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afgazad@gmail.com

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JAMAL KANJ

23.05.2025

Minimal Aid, Maximum Harm: A Smokescreen to Shield

Israeli War Crimes



Image by Mohammed Ibrahim.

Israel's decision to allow only minimal food into Gaza is a small reprieve—not a solution. It does nothing to reverse the widespread malnutrition ravaging Gaza's children or the irreversible health collapse among its elderly. This is not charity. It is an attempt to normalize starvation as a weapon of war. Indeed, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has openly admitted that the limited aid is necessary to maintain an "international umbrella" protection from Israel's allies to continue its genocide.

Hours after announcing the aid relief, Israel launched new military operations, expanding its occupation and mass displacement of civilians yet again. This came on the heels of a three-

day massacre that left over 500 civilians dead. The limited aid is not a policy shift—it is calculated savagery intrinsic in the Zionist ideology: inflict maximum pain, then offer the bare minimum to deflect outrage. This is not aid. It is barbarity with a countdown — starvation management, not relief.

It is yet another Israeli manipulative political maneuver — one we’ve seen time and again: apply unbearable pressure, then selectively ease it for “practical and diplomatic reasons,” all while maintaining control over the basic conditions of survival. Allowing crumbs of aid is not an end to war crimes. This is merely a shift from killing people on empty stomachs to killing them on half full ones.

Let us be clear: it was Benjamin Netanyahu who broke the most recent ceasefire—just as he has repeatedly violated international norms throughout this war of annihilation. There is no reason to believe he will not reimpose the blockade once political pressure and scrutiny subside. This pattern of intermittent blockade has persisted for nearly 20 months. In the absence of a decisive international response, Netanyahu is likely to repeat this tactic—using food and medicine not as humanitarian necessities, but as tools of coercion and collective punishment.

By reducing a systematic policy of deprivation to a discussion about supply chains or distribution, Israel tries to rebrand a war crime as a bureaucratic glitch. This is not new. In 2012, documents revealed that Israeli authorities had calculated the minimum caloric intake necessary to keep Gazans alive without sparking international outrage — a policy that turned an entire population into subjects of a wicked experiment. A grotesque reminder of the Nazi experimentations on Jewish concentration camps during WWII.

Now, in coordination with the U.S., Israel proposes aid distribution centers in southern Gaza—areas under its military control. The pretext? Preventing chaos. The reality? Israel itself has orchestrated past aid breakdowns. Its presence doesn’t ensure order; it deepens the desperation bred by enforced starvation.

The U.S.-Israel negotiation over so-called “safe” distribution zones is merely a continuation of the ongoing cruelty. These zones are not intended to alleviate suffering but to exert control and inflict humiliation on a starving population. By forcing displaced Palestinians to cluster near Israeli-controlled aid points—closer to the Egyptian border—a sinister plan to depopulate urban centers in both northern and southern Gaza, paving the way for their eventual “voluntary” expulsion. These so-called “food safe zones” risk becoming human traps, designed to detain or even kill desperate residents in search of aid—much like Israel’s use of hospitals to arrest or murder the sick seeking medical care.

As of May 20, Israel allowed five aid trucks into Gaza—only 0.8 percent of what’s needed to feed 2.3 million people. However, none of the aid was distributed because of last minute logistical obstacles created by the Israeli army. This brings to mind the Biden–Blinken floating pier: a theatrical distraction from the Israeli blockade. As Trump emulates Biden, Netanyahu takes it even further—weaponizing spectacle to anesthetize the starving, deflate Trump and international pressure, all while doing nothing to end the siege.

In my last op-ed, I cautioned that the release of the Israeli soldier could be misinterpreted by Israel not as a gesture of goodwill but as an entitlement. Sadly, that warning has proven correct, as Israel has intensified the air and shelling of schools and civilian centers, murdering more than 600 civilians in the last five days. Typical of Netanyahu, he hardened his stance, treating the release of the Israeli soldier as weakness to be punished —murdering one Palestinian every 12 minutes.

The Israeli blockade is not a logistical issue; it is a form of narrative warfare. It blurs intent, dilutes responsibility, and numbs global outrage. If the problem is logistics, then the solution is better trucks and tighter coordination. But if the problem is policy — a conscious decision to starve a civilian population — then it is a glaring war crime. Israel’s siege is a political choice—not a matter of “coordination,” “security vetting,” or “distribution inefficiencies.” Such framing is not just misleading; it is an intentional deception.

Therefore, allowing a trickle of food into Gaza must not absolve Israel of responsibility for the nearly three-month-long starvation blockade. There can be no negotiations over how to manage starvation—it is a deliberate method of warfare. The only acceptable response is accountability and prosecution. Bureaucratic smokescreens serve one purpose: to shield a war crime in progress.

Jamal Kanj is the author of Children of Catastrophe: Journey from a Palestinian Refugee Camp to America, and other books. He writes frequently on Arab world issues for various national and international commentaries.

MAY 22, 2025