Israel’s Humanitarian Efforts

- Overview -

As of April 25th, 2024
Since the barbaric massacre and other atrocities carried out by Hamas with various other terrorist organizations against Israel on October 7th, the IDF has been operating to dismantle the terrorist organizations' capabilities.

While doing so, the IDF maintains a clear distinction between the terrorist organizations and infrastructures and the civilian population in the Gaza Strip. In addition to the many efforts and measures the IDF implements to mitigate harm to civilians, numerous humanitarian efforts have been implemented over the past months, aimed at improving the civilian humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. Such efforts include facilitating aid, including food, medical supplies, fuel, and shelter, as well as the direct delivery of water from Israel to Gaza. Despite these many actions, there are no references to Israel's humanitarian efforts in varying international reports.

The Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) unit, responsible for the implementation of the government's civilian policy within the territories of Judea and Samaria and towards the Gaza Strip, has set up a coordination mechanism and works internally as well as closely with the international community to coordinate and synchronize the various humanitarian efforts in the Gaza Strip.
These mechanisms include, *inter alia*, a humanitarian task force, and a four-way meeting with the U.N., the U.S., and Egypt, to better assess, and address the humanitarian matters on the ground. COGAT also operates a joint coordination cell with representatives of international organizations, in coordination with the IDF's Southern Command. The IDF has additionally founded a professional forum, which includes international experts on public health and nutrition, to ensure that expert opinions are utilized.

Since the outbreak of the war, COGAT has facilitated at least *6,100 humanitarian operations in the Gaza Strip, including 2,337 sensitive missions* (classified as complex warzone operations, high-ranking delegations, etc.). Following is an interim summary of the various efforts that have been, and still are, being implemented on an ongoing basis, updated as of April 25th, 2024:
There are three means of transferring humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip: \textit{land, sea, and air.}

Nearly 95\% of aid enters via land crossings.

\textbf{Land}

Since the outbreak of ‘Swords of Iron’, COGAT has coordinated the entry of \textbf{24,790 trucks, carrying humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, at a total weight of 468,790 tons}. 63\% of the aid entering the Gaza Strip included \textbf{food products}, 15\% was \textbf{shelter equipment}, 8\% was \textbf{medical supplies}, and 6.7\% was \textbf{water} and various other \textbf{mixed goods}. The aid leaves for the Gaza Strip either from Egypt, from Jordan, or the Ashdod Port in Israel.
**Air**
Since February 2024, the IDF and COGAT have coordinated **81 airdrops of aid**, primarily to the **Northern Gaza Strip**. The airdrops included **7,353 humanitarian aid packages** from the United States, Egypt, Jordan, The Netherlands, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, Canada, Indonesia, the UK, and France.

**Sea**
**17 tons of humanitarian aid have been admitted to the Gaza Strip via the sea route**, departing from Cyprus, in partnership with the World Central Kitchen (WCK). In addition, a floating pier project is being developed with the United States, to expand current maritime route capabilities.
It is crucial to note, that there are no restrictions on the admission of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, provided it is coordinated in advance with the Israeli authorities and passes security screening.

Thus far, 98.7% of all aid trucks sent were approved and entered the Gaza Strip, while only 1.3% of the trucks (307 trucks) were rejected or sent for re-packaging, as they carried unauthorized dual-use items that can be reprocessed for terror activities. In the past month, the number of approved trucks was 99.47%. As there are no storage facilities at the screening sites, trucks with dual-use items need to be sent back to off-load such items, to allow the remainder of the trucks’ contents to enter the Gaza Strip. There is no blanket ban on dual-use items, they can be submitted for special authorization and coordination ahead of time, allowing them to enter the Gaza Strip.
Since the outbreak of the war, **15,901 trucks carrying 337,930 tons of food** have entered the Gaza Strip.

