human rights are being reported. In the Gaza Strip, there have been forced displacements affecting nearly the entire population, violating the basic right to a standard of adequate living. Furthermore, their unlawful killings have targeted not only the civilians in Gaza but also journalists, medical workers, and aid workers.

## II. Historical Background



*Figure 2. Palestinian Fatalities by Year*



*Figure 3. Israeli Fatalities by Year*

On October 7, 2023, more than 1000 members of various Palestinian armed groups, including the military wing of Hamas, launched a surprise attack against civilian and military bases in southern Israel, located near the border of Gaza. In the course of this attack, more than 1,200 people—of which 809 were Israeli civilians—were directly killed by Palestinian groups through the use of conventional arms such as rockets and mortars. In addition, 14,970 Israelis were injured, and at least 252 people were forcefully taken to Gaza, where many were then killed in captivity. In retaliation for these abrupt attacks, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) coordinated air strikes in the Gaza Strip on the same day, and on the following day—October 8, 2023—they officially announced the commencement of the military operation “Swords of Iron,” which, according to the Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was intended to obliterate Hamas to prevent effective governance and military operation in Palestine. With the breakout of the Hamas-led attacks in Israel, followed by the ISF’s retaliation on Gaza, nations worldwide were made aware of the commencement of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, also known as the Gaza War, a conflict that remains ongoing in the Gaza Strip and Israel.

The 2023 Gaza War was fueled by the October 7th Hamas-led attacks on Israel. Yet, the primary cause of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict dates back a century, starting with opposing territorial claims to the same land since the early 1900s. In the early nineteenth century, Jews increasingly migrated to Ottoman Palestine—then controlled by the Ottoman Empire—in search of land linked to Jewish religion, culture, and history. The urge for a new Jewish state was

further intensified by antisemitism in Europe and Nazi persecution in the 1930s, during which six million Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which proposed the partition of Mandatory Palestine—Ottoman Palestine after the British gained territorial control—into Arab states, Jewish States, and an international zone for Jerusalem. While the Jewish League accepted the resolution, the Arab League and Palestinian leaders rejected it, as the land was then mainly inhabited by Arab Palestinians. The conflicting territorial claims among the nations sparked tensions that subsequently led to violence. When the Israeli Declaration of Independence was proclaimed on May 14, 1948, marking the official establishment of the State of Israel, intended as a homeland for the Jewish people, the state was attacked by five Arab states on the following day. These attacks instigated the first Arab-Israeli War, which led to the mass displacement of approximately 750,000 Palestinians, an instance also referred to as Nakba.

After the Six-Day War in June 1967, in which Israel attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces in response to the nations' war threats, Israel gained partial territorial control over several Arab states, including the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt. In the same year, in response to the Six-Day War, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 242, calling for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the occupied territories, though the resolution only remained as an attempt to restore peace.

After a series of wars between Israel and its opposition, including Arab states and Palestinian leaders, tensions were temporarily settled in 1979 with the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, which agreed upon Israel's territorial withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and Egypt's recognition of the State of Israel. Nonetheless, while the peace treaty restored diplomacy between Israel and Egypt, it failed to address the displacement of thousands of Palestinians from the preliminary Arab-Israeli War, as well as their desire for self-determination and self-governance. Thus, in 1987, thousands of Palestinians inhabiting the West Bank and Gaza Strip started an uprising against Israeli military rule due to the lack of self-autonomy and poor living conditions, an event that later became known as the First Intifada. Palestinians were ultimately granted self-governance and political recognition by the Israeli government in 1993 with the Oslo I Accords, which also established the Palestinian Authority (PA). The agreement was subsequently followed by the Oslo II Accords in 1995, which enhanced Palestinian

territorial authority by mandating the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from a multitude of cities and towns in the West Bank.

Despite such efforts, tensions between Israel and Palestine continued to escalate with the Second Intifada in 2000, which involved more terrorist attacks carried out by Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups. Israel responded to these attacks by constructing a barrier wall around the West Bank in 2002, an action that was deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Although Israel withdrew its settlers and troops afterwards, when Hamas violently seized Gaza in 2007, Israel and Egypt imposed a blockade in retaliation. Tensions between Israel and Palestine remain unresolved and have rather escalated over the course of decades. This accumulation, consequently, triggered the breakout of the Gaza War in 2023.

Amid the ongoing Gaza War, Israel's imposition of a blockade in the Gaza Strip raises significant concerns regarding the protection of the fundamental human rights of Palestinians inhabiting the area. Since the military takeover of Gaza by Hamas, the Israeli government has imposed a blockade that has isolated the Gaza Strip from its surroundings and the international community, restricting movement by land, sea, and air. As a result of the siege, the inhabitants of Gaza have been deprived of the ability to move freely across places. In fact, while up to half a million people, primarily consisting of workers, could exit the Gaza Strip and enter Israel, this figure declined significantly within the first seven years of the blockade, reaching 4,000 people on average. Though recent trends demonstrate a considerable increase from this number, the number of migrants from Gaza to Israel remains comparatively low.

