

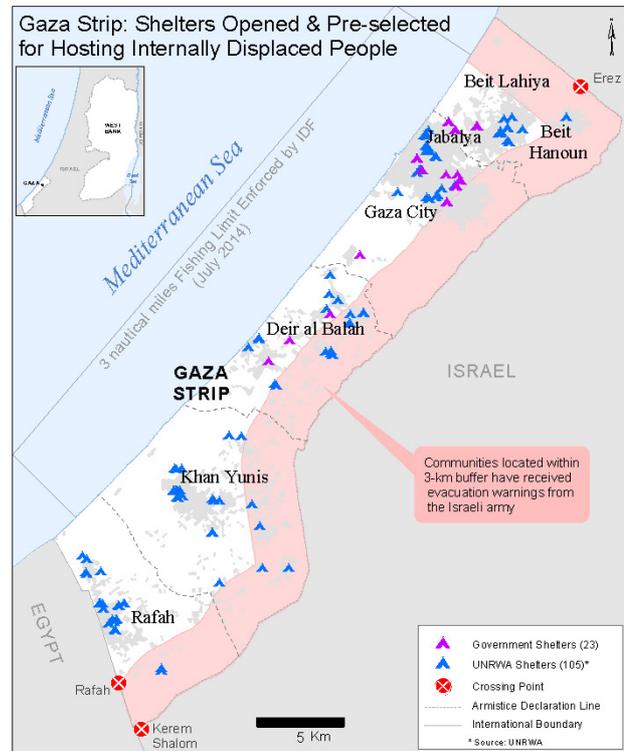


This report is produced by OCHA oPt in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 25 July (1500 hrs) to 26 July (1500 hrs). The next report will be issued on 27 July.

## Highlights

- A 12-hour ceasefire was observed today in Gaza between 08:00 and 20:00.
- The pause in hostilities allowed for the recovery of bodies, with at least 90 Palestinian dead reportedly retrieved up to 14:00.
- 58 Palestinians, including 12 children and eight women, are reported to have been killed in the last 24 hours. This brings the fatality toll to 925, excluding the bodies recovered today.
- Early this morning, prior to the ceasefire, 20 members of the An Najjar family were killed in an Israeli airstrike.

**Latest developments: 23:00:** although reports suggest that the ceasefire has been extended beyond the 20:00 deadline, some rockets have been fired from Gaza at southern Israel.



<b>924</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>200,000</b>
Palestinians killed, including at least 676 civilians, of whom 206 are children and 109 are women. <sup>1</sup>	Member of the An Najjar family killed by an Israeli airstrike.	Israelis killed, including two civilians and 40 soldiers, in addition to one foreign national.	Hospitals, clinics and medical centres hit and damaged by shelling.	Displaced people hosted in UNRWA and government schools and with host families.

## Situation Overview

A 12-hour ceasefire was observed today, the most extensive since hostilities began on 7 July. The lull allowed for Gaza residents to leave their homes and shelters and stock up on basic food items and other necessities. Most population centres, with the exception of Rafah, were filled with people and vehicles and shops and markets opened. Banks and ATMs were also operational. The pause allowed for the removal of accumulated garbage and the clearing away of some rubble, and for utility workers to carry out basic maintenance and repairs.

The ceasefire also provided an opportunity for Gaza residents to reunite with separated relatives, to check up on missing family members and to visit the injured in hospitals. Many returned to inspect damage to their homes, and to retrieve belongings. Ambulance crews and rescue workers continued to sift through the rubble of

<sup>1</sup> Data on fatalities and destruction of property is consolidated by the Protection and Shelter clusters based on preliminary information, and is subject to change based on further verifications.

+ For more information, see “background on the crisis” at the end of the report

destroyed buildings to retrieve bodies, particularly from Ash Shujai'ya, Beit Hanoun and around Khan Younis. However, Khuza'a where many are believed to have been killed, remains inaccessible

#### *Hostilities and casualties*

Since the last situation update, 58 persons have reportedly been killed, many of whose status still needs to be verified, including at least 12 children and eight women. This brings the cumulative fatality toll among Palestinians to at least 924 as of 14.00 today, according to preliminary data collected by the Protection Cluster from various sources. This includes at least 676 civilians (73 per cent of total fatalities); 129 members of armed groups; and 119 persons whose status is still unknown.

