

Israel Moves to Dismantle UNRWA Without Replacement Body to Manage Aid for Palestinians in Gaza

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While Israeli army plans to fully dismantle the UN agency in order to undermine Hamas' civilian rule in Gaza, including through a slander campaign, no other organization has been found to assume its responsibilities

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The Israeli army presented a plan on Monday for the full dismantling of the UN's agency for Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, after the Israeli defense establishment concluded that doing so will undermine Hamas' civilian rule in Gaza.

The plan presented follows a decision on the part of the Israel Defense Forces to wage a campaign in Israel and abroad – with the help of Israeli government bodies – to damage UNRWA's reputation and [expose its employees' involvement](#) in Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade.

Israel has frozen UNRWA's accounts at Israeli banks, which the army says will effectively block the transfer of tax and exemption-free [funds to Hamas](#). Israel is also refusing to transfer goods from its territory, is blocking residency visas for UNRWA employees, and is rejecting special requests filed by the agency and its supporters.

As part of the plan, Israel also decided to strengthen private sector entities that are interested [in helping](#), and to divert resources from UNRWA's logistical network in order to weaken it.

However, the IDF believes that Hamas has [not been dismantled](#), despite the damage the organization has sustained during the war. Israel is struggling to verify whether Hamas has taken aid money transferred to Gaza, but the Israeli defense establishment assumes that, over time, Hamas will struggle to administer civilian life in Gaza, which will ultimately result in the group losing control.

Five months since the outbreak of the war, the political establishment has still not responded to requests from the defense establishment to find a replacement for UNRWA, and it has not found any organization willing to assume responsibility for managing civilian life if Hamas' rule is overthrown.

The defense establishment has proposed [some alternatives](#) which are acceptable to the international community in terms of transferring aid funds to Gaza. Some possible organizations already began operating in Gaza on Sunday, including the UN's World Food Programme, which will transfer aid from Cyprus by sea and distribute it in both the northern and southern Gaza Strip. Other organizations under consideration are the World Central Kitchen, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and private sector entities.

Israel understands that the administering of humanitarian aid no longer lies in the hands of the IDF or official Israeli bodies, but because of the importance of bringing supplies into Gaza – especially for the U.S. – the Israeli army has come to understand that transferring aid to Gaza will strengthen its eroding international legitimacy for continuing the war.

Since UNRWA's primary donors froze funding to the agency following [the revelation](#) that some of its employees had participated in the October 7 massacre, some have renewed donations because no one else has been found to care for Gaza's civilians and over concerns of hunger spreading in the Strip.

The IDF insists that there is no famine, nor any proof of famine, in the Gaza Strip. It said that [footage](#) of Gazans looting aid trucks, as well as the fact that only a few aid trucks are entering northern Gaza, may create the appearance of famine, but that this is not the case. The IDF added that Egyptian officials are aware that there is no hunger in the southern and northern parts of the Strip.

As a result, the IDF presented on Monday data on the humanitarian condition of Gaza's civilians, noting that the protests on the Israeli side of the checkpoints have reduced the entry pace of aid trucks "dramatically."

The army says that [Khan Yunis](#) has a reasonable supply of water and partial access to food. Medical care for the city's residents is also limited due to the military activity there, and attempts are being made to make hospitals operational again. In [Rafah](#), where around 1.4 million Gazans are residing, the IDF says that civilians are receiving food on a continuous basis but that hospitals are at 220 percent capacity.

The army said that 77 humanitarian aid trucks have entered the northern Gaza Strip this week – where 300,000 Gazans are residing and where there is no civilian control by Hamas – and that Gazans have looted some of them. The army also said that there are seven hospitals providing medical care to civilians in the area, but that access to water is limited.

The army added that of the 500,000 civilians living in refugee camps in central Gaza, 400,000 are residing across 53 displaced persons camps. According to the IDF, there is no water shortage in these camps, a continuous supply of humanitarian aid is arriving, and there is reasonable medical care available. The army also noted that local government in those areas is partially active.