Furthermore, the siege also prevents Gaza inhabitants from receiving indispensable, rudimentary assistance, most particularly concerning medical treatment. As of 2022, the Israeli government had only permitted 64% of patients' requests to exit Gaza to receive medical treatment in the West Bank. Among the remaining portion of patients, many of those who were unable to attend scheduled appointments on time have experienced exacerbated conditions or, in many cases, have died while awaiting approval.

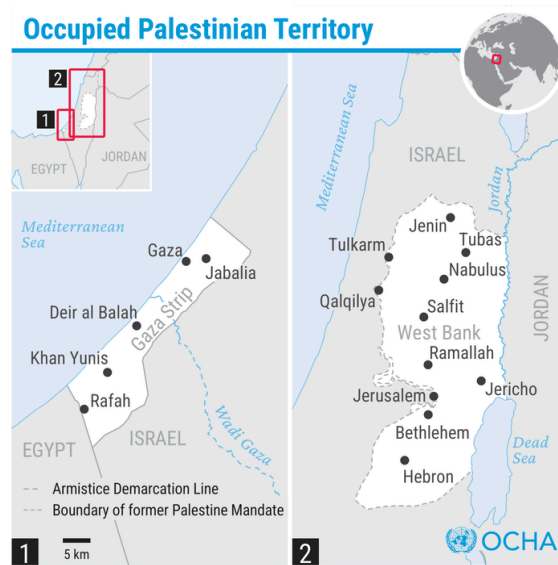
The restriction of movement is not the only way in which the siege has affected the lives of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The blockade also excludes Gaza from the wider global community by limiting trade and external contact. Indeed, following the blockade, the number of commercial transfers entering and exiting Gaza substantially declined, even though the Gaza population has grown by more than 50% since 2007.

According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's (UNICEF) situation report regarding the impact of the blockade in Gaza, about 2.1 million Palestinians are confined to this area. Over the course of the blockade, this confinement has limited countless inhabitants' access to higher education, to family and social life, to employment and economic opportunities, and to medical treatment critical to their survival—all of which are fundamental human rights. Hence, the ongoing siege in the Gaza Strip raises concerns about violations of international humanitarian and human law. Thus, nations and affiliated agencies are urged to address such violations and re-establish their positions on this crisis.



*Figure 4. Israeli-Occupied Territories as of 2018*





*Figure 5. Palestinian-Occupied Territory as of July 2025*

### III. Interested Parties

#### Israel

Israel is a central actor in the current conflict, and the nation's primary objective is to secure the release of hostages in Gaza and defend Israeli citizens from further Hamas-led attacks. Israel's stance on Hamas and other armed Palestinian groups stands clear: with the accumulation of tensions over the course of decades and the breakout of violence on October 7, 2023, Israel views Hamas as a threat to securing peace and security in Israel. On the day before the official onset of the war, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would act immediately to eliminate the capabilities of Hamas and strike them until their destruction. However, it is important to note that Israel claims itself as anti-Hamas, not anti-Palestinian. That is, through the war, Israel aims to eradicate Hamas, who pose significant harm to Israeli citizens through violence and terrorism. However, Israel does not intend to cause direct harm to the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip: the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "Israel's war is against Hamas, not against Palestinian civilians." Even so, the ongoing siege in Gaza and the series of military operations that have targeted areas in Gaza and thus, have threatened the lives of countless Palestinian civilians. Hence, multiple UN bodies, such as the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

have found that Israel's actions may constitute severe violations against international humanitarian law.

## **Palestine**

Palestine, along with Israel, is another key party in the current conflict. At the current moment, Palestine is not fully recognized as a member state by the United Nations. Instead, it has been admitted as a UN observer state since November 29, 2012. Still, Palestine has received international recognition as a state on its own. As of September 2025, 156 of the 193 UN member states—excluding nations such as Israel, the United States, and Germany—have officially recognized Palestinian statehood. Under the Oslo I Accords in 1993, the Palestinian Authority (PA) was established as the official governing body in Palestine. However, during the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Elections, the Islamist militant group Hamas defeated its rival political party, Fatah—the dominant party of the PA—by winning the majority vote. Currently, regions where Palestinians are granted self-governance are divided into Hamas-ruled and Fatah-ruled territories, with Hamas governing the Gaza Strip and the PA governing the West Bank.