These numbers do not include at least 90 bodies which were recovered during the ceasefire from various parts of the Gaza Strip, especially the Israeli-declared three km wide "no-go-zone" from the fence. Among those recovered, was the body of a woman from al-Shouka village, killed by Israeli shelling on 17 July. However, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in Khan Younis was denied access to Khuza'a to retrieve the bodies of persons killed during the night of 23 to 24 July. Beit Hanoun Hospital was also shelled again last night, reportedly injuring three staff members and extensively damaging the building.

Since the launch of the Israeli military operation, hundreds of homes have reportedly been directly targeted by Israeli airstrikes, and it is estimated that about 685 residential properties (including multi-storey buildings) have been totally destroyed or severely damaged, causing hundreds of civilian casualties and displacing the survivors. At least 44 families have lost three or more family members in the same incident, for a total of 253 fatalities, since the onset of the emergency. This trend of multiple family fatalities continued in the period leading up to the ceasefire, with four members of the al-Darazin family, including the father, two children aged three and five, and a cousin reportedly killed when a tank shell struck their home in an Nuseirat camp yesterday afternoon. In the most serious incident, 20 members of the An Najjar family were killed by an Israeli airstrike on their home in the early hours of this morning (see *box*).

On 26 July at around 03:10, an Israeli airstrike hit a two-storey building in the Sheikh Nasser area, eastern Khan Yunis, belonging to Sameer Hussein Mohammed An-Najjar. Twenty family members were reportedly killed including 11 children, four of them aged one year or under. Five women, two of them pregnant, were also killed. According to some reports, the family had recently fled the fighting in Khuza'a to take refuge in the Khan Yunis area.

*I unequivocally reiterate to all actors in this conflict that civilians must not be targeted. It is imperative that Israel, Hamas and all Palestinian armed groups strictly abide by applicable norms of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. This entails applying the principles of distinction between civilians and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives; proportionality; and precautions in attack. Respect for the right to life of civilians, including children, should be a foremost consideration. Not abiding by these principles may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.*

**UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, Statement to the Human Rights Council, 23 July 2014**

Also of concern are continuing incidents of attacks on ambulances and medical personnel. On 25 July at around 23:10 a PRCS ambulance, after being coordinated by the ICRC, was directed to Al-Qarara in the Khan Yunis area to evacuate an injured person. Three PRCS staff including the driver had to leave the car to reach the injured person during which time, again following ICRC coordination, the driver was reportedly shot at by Israeli forces. It took another 30 minutes for the PRCS personnel, who were shot at several times, to evacuate the driver, who died from his injuries in the hospital. In a similar incident in Beit Hanoun at 16:30 on 25 July, another PRCS ambulance was fired at by an Israeli tank shell, killing a paramedic and wounding two others.

Under international humanitarian law, medical facilities, transportation and personnel should be respected and protected in all circumstances, and must be allowed to carry out their duties, including in the collection, transport and treatment of the injured, at all times without hindrance. Parties to the conflict must take all measures to ensure access to those in need and must facilitate their safe evacuation.

*We condemn in the strongest possible terms the attacks against medical personnel and ambulances which have occurred in Gaza over the past two weeks. Targeting ambulances, hospitals and medical workers is a serious violation of the law of war. Palestinian Red Crescent volunteers are out there saving lives. This violence must stop.*  
**Jacques de Maio, Head of delegation for Israel and the occupied territories of the ICRC.**

Prior to the commencement of the ceasefire, indiscriminate firing by Palestinian armed groups in Gaza into southern and central Israel continued, with most falling in open areas or intercepted by the Iron Dome system, resulting in no additional fatalities. Since 8 July, three civilians in Israel have been killed, including one foreign national, and a few dozen directly injured by rockets or shrapnel. Five Israeli soldiers were killed during the reporting period bringing the Israeli military fatalities since the beginning of the ground offensive to 40.