**This amount of food constitutes 80% more food than was imported into Gaza before October 7th.**

Part of the food distribution efforts include operating **bakeries** (not only the provision of ingredients but also the supply of fuel to run the bakeries). COGAT has worked closely with both the private sector in the Gaza Strip and the World Food Program (WFP) to coordinate the opening and ongoing operation of bakeries throughout the Gaza Strip. There are currently **24 bakeries** operating throughout the Strip; 10 from the private sector, located in the central and southern districts, and 14 others are supported by the WFP (2 in the northern Strip, 7 in the center, and 5 in the south). More bakeries are planned to open in the near future. **In total, the existing bakeries produce approximately 3.658 million pita breads per day.**
Recently, COGAT worked to approve and coordinate the entry of animal feed into Gaza to support the livestock sector. So far, approximately **150 tons of animal feed has been imported**, which according to the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is enough to supply approximately 2,450 beneficiaries. **Additionally, 350 tons of feed are expected to be admitted in the coming weeks.** It should be noted, that the availability of animal feed has **benefits for the overall food and nutrition situation inside the Gaza Strip.** Well-fed livestock improves the quality, quantity, and nutritional value of the milk produced, as well as the locally produced meat products.
Since the outbreak of the war, over 50 million liters of water have been supplied to the Gaza Strip. Of these, 14 million liters have been provided directly from Israel, 20-30 million have been supplied by groundwater pumps within the Gaza Strip, 3 million liters were supplied via local desalination plants (fuel supply for the latter two was specially coordinated by Israel), 2 million liters entered as humanitarian aid (38,860 tons on 1,548 trucks), and 3.5 million liters of water were supplied via a water line built by the United Arab Emirates from the Egyptian side of Rafah to the Gazan side (delivering some 3,400 cubic meters of water per day). This should amount to the equivalent of a total of 20 liters of water per person, per day.

Furthermore, repair plans have been approved to restore the water lines and water mains at Nahal Oz and Bani Suheila, which will each supply approximately 17 thousand cubic meters of water per day to the Gaza Strip.

Additionally, 37 local wells in the northern Gaza Strip are being replenished (13 within Gaza City and 24 in Jabaliya City), which will provide an additional solution and relief for the population in the northern district.
COGAT has thus far coordinated the admission of 53,400 tons of shelter equipment into the Gaza Strip on 3,738 trucks.

There are currently several dedicated shelter areas being developed, particularly in the al-Mawasi humanitarian zone.

There are additional plans for entry and construction of 44,800 tents that could accommodate up to roughly 270,000 people for an immediate to short-term period.

Shelter areas are not only equipped with tents but also include basic infrastructure for sanitation services, food, and aid distribution, as well as some medical services.
Thus far, 21,730 tons of medical supplies have been admitted into the Gaza Strip, on 1,893 Trucks.

This aid included: sanitary equipment, wheelchairs, medical beds, syringes, various medications, assorted medical equipment, special equipment for treating babies, cleaning and disinfecting products, dialysis and intravenous equipment, medical oil, insulin, incubators, medical gowns, plaster casts, vaccinations, medical tools, and more.
Field Hospitals

Seven field hospitals have been erected in the Gaza Strip as well as three floating field hospitals, set up at El-Arish port. Two additional field hospitals are currently under evaluation before construction begins. Field hospitals, which employ an additional 900 staff members, have added 850 beds to the existing medical infrastructures in the Gaza Strip, over 50,000 patients have received medical care at these hospitals.

The field hospitals also provide various additional professional capabilities, such as urology, plastic surgery, pediatrics, psychological treatment, X-rays and CT scans, hematology laboratories, and more. This infrastructure has been set up to expand the extent and quality of the medical services provided to the civilian population in the Gaza Strip and to ensure that adequate medical solutions are provided in accordance with the needs of the population and align with international standards.

As part of these efforts, the IDF is working to connect potential international organizations (countries and aid agencies) with relevant actors on the ground, mapping out the workforce needs and the equipment required, assisting in planning the operation and arrangement of the necessary procedures, and more.
The IDF has coordinated the exit of 3,287 wounded individuals from the Gaza Strip for medical treatment in other countries. Furthermore, 725 escorts accompanied the wounded.

