



Palestine Situation Report

May 12, 2023

Background

Information about the escalations in Palestine during Ramadan 2023 is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(April 2023\)](#).

Overview

On Tuesday, May 9, two years after the 11-day bombardment in 2021, Israel launched a series of air strikes on Gaza, killing four members of the Islamic Jihad and ten or more civilians, including a dentist and his family who lived in one of the targeted buildings. Although Israel alleges the attacks focused on Islamic Jihad infrastructure, they struck residential buildings and killed civilians indiscriminately. Despite Egypt's attempts to broker a ceasefire, fighting continued through Wednesday and killed seven more Palestinians.¹ The same day, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate reported that on Tuesday and Wednesday, Israel prevented foreign journalists from crossing into Gaza to cover the attacks.²

An air attack on Khan Younis early Thursday morning after a few hours of silence struck an apartment building, killing three people and injuring dozens of Gazans.³ According to media reports, this attack killed the commander of the Islamic Jihad rocket launch unit.⁴ Another air strike struck an apartment building Friday afternoon, starting a fire and killing two Palestinians.⁵ One of the Palestinians killed was a senior leader of the Islamic Jihad, according to local media reports.⁶ As of May 12, 33 Palestinians have been killed⁷, at least half civilians,⁸ and over 90 wounded in the airstrikes.⁹ According to the Ministry of Housing, 47 housing units have been destroyed, 19 are uninhabitable, and 300 sustained damage. 165 Palestinians are now homeless.¹⁰

In response to the airstrikes on Gaza, groups fired rockets toward Israel. According to Israeli officials, by Wednesday evening more than 400 rockets had been fired from Gaza.¹¹ Although Israel intercepted most of them, and some fell in open areas of Gaza, a few caused damage in

¹ [Israel-Palestine conflict: Fighting ongoing as ceasefire falters | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

² [Israel-Palestine live: Dozens killed in Gaza bombings | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

³ [Israel-Palestine conflict: Fighting ongoing as ceasefire falters | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁴ [Israel-Palestine live: Dozens killed in Gaza bombings | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁵ [Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts | AP News](#)

⁶ ['Constant fear' in Gaza as Israel continues assault for 4th day | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁷ [Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts | AP News](#)

⁸ [Gaza rockets hit near Jerusalem amid fresh attacks | BBC](#)

⁹ [Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts | AP News](#)

¹⁰ [Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts | AP News](#)

¹¹ [Egypt starts mediating an end to Israel-Gaza strikes, rockets | Reuters](#)

Israel.¹² On Thursday, the first Israeli death was reported after a rocket hit a residential building, injuring five others.¹³ On Friday, a rocket fired from Gaza hit an open field in Bat Ayin, an Israeli settlement south of Jerusalem, and another was intercepted in the area. Israel responded by striking alleged military sites. According to residents, they struck targets in open areas.¹⁴

According to deputy UN spokesperson Farhan Haq, Secretary General Antonio Guterres condemned the deaths of civilians in Gaza. Haq said, “Israel must abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law, including the proportional use of force and taking all feasible precautions to spare civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of military operations.”¹⁵

The ongoing escalations mark the heaviest fighting between Gaza and Israel since the August 2022 escalations that killed 49 Gazan residents. The air strikes follow a recent ceasefire signed by Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza on May 3. The ceasefire came into effect following a night of airstrikes on Gaza, launched after Hamas and the Islamic Jihad fired at least 30 rockets at Israel, according to the Israeli military. The Palestinian groups initially fired the rockets as a joint response to the death of Palestinian prisoner, Khader Adnan, during a hunger strike to protest his detention without charges.¹⁶

As fighting continues, Egypt, Qatar, and the UN are attempting to broker a ceasefire, with Egypt increasing its efforts through contact with the Islamic Jihad and Hamas. It is unclear if and how soon a ceasefire can take effect, as the Islamic Jihad demands that Israel must agree to cease targeted killings of its leaders in order to agree to a ceasefire.¹⁷

Electricity

In addition to the air strikes, Israel has blocked the supply of fuel needed for the only power plant in Gaza, threatening the continued operation of the plant and its ability to supply electricity. Due to dwindling fuel supplies, the countdown to shutting down the station has begun, warning of a humanitarian, health, and environmental crisis for all of Gaza.

Health

Without electricity from the power plant, healthcare centers rely on expensive fuel to power their generators in order to continue providing critical services for Gazans, especially for those injured in the escalations or in need of lifesaving care. Currently, all health facilities are open and functional, but with reduced hours. They are focusing on essential and emergency cases, including high risk pregnancy. The Ministry of Health in Gaza activated a counseling line and reports that 292 patients and companions cannot access essential healthcare outside of Gaza. According to Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Erez crossing has been closed for four days as

¹² [Israel-Palestine live: Dozens killed in Gaza bombings | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

¹³ [Israel suffers first rocket death in clash with Islamic Jihad that has left 30 Palestinians dead | CNN](#)

¹⁴ [Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts | AP News](#)

¹⁵ [Israel-Palestine conflict: Fighting ongoing as ceasefire falters | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

¹⁶ [Palestinian groups, Israeli forces agree to Gaza ceasefire | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

¹⁷ [‘Constant fear’ in Gaza as Israel continues assault for 4th day | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

of Friday, blocking 432 patients from receiving treatment in the West Bank and Israel, 27 of whom need life-saving treatment and most of whom suffer from cancer.¹⁸

Escalations such as the one ongoing have significant psychosocial effects on Gazans, especially children, who experience similar violence on a regular basis. When Israel struck a nearby residential building at 2 am on Tuesday, a four year old boy, Tamim Daoud, awoke and experienced a panic attack. Around five hours later, Tamim experienced another panic attack. Despite being rushed to the hospital, his heart stopped before he arrived. Tamim was admitted to the ICU but passed away at dawn.¹⁹

Food Security

Palestinians face a growing threat to their food security in the midst of the ongoing escalations. Due to limited economic activity and the rising cost of living and food prices, 35% of Palestinians face food insecurity. Steep unemployment in Gaza exacerbates this issue, where two-thirds of the population faces challenges feeding themselves and their families. As food insecurity continues to rise, Palestinians rely on support from WFP, just as the organization is experiencing a funding shortage and will have to cut services to 60% of people receiving assistance next month. WFP might be forced to completely suspend operations in August if the shortage is not resolved. The loss of WFP services will exacerbate existing vulnerabilities among Palestinians.²⁰

¹⁸ [Amid deadly airstrikes, Israel further endangering Palestinian lives by preventing exit of Gaza patients | Medical Aid for Palestinians](#)

¹⁹ [Gaza: Palestinian boy dies after panic attack from Israeli bombing | Middle East Eye](#)

²⁰ [WFP operations in Palestine risk suspension due to funding shortfall | Development Aid](#)