

Department of Exterior Affairs statement regarding the situation in Gaza

IT'S A SHAME to see that the conflict between the unrecognised State of Israel and Hamas is still underway, at the devastating cost of the deaths of Palestinian people. According to data from the Palestinian Ministry of Health (Gaza), over 25,000 people have died since Israel's declaration of war against Hamas (of those 9,600 children and 6,750 women - reportedly).

Reports out of Gaza indicate that sufficient aid is still not reaching all civilians, with food and hygiene products among the necessities that aren't available enough. This is all happening at a time where funding for the UN agency UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) is being cut by nations that include the United States, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Italy, Australia and Finland. Funding cuts come after accusations against an estimated 0.04% (12) of employees in one of the largest aid agencies in the Gaza strip were accused by Israel of participating in the October 7th attacks by Hamas. The funding cuts will undoubtedly worsen the aid situation in Gaza at a time where civilians are already suffering from bombardment and a lack of basic necessities.

Recently, the ICJ (International Court of Justice) ruled that there was plausible argument that Israel may be committing a genocide against the Palestinian people. The ICJ ordered that Israel take steps to prevent genocide. Whilst stopping short of ordering a ceasefire (which Hamas had already stated it

would abide by), the ruling is monumental and is a huge step for freeing Gaza from its current situation. We look forward to seeing compliance by the State of Israel.

We'd finally like to condemn the European Broadcasting Union for their double-standards in regards to inviting the State of Israel to compete in the Eurovision Song Contest. The Russian Federation was previously banned in light of the Russia-Ukraine war, following concerns that "the inclusion of a Russian entry in [the] Contest would bring the competition into disrepute". The participation of an Israeli act undoubtedly goes against their commitments to "[bringing] audiences together".



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