



● JACK GUEZ/AFP

has become a matter of life and death for millions," Lazzarini said. The director of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Lisa Doughten, told the Security Council that the "scale of the horror" being experienced by Gazans is "hard to convey." "We simply do not have enough essential supplies to provide for the survival of internally displaced people at this scale," Doughten said.

800,000 have fled south
Israel said its troops attacked underground compounds on Tuesday with a focus on northern Gaza. An estimated 800,000 Palestinians have fled south, even though Israeli airstrikes have pounded the entirety of the besieged enclave. More than half the territory's 2.3 million Palestinians have fled their homes, with hundreds of thousands sheltering in packed UN-run schools-turned-shelters, or in hospitals alongside thousands of wounded patients. Israeli strikes have hit closer to several northern hospitals in recent days, alarming medics. The UNRWA says nearly 672,000 Palestinians are sheltering in its schools and other facilities – four times their capacity. Thousands of people broke into its aid warehouses over the weekend to take food, as supplies of basic goods have dwindled because of the Israeli siege. There has been no central electricity in Gaza for weeks, and Israel has barred the entry of fuel needed to power emergency generators for hospitals and homes.

Children's casualty toll
UNICEF Executive Director Cath-

erine Russell said that the toll includes over 3,400 children killed, and more than 6,300 injured. "This means that more than 420 children are being killed or injured in Gaza each day – a number which should shake each of us to our core," she said. Lazzarini said: "This surpasses the number of children killed annually across the world's conflict zones since 2019." And he stressed, "This cannot be collateral damage."

64 of UN staff killed in Gaza
UNRWA, on which hundreds of thousands of people in Gaza rely for basic services even in normal times, said 64 of its staff have been killed since the start of the war, including a man killed alongside his wife and eight children in a strike late Monday. "This is the highest number ever of UN aid workers killed in any conflict around the world in such a short time," spokesperson Juliette Touma told the Associated Press. "UNRWA will never be the same without these colleagues."
Norway: Israel breaks int'l law
Meanwhile, Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide on Tuesday criticized Israel for breaking international law in its bombardment of Gaza that has leveled neighborhoods and killed thousands of Palestinians. The foreign minister told Reuters in an interview that while Oslo supports Israel's right to self-defense, humanitarian law must be adhered to. This meant distinguishing be-

tween combatants and civilians and ensuring military attacks are proportionate to avoid excessive harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure, he said. "We believe that there have been cases where this proportionality and this distinction have not been fully respected," he said, speaking in the UAE. In Oslo, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said it was crucial to get relief to civilians in Gaza as soon as possible. "It is paramount now to have a humanitarian pause to get the support, to get the humanitarian relief to two million people who now are in an extremely dire situation," he told reporters.

China's effort for ending Israeli violence
Also, China on Tuesday said it will work with the international community to help end the ongoing Israeli violence in the Gaza Strip, noting that the core of the conflict is Israel's "illegal occupation of the Palestinian territory." "The root of the cycle of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict lies in the long-term illegal occupation of the Palestinian territory, the long-term neglect of the right of the Palestinian people to independent statehood, and the lack of a fundamental guarantee of the basic rights of the Palestinian people," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said, stressing, "This historical injustice should not continue."

Tehran's readiness to work out a deal
Meanwhile, the Iranian Foreign Minister was in Qatar on

Tuesday to coordinate and discuss efforts needed for an immediate stop in the fighting in Gaza. Tehran has announced it is ready to use its relations with Hamas to work out a cease-fire deal between the group and the Israelis, although Iran does not have any relations with the Israeli regime. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian held meetings with senior Qatari officials, including Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in Doha before departing for Turkey to continue his diplomatic efforts to help find a solution to the crisis in Palestine. Emphasizing the need to use the last political opportunities to stop the war in Gaza, Amir-Abdollahian stated that the resistance stream will not wait for anyone's advice to confront the Zionists. Yemen's Houthis on Tuesday pledged more attacks against Israel if its war in Gaza continues, saying it had already fired drones and ballistic missiles in three separate operations. Amir-Abdollahian also met with Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in the second such encounter since the war erupted. During the meeting, the top Iranian diplomat was briefed about the latest situation of people in Gaza amid ongoing Israeli aggression on the small blockaded territory.

AP, AFP, Reuters, CNN, and Press TV contributed to this report.

Why doesn't Egypt open Rafah crossing?



● REUTERS

By Hojjatollah Joudaki
Former Iranian diplomat in Egypt
OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The war between Israel and Hamas, and the subsequent Israeli war crimes in Gaza prompted a question in the minds of many: Why doesn't the Islamic government of Egypt open the Rafah border crossing and let Gazans into its Sinai Desert? It seems to me that one of the most significant measures of the Egyptian government in recent years, which turned in favor of Palestinians, was the same decision to keep the Rafah closed. Cairo has so far ignored numerous suggestions by Israel and some Western countries and never gave the green light to their project of relocating the people of Gaza into the Sinai Desert. Moving Gazans out of Gaza is the main step in Israel's plan for ethnically cleansing the land. Our past experience tells us all that if the people of Gaza were ever forced to migrate out of Palestine, there would never be another chance for them to return. In this light, Cairo's resistance against Israel's demands for the forced migration of Palestinians to the Sinai becomes justifiable. Tel Aviv claims to be fighting Hamas's armed forces in Gaza. So the Egyptians proposed that the Gaza civilians be relocated, not to the Sinai Desert, but to the Negev Desert, within the occupied territories in order to keep them safe from the war. Yet, the Israelis declined the proposal because their main goal is not to distinguish between combatants and civilians. Israel wants both to force Gazans to migrate out and to crush Hamas fighters, but this is easier said than done. Whether Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wins or loses this war, he will soon be sacked and indicted in court. Nevertheless, he thinks that if he can come out of this as a war hero, it may positively affect his open lawsuits in Israeli courts. Of course, he is mistaken since more and more voices are starting to slam his warmongering policies within the occupied territories. Even now, there are Israeli media and former officials that stress the need to remove Netanyahu. It has been proven that he can't bring peace and prosperity to Israel. Netanyahu is working against himself and Israel. Even if he manages to destroy Hamas, from the ashes of that devastating war another group or groups would rise that would surely be a tougher opponent than Hamas. What is more, the world public opinion is against Israel already. The efforts by Netanyahu and the Israelis to play innocent during the early days of the war fell flat quickly. Their continuous string of war crimes in Gaza has angered people everywhere. So, it doesn't seem like Israel would be able to achieve its goals. It can neither force Gazans out of their homes, nor can it destroy Hamas. It may be able to kill the fighters of Hamas, but the idea behind Hamas will not die. Netanyahu is sinking deeper into Gaza's quagmire, and whatever war crimes he commits only strengthens the case against him.

Iran's 'yes' vote at UNGA in line with Palestinian cause



sation of hostilities" and "firmly rejects any attempts at the forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population".

It also stresses the need to avoid a wider escalation of the fighting and demands increased humanitarian aid for Gaza, where

only a small handful of trucks carrying aid have been allowed to enter over the last week.

● The UN General Assembly votes for an "immediate humanitarian truce" in Gaza at the UN in New York on October 27, 2023.
● ANDREA RENALTY/AFP