Through the 2023 Gaza War and the ongoing blockade in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian inhabitants of Gaza endure harsh living conditions, with a lack of external contact and minimal access to education, economic opportunities, and medical assistance. Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have reported that due to the restrictions on the entry of medical supplies amid the ongoing siege, dozens of Palestinian patients, being unable to receive adequate treatment and medicine, die on a daily basis. Furthermore, the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza revealed that over half a million people inhabiting the area are in urgent need of proper medical care. The Gaza inhabitants' exposure to such devastating conditions has heightened concerns regarding whether Palestinian civilians are able to exercise their basic rights in the current situation.

## **Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel**

On May 27, 2021, the UNHRC held a special meeting in regards to the recurrent tensions between Israel and Palestine. As an outcome of the session, the committee adopted the resolution

“Ensuring respect for international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel.” Resolution A/HRC/RES/S-30/ establishes the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including East Jerusalem, and Israel. The foundation of the Commission is aimed at investigating all allegations of human rights violations and identifying the root causes of conflict in the OPT and in Israel. Since its founding, the Commission has published several reports detailing the present landscape of the 2023 Gaza War. In a recent report published in August 2025, the Commission revealed its findings on the alleged crime of genocide carried out by Israeli military forces in Gaza. In the report, the Commission reported that since the onset of the Gaza War, Israeli military forces have been systematically demolishing infrastructure in civilian and buffer zones, causing significant casualties over the course of two years. The Commission is mandated to report findings as such to the UNHRC and UNGA on an annual basis. Hence, the establishment of the Commission represents the United Nations’ efforts to provide neutral assessments of the ongoing conflict environment.

### **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)**

Since the first Arab-Israeli War and the subsequent Nakba, countless Palestinians have been forcibly displaced from their homelands. In response to this mass displacement, the UNGA adopted Resolution 302 (IV) on December 7, 1949, marking the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The resolution mandates the organization to provide direct assistance and protection to Palestinian refugees, aiming to improve the accessibility of education, healthcare, shelter, basic infrastructure, food, and social services in areas affected by the ongoing Gaza War. In a recent situation report published in November 2025, UNRWA reported on the severity of the Gaza situation, which is currently characterized by a lack of medical assistance and essential resources. In their report, over the course of the war, they claim to have assisted around 730,000 people by providing psychosocial support sessions and 38,024 children by teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, with heightened tensions amid the ongoing siege, the organization has been facing immense difficulties in securing food supplies for Palestinian refugees. According to the same report, no UNRWA supplies have entered the Gaza Strip since

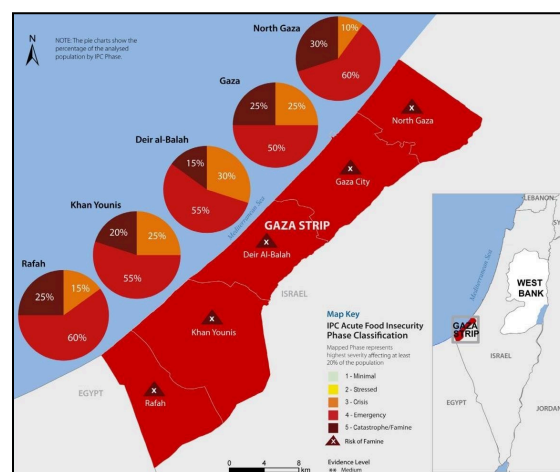
March 2025 due to the direct interference of Israeli forces, who have been preventing foreign assistance from reaching civilians in Gaza.

## Forcibly Displaced Persons (FDP)

According to the UNGA Resolution A/HRC/39/55 adopted on August 3, 2018, the United Nations defines forcibly displaced persons (FDP) as “those who are forced to move, within or across borders, as a result of ... persecution, armed conflict, other situations of violence, or human rights violations.” FDP includes internally displaced persons, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants in vulnerable situations—all of whom have been forced to leave their homes, as the alternative choice to stay would put their lives at risk. In the ongoing Gaza War, this term refers to Palestinians who have been forced to stay in confined areas such as the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, or those who have fled into neighboring countries. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as of November 10, 2025, one million out of the total population of 2.1 million Palestinians in Gaza are currently residing in 862 displacement sites located across the Gaza Strip. A majority of these individuals are confined to this area, without being able to receive essential resources and services amid the ongoing siege carried out by Israeli military forces.

## IV. Status Quo

### 1. Current Situation



*Figure 6. Projected IPC Acute Food Insecurity (11 May - 30 September 2025)*

The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip remains catastrophic and is directly linked to the ongoing siege and restrictions on humanitarian infrastructure. Over 90% of the population of Gaza has been displaced since the inception of the war, with many having been displaced multiple times. Many of these displaced people currently reside in heavily damaged buildings or inadequate shelters, including sites built with temporary materials such as flour and rice bags, facing significant risk of flooding and other environmental hazards as winter sets in. Additionally, there are concerns about the heightened risk of exploitation, abuse, and exposure to gender-based violence as many return to unfit housing with no privacy or lighting.

