

***LIBREVILLE, October 15 (Infosplusgabon) - Nothing can justify the horrific attacks Israel suffered last weekend. Our hearts go out to people who lost family members or are worried sick about loved ones taken hostage. We reiterate our call for their immediate release and stand ready to conduct humanitarian visits. But those attacks cannot in turn justify the limitless destruction of Gaza. The parties must not neglect their legal obligations regarding the methods and means used to wage war.***

The instructions issued by the Israeli authorities for the population of Gaza City to immediately leave their homes, coupled with the complete siege explicitly denying them food, water, and electricity, are not compatible with international humanitarian law.

When military powers order people to leave their homes, all possible measures must be taken to ensure the population has access to basic necessities like food and water and that members of the same family are not separated.

Gaza is a closed area of limited size and resources. People have nowhere safe to go and many, including the disabled, elderly, and sick, will not be able to leave their homes. International humanitarian law protects all civilians, including those who remain. Today, it is impossible for Gazans to know which areas will next face attack.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is scaling up to provide life-saving relief. But our teams will require pauses in the fighting to work safely and effectively. With a military siege in place, humanitarian organisations including the ICRC will not be able to assist such a massive displacement of people in Gaza. The needs are staggering, and humanitarian organizations must be able to increase aid operations.

The ICRC office in Gaza City received the same instructions to leave, as did other international organisations. We are extremely concerned for our colleagues in Gaza and their families. We remain committed to doing everything we can to provide humanitarian protection and assistance to the people of Gaza.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a neutral, impartial and independent organization with an exclusively humanitarian mandate that stems from the Geneva Conventions of 1949. It helps people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence, doing everything it can to protect their lives and dignity and to relieve their suffering, often alongside its Red Cross and Red Crescent partners.

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