

GAZA NEEDS IMMEDIATE  
HUMANITARIAN AID

(Mr. McGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, there is a catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza. It is happening before our eyes.

Tons of food, medicine, water, shelter, and other urgent humanitarian aid remains blocked from entering Gaza by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. The World Food Programme and NGOs have been forced to close their programs or are using the last of their dwindling supplies.

For the first time, lab technicians with the American Near East Refugee Aid organization are detecting signs of starvation in the lab work of one-third of all blood and urine samples of their patients in Gaza.

Israeli officers charged with monitoring conditions inside of Gaza have told their commanders that it is on the brink of starvation.

Mr. Speaker, for too long Congress has been complacent and complicit about the suffering of the Palestinian people in Gaza. We need to speak out and demand the rapid, unimpeded, impartial, neutral, and independent delivery of humanitarian aid today. Tomorrow may be too late.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to enter additional materials into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

[From The New York Times, May 6, 2025]

THIS IS THE MOMENT OF MORAL RECKONING IN  
GAZA

(By Sean Carroll)

A full-blown humanitarian emergency in Gaza is no longer looming. It is here, and it is catastrophic.

It's been more than two months since Israel cut off all humanitarian aid and commercial supplies into Gaza. The World Food Program delivered its last stores of food on April 25. Two million Palestinians in Gaza, nearly half of them children, are now surviving on a single meal every two or three days.

At makeshift clinics run by my relief organization, American Near East Refugee Aid, signs of prolonged starvation are becoming more frequent and alarming. In the past 10 days, our lab technicians began detecting ketones, an indicator of starvation, in one-third of urine samples tested, the first time we have seen such cases in significant numbers since we began testing in October 2024. Food, fuel and medicine are exhausted or close to it.

Every hour is a race against time—but without the access and political will needed to aid to deliver aid, save lives and end the unimaginable suffering, our hands are tied.

This is the longest continuous total siege Gaza has endured in the war. Israel is now openly exploiting aid as a tool of war; senior Israeli officials have declared what effectively is the intent to use starvation as a tactic to pressure Hamas to release the remaining hostages—a clear violation of international law. Many Palestinians fear it is

also part of a plan to expel them from Gaza, and aid groups warn that Palestinians could end up in a “de facto internment conditions.”

Israel's blockade—and the deliberate delays, denials and excessive security procedures that surround it—is not just a failure on logistics. It is an engineered system of deprivation. The short-lived cease-fire in January proved inadequate to meet humanitarian needs. Aid increased beginning of Jan. 19, but was again cut off entirely by March. The intent to use hunger as leverage is explicit, and it is unconscionable.

As food stocks vanish, leaders including President Trump, Canada's new prime minister and Israel's allies in Europe and around the world are calling for the immediate resumption of humanitarian aid. Yet their words remain no more than that: just words, empty and ignored. On Sunday, Israel's security cabinet approved plans to step up its military campaign in Gaza.

Just as ominously for Palestinians, Israel also approved a plan to entrench its control over aid, through Israeli-established hubs with private companies handling security. This appears part of a broader effort that includes the continued closure of Gaza's crossing with Egypt and a ban on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, the main source of humanitarian support for Palestinians. The clampdown on aid would also undermine Arab-led regional efforts for genuine recovery and reconstruction by ignoring or putting off feasible and legitimate security and governance plans. The danger for relief workers is constant. This March, the Israeli military killed 14 aid workers and a U.N. official. For my organization, the war became deadly in March 2024, when an Israeli airstrike killed our colleague Mousa Shawwa and his young son. At least 418 humanitarian staff members have been killed in Gaza over the past 18 months, making it the deadliest region in the world for aid workers.

Since breaking the cease-fire with intensified bombing on March 18, the Israeli military has pushed Palestinians in Gaza into smaller and smaller enclaves, expanding “no go” military or evacuation zones to about 70 percent of their territory.

Israel must be required to create open and secure humanitarian corridors. Without them it is impossible to scale up relief because every delivery is a gamble with civilian and aid workers' lives. And while an immediate cease-fire and influx of aid are urgently needed, that will not be enough.

There must be a plan not just for relief but also for recovery, which cannot happen in a war zone or under permanent siege. True recovery requires a political agreement that guarantees Palestinian presence, security and self-determination. Humanitarian access is not just a moral imperative; it is a prerequisite for any hope of a better future.

Imagine instead a Gaza where homes are rebuilt, clean water flows, children return to school and families can once again harvest food from their own land. This vision may seem distant after decades of Israeli military occupation, blockade and repeated wars that have severely damaged infrastructure and essential services.

But we've helped improve the lives of Palestinians in Gaza before and we can do it again. What stands in the way isn't capacity; it's deliberate policy blocking the path to basic human dignity.

When we talk about peace, we must ask: What kind of future are we envisioning if an entire people is left to suffer starvation? Israelis will not be safer while Gaza remains under siege. Sustainable peace is built not through domination, but through dignity, freedom, opportunity and mutual security.

