

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation – A Cog in Israel’s Genocidal Killing Machine

Israel’s policies in Gaza - particularly the operation of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) aid distribution points and the July 12, 2025, sea access ban - constitute a systematic assault on Palestinian civilians and demand unequivocal condemnation. These actions violate core tenets of international humanitarian law (IHL), weaponize humanitarian aid, and force desperate Palestinians into a deadly game of Russian roulette at GHF sites. The sea ban, imposed in mid-summer amidst unlivable conditions, deprives civilians of food, relief, and dignity, driving them toward lethal aid points where they risk death or mutilation. The cumulative effect of these policies, alongside explicit statements by Israeli officials, reveals not only intent but a coordinated strategy that meets the legal definition of genocide.

Israel’s Breaches of International Law

Israel’s conduct in Gaza flagrantly violates international humanitarian and human rights law as codified in the Geneva Conventions, customary international law, and multilateral treaties:

1. Violation of the Principle of Distinction

By locating GHF aid distribution points within or near military evacuation zones - such as the Netsarim checkpoint and parts of Rafah - Israel disregards the foundational principle of distinction between civilians and combatants, enshrined in Article 48 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. The UN Human Rights Office reported 798 deaths near aid points since late May 2025, with at least 615 linked directly to GHF sites (Reuters, July 11, 2025). IDF personnel routinely fire on these crowds, confirming deliberate endangerment of civilians.

2. Collective Punishment

The blockade of Gaza, intensified since October 2023, and further enforced by the July 12, 2025, sea access ban, violates Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits collective punishment. Fishing has been a critical food source in Gaza for generations. By banning not only fishing but swimming in the brutal summer heat - amid destroyed homes, scarce water, and no electricity - Israel inflicts suffering on the population in violation of its legal obligations as an occupying power.

3. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life

The sea ban, enforced with shoot-on-sight orders for swimmers and fishermen, constitutes a clear violation of Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees the right to life. Combined with IDF shootings at GHF aid sites, these actions represent a pattern of arbitrary executions that amount to crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute.

4. **Weaponization of Humanitarian Aid**

The GHF, created under a joint U.S.-Israeli initiative in early 2025 and operated with IDF security and private U.S. contractors, undermines the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Amnesty International's May 29, 2025, statement condemned the GHF as "illegitimate and inhumane," noting that it violates Israel's duty to ensure the well-being of the occupied population. Instead of providing safe access to aid, the GHF exposes civilians to lethal violence, converting humanitarian relief into an instrument of warfare.

These actions form part of a broader strategy to "create conditions of life calculated to bring about *a people's* physical destruction," in direct violation of Article II(c) of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

Genocidal Intent: The Words Behind the War

The legal threshold for genocide includes the requirement of specific intent. Israeli political and military leaders have repeatedly expressed this intent in unmistakable terms. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant described Palestinians as "human animals," while Minister of Heritage Amichai Eliyahu proposed dropping an atomic bomb on Gaza. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu invoked the biblical command to "remember Amalek," a call historically interpreted as a mandate for total annihilation.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich declared, "Not a single grain of wheat should reach Gaza," and President Isaac Herzog denied any civilian innocence, asserting collective guilt. Education Minister Yoav Kisch bluntly said: "They need to be exterminated." Statements by IDF generals and Knesset members echo this genocidal rhetoric, with one deputy speaker calling to "wipe Gaza off the face of the earth," and another urging to "flatten Gaza without mercy."

These declarations are not aberrations - they reflect state policy. Year after year, the Jerusalem Flag March echoes with chants of "Death to Arabs," underscoring a culture of eliminationism at the core of the Israeli state. The fusion of dehumanizing language with policies that systematically destroy civilian life reveals the genocidal intent behind Israel's actions in Gaza.

The Bloodiest Days at GHF Aid Distribution Points

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's distribution points have become killing grounds. Some of the bloodiest days since late May 2025 include:

- **June 3, 2025:** 102 killed, 490 injured
- **June 6, 2025:** 110 killed, 583 injured
- **June 8, 2025:** 125 killed, 736 injured
- **June 10, 2025:** 163 killed, 1,495 injured
- **June 11, 2025:** 223 killed, 1,858 injured
- **June 12, 2025:** 245 killed, 2,152 injured

These incidents, corroborated by journalists and medical staff, show a recurring pattern of targeted fire against civilians gathered for aid. The rising death toll is a direct result of the deliberate militarization of humanitarian space.

Gaza's Collapsing Health System: Hospitals Targeted, Medicine Blocked

As civilians are maimed at GHF sites and throughout Gaza, they find no refuge in hospitals - because Israel has bombed and damaged **every single one**. Gaza's healthcare infrastructure has been systematically targeted, reducing operating rooms to rubble, destroying ICUs, and killing doctors, nurses, and patients. The World Health Organization has condemned these attacks as war crimes.