#### *Displacement*

As a result of hostilities, tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled their homes in search of a safe haven. As of 08:30 this morning, UNRWA was hosting 165,548 IDPs in 92 schools operating as emergency shelters, an additional 6,000 compared to yesterday. It is estimated that nearly 9,000 IDPs are residing in 13 government schools and public buildings. This is in addition to the approximately 20,000 individuals who have been displaced, and are hosted by friends or relatives as destruction or damage to their homes has rendered them uninhabitable. The total figures of IDPs are now over 200,000 people.

After more than two weeks of escalating conflict, some areas are reporting that host families are finding it increasingly difficult to support displaced family members, leading to some increase in the numbers seeking refuge in UNRWA shelters. While many IDPs took advantage of the ceasefire today to leave the shelters for food and other essentials, and some to return to their homes if the security situation allowed, it is expected that most will return to shelters in the absence of a more comprehensive ceasefire. However, the extent of house destruction and damage in Gaza has rendered thousand of families homeless, which will pose challenge when normalcy resumes after a comprehensive cease fire.

#### *Public infrastructure and services*

The pause allowed for utility workers to carry out basic maintenance and repairs. The Gaza Electricity Distribution (GEDCO) Corporation reported that all ten feeder lines from Israel were down. GEDCO teams attempted to repair seven lines, including those in northern Gaza, the middle area, Khan Yunis and Rafah in coordination with the ICRC. The three lines feeding Gaza city were found to be extensively damaged and in need of major repair, if not replacement. A main storage warehouse the east of Gaza city was discovered to be heavily damaged with all spare parts unusable.

*The Special Coordinator is involved, together with other stakeholders, in brokering an extension of the humanitarian pause for an additional extendable period of 24 hours, to allow vital humanitarian efforts to continue, including UN relief operations. It will give civilians a chance to retrieve and bury their dead, flee to safer premises, resupply with vital commodities and services, and continue overdue emergency repairs on water and energy infrastructure.*

**Statement by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Robert Serry, calling for an extension of the humanitarian pause, 26 July.**

#### *Key humanitarian priorities*

Protection of civilians: ensuring respect for the IHL principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack.

Humanitarian space: increased access for humanitarian workers to carry out life-saving activities, for example, through regular and meaningful humanitarian pauses. This is needed among other reasons, to complete search and rescue operations in several areas; reach IDPs and families in northern Gaza; and repair critical water and electricity infrastructure.

Scale up response to IDPs: additional shelters are needed to reduce overcrowding and accommodate new IDPs, alongside the replenishment of food, water, and NFI stocks. Assistance for IDPs living with host families also needs to be increased, particularly the provision of NFIs and water.

#### **Update on Gaza Crossings:**

**Erez**: Exceptionally open today from 1100 for pre-coordinated movement only.

**Beit Hanoun (Arba-Arba)**: Closed until further notice.

**Kerem Shalom**: Closed today as per its regular operating schedule. Yesterday, 110 truckloads of mostly food and medical supplies entered Gaza, including 26 for UNRWA, five for WFP and three for UNICEF in addition to approximately 700,000 litres of fuel and 132 tons of cooking gas.

**Rafah**: Open today from 9:00-15:00.. Yesterday 16 truckloads of medical supplies – donations from Saudi Arabia, Arab Medical Union, Jordan and Morocco - entered Gaza via Rafah.

Note: As the majority of cluster and focal points were in the field for much of the day, taking advantage of the ceasefire to conduct assessments, it was decided not to request inputs for the Humanitarian Needs and Response section today. This will resume tomorrow.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Katleen Maes**, Head of the humanitarian Emergency Operations Center in Gaza, [maes@un.org](mailto:maes@un.org), +972 59 291 1047  
**Yehezkel Lein**, Head of Analysis, Communications and Protection Unit, OCHA oPt, [lein@un.org](mailto:lein@un.org), +972 54 331 1809

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

**Hayat Abu-Saleh**, Communications and Information Analyst, OCHA oPt, [abusaleh@un.org](mailto:abusaleh@un.org), +972 (0) 54 3311816

For more information, please visit [www.ochaopt.org](http://www.ochaopt.org)