This is the moment of moral reckoning. Will the world be complicit in Gaza's collapse, or part of its recovery?

IN PRIVATE, SOME ISRAELI OFFICERS ADMIT  
THAT GAZA IS ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION  
(By Natan Odenheimer and Ronen Bergman,  
May 13, 2025)

Israel's government has publicly dismissed warnings of extreme food shortages after it blocked aid deliveries, but an internal analysis concluded that a crisis looms if food supplies are not restored.

Some Israeli military officials have privately concluded that Palestinians in Gaza face widespread starvation unless aid deliveries are restored within weeks, according to three Israeli defense officials familiar with conditions in the enclave.

For months, Israel has maintained that its blockade on food and fuel to Gaza did not pose a major threat to civilian life in the territory, even as the United Nations and other aid agencies have said a famine was looming.

But Israeli military officers who monitor humanitarian conditions in Gaza have warned their commanders in recent days that unless the blockade is lifted quickly, many areas of the enclave will likely run out of enough food to meet minimum daily nutritional needs, according to the defense officials. They spoke on the condition of anonymity to share sensitive details.

Because it takes time to scale up humanitarian deliveries, the officers said that immediate steps were needed to ensure that the system to supply aid could be reinstated fast enough to prevent starvation.

The growing acknowledgment within part of the Israeli security establishment of a hunger crisis in Gaza comes as Israel has vowed to dramatically expand the war in Gaza to destroy Hamas and bring back the remaining hostages—twin aims that more than 19 months of war have yet to achieve. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was defiant, and said the military would resume fighting in the coming days “in full force to finish the job” and “eliminate Hamas.”

Mr. Netanyahu's statement came on the same day that President Trump landed in Saudi Arabia, as part of his first major foreign trip since his re-election. Mr. Trump, however, is not visiting Israel, underscoring a growing divide between two leaders who increasingly disagree on some of the most critical security issues facing Israel.

The military officials' analysis has exposed a gulf between Israel's public stance on the aid blockade and its private deliberations. It reveals that parts of the Israeli security establishment have reached the same conclusions as leading aid groups. They have warned for months of the dangers posed by the blockade.

The analysis also highlights the urgency of the humanitarian situation in Gaza: Most bakeries have shut, charity kitchens are closing and the United Nations' World Food Program, which distributes aid and coordinates shipments, says it has run out of food stocks.

On Monday, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, a U.N.-backed initiative that monitors malnutrition, warned that famine was imminent in Gaza. If Israel proceeds with a planned military escalation in Gaza, the initiative said in a summary report, “The vast majority of people in the Gaza Strip would not have access to food, water, shelter, and medicine.”

The Israeli military and the Israeli ministry of defense declined to comment on the Israeli officers' predictions that Gaza is nearing a food crisis. Oren Marmorstein, a spokesman for Israel's foreign ministry, said

he was unable to share details from internal discussions but that the ministry was in contact with “all the relevant agencies on an ongoing daily basis” and closely monitors the situation in Gaza.

Israeli restrictions on aid to Gaza have been one of the most contentious issues of the war. Israel cut off supplies to Gaza in March, shortly before breaking a cease-fire with Hamas, which remains entrenched in Gaza despite losing thousands of fighters and control over much of the territory during the war.

Israel said the aim of the blockade was to reduce the Palestinian armed group’s ability to access and profit from food and fuel meant for civilians. In the process, a senior Israeli defense official said, Hamas would be more likely to collapse or at least release more of the hostages that the group captured during its attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023 that ignited the war.

The blockade was discussed at an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday, called by Britain, France and other European nations. Tom Fletcher, the U.N.’s humanitarian chief, told the council that Israel was “deliberately and unashamedly” imposing inhumane conditions on civilians in Gaza and the West Bank.

“What more evidence do you need now?” Mr. Fletcher asked. “Will you act—decisively—to prevent genocide and to ensure respect for international humanitarian law? Or will you say instead that ‘we did all we could?’” All of the council’s 15 members except the United States, which has staunchly supported Israel throughout the war, called on Israel to immediately let aid into Gaza.

The Israeli government has repeatedly said that the blockade had caused “no shortage” of support for civilians, partly because so much aid had entered the territory during the truncated cease-fire.

But aid groups swiftly warned that civilians would be the main victims, adding that the restrictions were illegal under international law. Those warnings increased as civilians said they were eating as little as one meal a day as food prices spiraled. Palestinians interviewed by The New York Times said the cost of flour has risen 60-fold since late February, leading to a rise in looting.

“All I ate today was a little bit of fava beans from an expired can,” said Khalil el-Halabi, a 71-year-old retired U.N. official from Gaza City. He said on Monday that he was too dizzy and weak to walk, adding that his weight had dropped to roughly 130 pounds from about 210 pounds before the war.

Mr. el-Halabi said his daughter, who recently gave birth, was unable to breastfeed because she has not been eating enough. No baby formula is available, he said.