Due to the blockade, essential medications, including anesthesia, painkillers, and antibiotics, are unavailable. Doctors are often forced to perform amputations, cesarean sections, and life-saving surgeries **without sedatives or anesthetics**. This cruelty is not collateral damage - it is part of the design. Wounding civilians at aid points and then denying them treatment serves Israel's broader genocidal aim of eliminating Gaza's population by any and all means.

Soldiers Ordered to Fire on Civilians: Violations of Law and Conscience

In a damning exposé published by *Haaretz* on June 27, 2025, multiple Israeli soldiers testified that they were explicitly ordered to open fire on unarmed Palestinians gathered at GHF aid distribution sites. These testimonies confirm what survivors and journalists have long reported: civilians queuing peacefully for food and water were deliberately targeted, not accidentally caught in crossfire. One officer described the scene as a "killing field," and admitted that live fire was used not in self-defense, but to disperse crowds by force. This policy of calculated murder violates both international law and military ethics.

The Nuremberg Trials, which followed the atrocities of World War II, established a precedent that "just following orders" is no defense for war crimes. Soldiers are personally responsible for unlawful conduct, especially when orders are manifestly illegal. This principle is enshrined in the IDF's own Code of Ethics, which affirms that Israeli soldiers have not only the **right** but the **duty** to disobey illegal orders. Firing live ammunition at unarmed civilians - especially those seeking humanitarian aid - is not a gray area: it is a war crime. The soldiers who followed these orders, the commanders who issued them, and the state that enabled this policy must all be held accountable. Moral responsibility cannot be outsourced. Nor can it be buried under the ruins of a people denied food, water, and dignity.

A Victim's Account: Shot While Starving

I want to share a personal story here about a close friend of mine, a young resident of Gaza, just 20 years old. He lost his entire family in an Israeli airstrike in 2024. Since then,

he has been living alone amid the ruins, scavenging for food, sleepwalking through trauma. In early July 2025, he had gone four full days without eating. His hands trembled with hunger; his vision blurred; his breath came in gasps as the summer heat blazed overhead. Starvation was clawing at his body. He had no choice. He walked - stumbled, really - toward the GHF aid site at Netsarim. It was his last hope.

When he arrived, he found himself surrounded by thousands of others, equally desperate. Suddenly, without warning, Israeli forces opened fire. Bullets tore into the crowd. He was hit once in the arm, again in the back. A third bullet pierced his thigh. The fourth shattered part of his spine. He collapsed into the sand, paralyzed, bleeding, surrounded by screams. There were no ambulances. No stretchers. No medics. Only the raw courage of strangers - other Palestinians who refused to leave him behind. They carried him by foot under constant threat of being targeted again to the nearest functional hospital. He lost a finger. He may never walk again. But he survived. And for what? For trying to eat.

Sea Ban Forcing Reliance on GHF

The July 12, 2025, ban on sea access eliminated Gaza's last independent food source. By criminalizing fishing and swimming under threat of death, Israel stripped Palestinians of agency and drove them toward the only remaining option: GHF sites. Doctors Without Borders reported that the ban, enforced during an unbearable summer with little shade or water, has exacerbated dehydration, malnutrition, and despair (MSF, July 2025). This policy funnels Palestinians into fatal aid traps - denying life-saving alternatives while constructing death zones.

GHF as a Cog in Israel's Genocidal Killing Machine

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation is not a neutral aid provider - it is a cog in a genocidal killing machine. Its structure ensures that civilians are exposed to maximum danger under the pretense of relief. The sea ban, the militarization of aid, and the systematic targeting of distribution sites combine into a coherent strategy: to destroy Gaza's civilian population in whole or in part.

The UN's death toll of 798 at aid sites, growing daily, is matched by tens of thousands more wounded, traumatized, and displaced. GHF's operations - conducted with IDF oversight and U.S. backing - make it complicit in crimes against humanity. It enables a genocide cloaked in humanitarian language.

Conclusion

Israel's actions in Gaza - through the GHF, the sea ban, the total blockade, and the systematic destruction of Gaza's healthcare system - are not only morally reprehensible but legally indefensible. These policies violate international law, humanitarian norms, and the basic principles of human dignity. The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, rather than providing relief, functions as a mechanism of extermination. The July 12 sea ban forces civilians

to choose between starvation or near-certain death at militarized aid sites. The destruction of hospitals and the withholding of medicine compound the suffering.

The world must act. The GHF must be dismantled. The sea ban must be lifted. Gaza's hospitals must be rebuilt and resupplied. And Israel must be held accountable for its genocidal campaign. Nothing less than the survival of a people - and the credibility of international law - is at stake.