



The Sabra Report

Israel Says It Will 'Flood' Gaza with Aid as Pressure Mounts

Reuters, March 13th 2024

Recap:

Following intense international pressure, Israel will try to "flood" Gaza with humanitarian aid to address Gaza's growing hunger problem.

The Context:

- ✦ Israel has been operating in Gaza to dismantle Hamas after the terror group massacred 1,200 Israelis and kidnapped over 250 others on October 7th. Hamas claims over 30,000 Palestinians have been killed in the ensuing war. For five months, aid delivery to Gaza via Israel's two southern border crossings, where Israel inspects incoming shipments for items aiding Hamas in its war effort, has slowed considerably. The United Nations (UN) says at least 576,000 Gazans are on the brink of starvation [1].
- ✦ Most aid entering Gaza is cleared by Israel at Kerem Shalom and then brought in through Rafah. The UN used a new land route this week to deliver food directly into northern Gaza for the first time "as part of an experimental pilot in order to prevent Hamas from taking over the aid." Western and Arab countries have conducted over 30 airdrops since the war began [2], a politically savvy but largely ineffective method of aid distribution. Israel alleges Hamas stockpiles and resells food staples and other essentials [3].
- ✦ President Joe Biden declared that the US would construct a floating pier for aid deliveries off Gaza's coast within 2 months [4]. The facility, comprising an offshore platform and a pier for unloading, aims to deliver up to two million meals or bottles of water daily, without deploying American "boots on the ground" in Gaza [5].
- ✦ Josep Borrell, the European Union's foreign policy chief, accused Israel of using "starvation as a war arm [6]." Israel refuted the accusation, stating there are no limits to aid delivery into and across Gaza and blamed UN agencies for supply distribution failures [7]. Distributing aid fairly and efficiently in Gaza remains a challenge. Major relief groups suspended operations due to lawlessness and poor road conditions. Aid is now distributed close to the border, quickly and from a distance, all but ensuring chaotic outcomes. Underscoring the distribution dangers, last month, thousands of Palestinians descended on an aid convoy, resulting in scores of deaths [8].

Conversation Points:

- ✦ Should the international community be accountable for the wellbeing of Palestinians during this war, given their ongoing assistance to the Palestinian population over the years?
- ✦ Should Israel bear the responsibility of risking the lives of its soldiers for Gazan aid distribution?
- ✦ Will a hands-off American approach suffice if distribution in Gaza remains the primary challenge in providing aid to Palestinians?
- ✦ Should Israel permit its allies, like Egypt, to share the burden and inspect aid shipments into Gaza, considering their shared interest in preventing Hamas from rearming?

Notes:

1. [UN aid convoy uses new land route from Israel to reach north Gaza](#), David Gritten, BBC News
2. [Ibid.](#)
3. [As armed men surround trucks, Gazans blame Israel, Hamas for humanitarian aid crisis](#), AHMED ABD AL-SALAM, Jerusalem Post, MARCH 12, 2024
4. [With aid headed to Gaza, hurdles remain to getting food to its starving population](#), Fatma Tanis, NPR, MARCH 13, 2024
5. [US troops depart for mission to build Gaza aid port](#), Times of Israel 12 March 2024
6. [With aid headed to Gaza, hurdles remain to getting food to its starving population](#), Fatma Tanis, NPR, MARCH 13, 2024
7. [UN aid convoy uses new land route from Israel to reach north Gaza](#), David Gritten, BBC News, March 13th 2024
8. [Israel Allows Aid Directly into North Gaza, Raising Hopes for More](#), Adam Rasgon, Lars Dolder, Victoria Kim and Michael Levenson, New York Times, March 13, 2024

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