Specialist officers in COGAT, the Israeli government agency that oversees policy in Gaza and the West Bank, have reached the same conclusion as the aid agencies. The officers continuously assess the humanitarian situation in Gaza by speaking with Palestinians there, scrutinizing updates from aid organizations about their warehouse stockpiles, and analyzing the volume and contents of aid trucks that entered Gaza before the blockade.

The officers then privately briefed senior commanders on the worsening situation, warning with increasing urgency that many in the territory were just a few weeks away from starvation. An Israeli general briefed the cabinet on the humanitarian situation in Gaza last week, saying that supplies in the territory would run out within a few weeks, according to an Israeli defense official and a senior government official. The cabinet briefing was first reported by Israel’s Channel 13.

According to three of the defense officials, the military leadership has acknowledged the severity of the situation and is exploring ways to restart aid deliveries while circumventing Hamas.

Last week, the Trump administration said it was working with Israel on such a plan. Israeli officials and aid groups said it would involve private organizations distributing food from a handful of sites in Gaza, which would each serve several hundred thousand civilians. The Israeli military would be posted at the sites’ perimeters, while private security firms would patrol inside them.

The plan was dismissed by aid agencies, including the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which said it would not join the initiative because it would place civilians at greater risk. The agency said the proposal would force vulnerable people to walk longer distances to get to the few distribution hubs, making it harder to get food to those who need it most. Under the current system, the U.N. said, there are 400 distribution points. The new one, it said, “drastically reduces this operational reach.”

The U.N. also warned that the plan would force civilians to regularly pass through Israeli military lines, putting them at greater risk of detention and interrogation. It added that the plan would accelerate the displacement of civilians from northern Gaza, since the distribution centers were expected to be located far away in the south of the territory.

Israeli officials confirmed that the plan, if enacted, would help the military to intercept Hamas militants and help to move civilians from northern to southern Gaza. But they said the aim was not to increase civilian hardship but to separate civilians from fighters.

Experts on the laws of international conflict say it is illegal for a country to limit aid deliveries if it knows that doing so will cause starvation.

“Enforcing a military blockade with the knowledge that it will starve the civilian population is a violation of international law,” said Janina Dill, co-director of the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict at the University of Oxford.

Ms. Dill said that even if there is some debate over Israel’s obligations toward Gazans, “when Israeli decision makers state that the purpose is to extract political and military concessions, it clearly constitutes a war crime.”

#### STOP TRUMP’S CHAOS—STAND UP FOR SCIENCE

(Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. STEVENS of Michigan was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise with my Democratic colleagues, frankly, to call out the dangerous and draconian antiscience agendas of this current administration. Since day one, this administration has unleashed chaos on our national scientific enterprise, undermining our Nation’s competitiveness, our health safety, and the dignity of research and how it is conducted. It is coming at a time that will, frankly, move our country in the wrong direction, and it will cost us.

In just over 100 days, we have seen the firing and rehiring of experts, the illegal impounding of congressionally authorized and appropriated research funding, and the future of our STEM

student pipeline jeopardized. Frankly, it has created a chilling effect across our scientific research enterprise.

For the science enthusiasts watching at home, allow me to clarify that, yes, we support our national scientific research enterprise, our National Science Foundation, and our National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In this country, we also have the National Institutes of Health. Some of us are old enough to remember when we passed a DARPA for health research, ARPA-H, Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health.

While much of my remarks will be dedicated toward our hard-nosed scientific research funding, I do want to make mention of what it means to have our health sciences under attack right now as well because doctors and researchers, particularly in the medical fields, are feeling extraordinary pain.

These aren’t just talking points. This isn’t just fear-mongering. This is the cessation of scientific research, health research, special projects dedicated toward combating cancer, pilot projects being suddenly halted. It is a blow to patients. It is a blow to medical researchers and physicians.

My colleagues tonight are going to join me in speaking about the antiscience agenda that is in full swing in the United States of America and what it means. Tonight, I am going to speak about Michigan. I am going to speak about the harm of this chaos and the antiscience agenda that it poses to the incredible State of Michigan.

The State of Michigan is known for its manufacturing prowess. Yes, we have great healthcare institutions as well, but we are known as the place that has put the world on wheels for our best-in-class workforce. We are, of course, also known for the beauty of our Great Lakes. We are known as a place that has the most number of first robotics teams in the Nation. Also, that we are a hotbed and a place that people and businesses come to to expand, to grow, and to tap into our engineering talent.

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Mr. Speaker, you can’t have a shop floor without research and development. You can’t have incredible manufacturing and incredible innovation without scientific research and development.

It is about problem-solving. I know this from my time in the Obama administration. I know this from my time working in a scientific research lab. That innovation takes place on the shop floor and in the heart of Michigan’s manufacturing capabilities.

We are so proud of public-private partnerships. We are so proud of how the government can provide seed funding through the National Science Foundation and support for our National Institute of Standards and Technology through the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program.