2,431 of the injured received medical treatment in Egypt, 428 in the UAE with 52 others treated on the UAE’s floating hospital, set up in the El-Arish port. 340 were sent to Turkey, 24 to Italy, 10 to Qatar, 1 to Jordan, and 1 to the United States.

Vaccinations

The IDF has also coordinated the admission of over 2.5 million doses of vaccinations to the Gaza Strip, to prevent disease outbreaks. Thus far, vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and Hepatitis B have been admitted, among others.
The IDF has additionally coordinated the admission of 127 ambulances to the Gaza Strip, to reinforce the existing medical capabilities. 50 additional ambulances are expected to be admitted in the coming weeks.

It should be noted, that COGAT is currently constructing a plan for strengthening the existing health system in the Gaza Strip, in coordination with the Health Cluster and various NGOs.
The IDF facilitates and supervises the admission of fuel and cooking gas via a land route. **This fuel is used for operating critical infrastructures, based on an agreed-upon mechanism to avoid the diversion of the fuel to Hamas’ terror needs**, while the U.N. aid agencies are responsible for the distribution of the fuel within the Gaza Strip.

Thus far, **253 tons of fuel** and **489 tons of cooking gas** have been admitted into the Gaza Strip.
Over the coming weeks, various reports evaluating the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip are expected to be released, the most notable among them being the IPC (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification) report.

Previous reports released have relied heavily on data derived from questionable methodological sources and information collection, portraying a dire humanitarian state when it comes to the civilian population in the Gaza Strip while glossing over critical evidence. Without minimizing the hardship that the extended conflict imposes on the civilian population, it is important to properly take into account the various humanitarian efforts conducted by Israel.
Main Challenges

Despite the various and extensive efforts listed above, several key factors hinder and delay Israel’s ability to increase the amount of aid entering and reaching civilians in the Gaza Strip:

1. Theft and looting

The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip steal and divert humanitarian aid deliveries, for their military-terror needs. An example in this context, was when UNRWA publicly announced that Hamas had stolen fuel from its premises. Videos posted online show many cases in which Hamas terrorists hijack and loot the humanitarian aid shipments intended for the local civilian population.

2. Hoarding

Terrorist organizations have been hoarding supplies entering the Gaza Strip – such as food and fuel – using these resources to pursue hostilities and terror activities toward the Israeli civilian population. The fact that Hamas still possesses significant terror capabilities – continues to fire rockets toward Israel and continues to operate in its extensive terrorist tunnel network, built and maintained thanks to billions of dollars - is proof that Hamas possesses ample supplies.
3. Lack of capability to distribute the aid within the Gaza Strip

International organizations operating inside the Gaza Strip are limited in their capacity to receive and distribute the incoming humanitarian aid. This lack of capability leads to delays logistical distribution process, which in turn hinders the receipt of aid by civilians.

Recently, there has been such a severe backlog of aid awaiting collection by the U.N. on the Gazan side of Kerem Shalom, that there has been no room to unload additional aid. Roughly 700 trucks worth of aid were waiting for collection and distribution. Furthermore, Israel has no control over the distribution of aid within the Gaza Strip, and thus cannot guarantee that it reaches the civilians in need. Israel is aware of the difficulties in accessing aid in parts of the Gaza Strip and has urged international organizations to scale up their logistic capacity through manpower, forklifts, trucks, operating hours, and more. Israel is working in coordination with international organizations to overcome this challenge. In the last week, 17 empty trucks designated for aid distribution inside Gaza were purchased by aid agencies, in coordination with Israel and transferred to the Gaza Strip.
4. Sabotaging the humanitarian efforts

Hamas’ strategy and modus operandi is to intentionally delay and interrupt the humanitarian efforts. Examples of this include Hamas firing rockets from within and nearby humanitarian zones and critical infrastructures (such as a desalination plant, funded by the international community). Moreover, Hamas has attempted to smuggle terror operatives among civilians who were exiting the Gaza Strip to obtain medical treatment. Hamas even fired at IDF forces protecting humanitarian corridors.