

Three Ways to Tackle the Palestinian Social Crisis

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Abstract

The lingering humanitarian crisis in Palestine has resulted in severe humanitarian consequences, including a lack of access to services and displacement. People in dire need are facing an exploited healthcare system, scarce shelters, food insecurity, and increased poverty and unemployment. Since the UN Partition plan in 1948, it divided the region into one Israeli and one Palestinian sector, leading to an Arab-Israeli War, which has led to the persistent episodes of violence in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israel-Palestine conflict has seen increased violence in 2023 linked to the continued occupation, internal political divisions, and ongoing conflict that pose a threat to stability and development of the Palestinian people. The crisis is intensified by a lack of adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law. There are three strategies for different actors internationally that can aid in fighting this injustice.

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Abstract

The lingering humanitarian crisis in Palestine has resulted in severe humanitarian consequences, including a lack of access to services and displacement. People in dire need are facing an exploited healthcare system, scarce shelters, food insecurity, and increased poverty and unemployment. Since the UN Partition plan in 1948, it divided the region into one Israeli and one Palestinian sector, leading to an Arab-Israeli War, which has led to the persistent episodes of violence in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israel-Palestine conflict has seen increased violence in 2023 linked to the continued occupation, internal political divisions, and ongoing conflict that pose a threat to stability and development of the Palestinian people. The crisis is intensified by a lack of adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law. There are three strategies for different actors internationally that can aid in fighting this injustice.

Keywords: humanitarian crisis; the State of Palestine; genocide; humanitarian aid; intervention

Highlights:

- The State of Palestine has exhibited a chronic humanitarian crisis for decades.
- The risk of famine is increasing daily and has only gotten worse since October 2023.
- The State of Palestine is vulnerable to climate change and has largely increased due to the constant bombings.
- The Arab-Israeli War is only making things worse globally.

Ethic Statement – Not Applicable

The United States

The United States should stop supporting Israel and pivot to helping Palestinians. Federal Elected officials, including Senators, and the entire congressional delegation as well as Governor's in the United States should condemn these violent attacks and must recognize Palestine's sovereignty. In January of 2023, "Israeli forces were reported to have killed a Palestinian boy in the West Bank and nine Palestinians were killed during an Israeli military raid in Jenin."¹¹Claire Brader, Israel-Palestine conflict: Recent developments and statements, UK Parliament, March 2, 2023, accessed April 12, 2023, <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/israel-palestine-conflict-recent-developments-and-statements/>. Moreover, in February of 2023, "at least 10 Palestinians were killed and more than 100 injured during an Israeli raid in Nablus."²²Ibid. Following the raid, there was an exchange of rocket fire in the Gaza Strip between the Palestinian militants and Israel Defense Forces.

A military intervention seems most appropriate because it is the only way to defend and protect Palestinians because no one else is doing it for them. This ongoing bias and discrimination against Palestinians (Muslim and Christian) need to stop. Palestinians have been begging for foreign intervention for years, but NATO and the United Nations Security Council have ignored their cry for help.

The United States must redistribute its military aid to help Palestinians. Facilitating communications between Hamas and the Israeli government will warrant that a new resolution can be brokered and bring more humanitarian aid to relieve the crisis. United States has subsidized Israel both militarily and economically for decades. They need to hold the Israeli Government accountable for its actions and to demand an end to the aggression against Palestinian worshippers at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound.

Further, they must demand that both Muslim and Christian Palestinians in and around Jerusalem, which has been their cultural and spiritual center for nearly two millennia, be given the true freedom of worship at their respective holy places. The United States must condemn the construction of any more Israeli settlements in the West Bank, support for the ending of the Israeli Defense Force's occupation of the West Bank, and force for the demolition of the wall that surrounds Gaza and the West Bank.

International Aid Agencies

International aid agencies will need to play a key role in this crisis. Foreign aid groups and donors have difficulty in providing aid because of the damaging Israeli policies, for example, the stringent limits on what can be brought into Gaza, the growing settlements, and the land resources appropriated to support them in the West Bank. Millions of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank struggle to live with pride under Israeli occupation, facing movement restrictions, political divisions, and recurrent escalations of hostilities. The ongoing "large-scale security, political and economic unrest in the West Bank and the 15-year sea, land and air blockade on the Gaza Strip have resulted in economic stagnation, loss of land and restricted trade and access to resources."¹¹World Food Programme, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.wfp.org/countries/palestine>. The World Food Programme indicated that 1.84 million people are food insecure from a total population of 5.3 million people. 63% of the people in the Gaza Strip are food insecure.²²Ibid. Moreover, "nearly one-third of the registered Palestine refugees, more than 1.5 million individuals, live in 58 recognized Palestine refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem."³³United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>. The United Nations and World Food Programme need to spread the word so people and other organizations know that the problem exists, and that it is serious. No one is acknowledging that there is a problem in Palestine and that is why the violence has never stopped.

Local Aid Agencies

Donors and local aid agencies need to get push forward and get more involved in the crisis. Israel has enacted discriminatory policies and causes many of the very situations that humanitarian groups are trying so hard to improve. Last week, the Israeli occupation entered Masjid al-Aqsa in the heart of Jerusalem committing acts of terrorism during the month of Ramadan. Unfortunately, this latest attack has been a series of attacks over the last several years where the occupation yearly enters the mosque during the month of Ramadan using excessive and lethal force against defenseless worshippers. The attacks against the worshippers continue

a well-established pattern of indiscriminate violence against Palestinian men, women, and children exercising their basic human right to worship peacefully in their holy places. When events such as this one happens, donors and local aid agencies become afraid to provide any support. Addressing these structural challenges will require donors and local aid agencies to provide credibility and experience to change the circumstances that will ensure Palestinians need aid for decades to come.

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