The collapse of vital services and lack of support for aid workers have also created a public health emergency. Only 34% of health service points remain operational, including just 14 out of 36 hospitals. Additionally, more than 1700 health workers have been killed since October 2023. This collapse of medical infrastructure within the Gaza Strip has led to a significant uptick in diseases linked to poor living conditions, such as skin, eye, respiratory, and gastrointestinal infections. These diseases now account for 70% of all outpatient consultations at MSF Healthcare Centers in Southern Gaza, further compounded by the collapse of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems. Furthermore, aid workers are forced to face immense threats in fulfilling their duties, with an average of four aid workers killed every week so far in 2025.

The hunger crisis has also reached catastrophic levels, with the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) confirming that famine is occurring in the Gaza Governorate, with nearly a third of the population of the Gaza Strip facing conditions characterized by starvation, destitution, and death. Furthermore, malnutrition among children is accelerating at an unprecedented pace, with around 130,000 children expected to suffer from acute malnutrition through June 2026.

These issues have all compounded to amplify the need for humanitarian aid to be delivered to the Gaza Strip as soon as possible. However, the ongoing siege within the Gaza Strip has consistently hampered the efforts to provide humanitarian aid. Between 10 and 21 of October 2025, 17 NGOs had urgent shipments of aid denied entry by Israeli Authorities, following the trend of 94% of all rejections being against NGOs. The primary reason for these denials was on the grounds that these organizations were not authorized to deliver humanitarian

aid into Gaza. Thus, critically needed supplies such as food, tents, and medical equipment remain stuck at crossings and warehouses. It's currently estimated that these supplies account for nearly \$50M of humanitarian aid.

## **2. Past Actions**

There have been many attempts to facilitate humanitarian aid inside the Gaza Strip previously. However, effectiveness remains critically low as a result of the ongoing political dynamics and administrative obstructions.

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-10/21 called for an immediate and sustained humanitarian truce for the unhindered provision of essential goods and services to civilians throughout the Gaza Strip. The resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority, establishing a clear benchmark for global and political expectations regarding civilian protection and humanitarian access. However, the demands of the resolution were not met as the cessation of hostilities did not occur, and the humanitarian crisis intensified rapidly in the following months, still occurring to this day.

Agencies such as the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) have remained central in responding to the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, providing health services, psychosocial support, food assistance, and more. However, the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) implemented policies in October 2024 that prohibit the operations of the UNRWA in areas considered the sovereign territory of Israel, including Gaza. Thus, Israeli Authorities continue to block the UNRWA from bringing humanitarian personnel and aid into the Gaza Strip, having not granted UNRWA's workers international staff visas or permits to enter their sovereign territories since January 2025.

## **V. Future Outlook**

### **Direction of the Debate**

Currently, one of the most significant issues in the Gaza Strip is that humanitarian aid is being turned away by the Israeli authorities. Thus, opening predictable and protected

humanitarian corridors should be one of the highest priorities in mitigating the crisis in Gaza. These corridors should be clearly demarcated and agreed upon by all relevant parties so that aid movements are not subject to sudden closures, lengthy inspections, or shifting political tensions. The corridors should operate on fixed schedules, with transparent and clearly defined guidelines for inspection, documentation, and cargo clearance for greater effectiveness. Furthermore, independent observers should be present to ensure that these guidelines are consistently met in the transportation of humanitarian aid. These structured pathways will be vital in not only delivering lifesaving assistance but also in rebuilding trust among local communities who have long-endured uncertainties and inconsistent aid access.

Furthermore, policies should be implemented to protect aid providers and humanitarian personnel to the fullest extent, including vehicles and facilities. These workers operate in active conflict environments, making them vulnerable to targeted attacks, accidental strikes, and arbitrary detention. Thus, there should be formal protocols established recognizing humanitarian vehicles, warehouses, medical centers, and other facilities as protected sites under international humanitarian law, with clear markings and clear boundaries established as a “no-strike” zone. Furthermore, humanitarian staff should be granted safe passage in the provision of aid, free from detainment or interrogation not directly related to security screening. These policies ensure the physical safety of aid workers and also help preserve the integrity of humanitarian operations as a whole.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. How can the UNHRC ensure that humanitarian aid is not politicized or militarized?
2. What methods can be taken to ensure the long-term provision of humanitarian aid?
3. How can the provision of aid remain secure, neutral, and operational if the conflict continues?
4. What role can regional organizations have in providing aid and protecting human rights?
5. How can the UNHRC ensure the protection of human rights in the midst of conflict?

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