



World Court Orders Israel to Ease Grip on Gaza Aid

Description

WORLD : The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ordered Israel to relax its blockade on aid shipments into Gaza, saying Tel Aviv must stop interfering with deliveries as Palestinians face dire food and medicine shortages.

In a ruling issued on Thursday, the ICJ pointed to “the spread of famine and starvation” in the Gaza Strip, observing that the crisis was the result of Israel’s “extensive restrictions on the entry and distribution of humanitarian aid and commercial goods.”

The court ordered Tel Aviv to allow supplies into the territory “unhindered” and “in full cooperation with the United Nations,” prohibiting “any action” that would obstruct aid deliveries.

The ruling also stressed an “urgent need to increase the capacity and number of open land crossing points into Gaza and to maintain them open,” as there is “no substitute for land routes and entry points from Israel into Gaza to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of food, water, medical and humanitarian assistance.”

The latest ruling came at the request of South Africa, which filed a case with the ICJ last year arguing that Israel’s assault on Gaza had violated the Genocide Convention.

Though the court issued a preliminary ruling that ordered Tel Aviv to take all steps to prevent a genocide, Pretoria later asked the body to clarify and strengthen its decision in light of rapidly deteriorating conditions in Gaza.

Noting that at least 15 Palestinian children had already died of starvation in the first week of March, South Africa proposed an immediate end to all Israeli restrictions on aid. The ICJ accepted that the worsening crisis warranted a modified order, but did not adopt the stronger language used by Pretoria.

In addition to its tight blockade on humanitarian assistance, Israeli forces have been accused of deliberately targeting aid shipments – including an attack last month that killed more than 100

Palestinians lining up for supplies.

In another incident in February, a convoy of food trucks bearing UN insignia was forced to turn back after an Israeli naval vessel shelled one of the vehicles, scoring a direct hit which destroyed much of its cargo.

Israeli tanks and bulldozers have also devastated vast tracts of Palestinian farmland, reportedly destroying around one-fourth of Gaza's arable land between October and December 2023.

Greenhouses, olive groves and other agricultural facilities have also been repeatedly targeted throughout the conflict, with UN human rights chief Volker Turk suggesting Israel's actions may amount to war crimes.

by Will Porter

Category

1. Crime-Justice-Terrorism-Corruption
2. Disasters-Crisis-Depopulation-Genocide
3. Economy-Business-Fin/Invest
4. Main
5. Politics-Geopolitics-Gov.-Events

Date Created

03/29/2024