

# Gaza: Ceasefire now! Lift the siege!



*Injured child in hospital after an Israeli airstrike in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, 18 Oct. Omar Al-Dirawi APA images*

As of Wednesday, 3,478 Palestinians had been killed in the Gaza Strip from Israeli airstrikes and raids since 7 October. Over 12,000 are injured, and 70% of casualties are children, women, and elderly. Israel is bombarding Gaza to prepare for a ground invasion. In a collective punishment, Israel cut all supplies of water, fuel, electricity and food. A total siege. It issued impossible orders for all civilians to evacuate northern Gaza, causing massive overcrowding in the south while the border with Egypt remained closed.

At least 22 Gaza hospitals have now had Israeli threats to clear out or face air strikes. Last Saturday, the Israeli military told al-Awda hospital in the north it would be bombed. "They insisted that everyone and everything move," said nurse Asala al-Batsh. "All hospital personnel, all patients, including those in the ICU (intensive care), and bodies in the morgue." The staff refused to leave.

US and UK political leaders gave a green light to the horror in Gaza. Humanitarian aid does not stop indiscriminate bombing of civilians, collective punishment, evacuation orders and a ground invasion. These are war crimes. There are no excuses for those who endorse them, fund and supply the weapons for them, or stay silent.

**Ceasefire now! Lift the siege! No blank cheque for Israel!**