

ICRC*

Israel and Occupied Territories: People caught in rising violence need your help

The hostilities that broke out Saturday 7 October are at a level that we have not seen in many years. They have the potential to cause even more suffering to civilians on both sides.

At this crucial turning point, we have urged all parties to the conflict to take every possible step to prevent civilians and civilian objects from further harm.

It is estimated that more than 180,000 people are displaced within the Gaza strip due to the military strikes.

We've seen what's happening in Gaza and what's still happening in Israel. At the end of the day who pays the price? Civilians. My thoughts are with the Israeli people who have lost their friends and family. And my thoughts are with the Gazan families stuck in Gaza who can do absolutely nothing, just hope that they won't be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Fabrizio Carboni, ICRC regional director for the Near and Middle East

The decision by the Israeli authorities to halt all food and energy supplies entering Gaza will have a massive impact on essential services and deepen an already degraded humanitarian situation. The latest violence comes on top of 16 years of restrictions on the movement of people and goods, which have taken a huge toll on the economy and lives of residents of Gaza.

How the ICRC helps the affected people

Thanks to decades of presence in Gaza, our teams are ready to support essential infra-



(Photo www.icrc.org)

structure providing health care, water and electricity.

- On Saturday 7 October, we dispatched a truck of medical supplies (stretchers, beds, body bags) to a hospital in Gaza. We have also donated 280 body bags and 12 stretchers to the Ministry of Health in Gaza. We are ready to provide further humanitarian assistance as required on both sides.
- A first assessment of the damage to sewage and water treatment and distribution systems is ongoing. Two vital desalination plants that ensure clean water, as well as three wastewater plants are out of order or lie dormant due to electricity shortages. In addition, Gaza's major hospitals risk shutting down due to low fuel supplies.
- The reports of people being captured or detained are deeply distressing. Our colleagues in Gaza, in Israel, but also beyond, are doing all they can to contact the relevant authorities who are arbitrarily holding Israeli and other nationals. Our ask is very clear: we need to have access to them, assess their needs, and reestablish contact with their families. People who have been taken hostage need to be released. People detained must be treated humanely.
- Our offices on both sides are overwhelmed with phone calls from people enquiring about the possible whereabouts of their missing loved ones. We are doing our best to accompany them in these moments of distress. With our Movement partners, we will try to locate

* *The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.*

the missing and provide answers as soon as the situation will permit.

- As our ability to bring lifesaving help heavily depends on the security guarantees our staff may obtain from parties waging military operations, we remind them that ambulances, health workers and facilities are to be protected at all times.

Source: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/israel-and-occupied-territories-people-caught-in-rising-violence-need-your-help>, 10 October 2023

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