IDF: UN enabling Hamas through aid mismanagement in Gaza

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<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-863410>

The Israeli military claims that [United Nations agencies operating in Gaza](https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-863092) have enabled Hamas to hijack humanitarian aid and distort global perception, alleging that the aid system has become both operationally dysfunctional and politically compromised.

In a closed-door background briefing at the IDF Spokesperson’s Unit, a senior Israeli security official presenting the position of the defense establishment said the UN had ‘failed the test,’ allowing Hamas to shape the international narrative around humanitarian need in a way that advances the terror group’s strategic objectives.

‘There is a huge gap between reality and what we see reported,’ the official said, asserting that the famine narrative promoted by international media and humanitarian actors originated in a deliberate disinformation campaign launched by Hamas during hostage negotiations. ‘They’re succeeding. The UN legitimizes their claims.’ According to the military, much of the data cited by international bodies originates from the Gaza Health Ministry, which the Israeli side considers a Hamas-controlled institution.

At one point during the briefing, the official challenged the journalists in the room with a pointed question: Had any of them seen Palestinians in Gaza who appeared to be in the same physical condition as Israeli hostages Rom Braslavski or [Evyatar David](https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-863036" \t "_blank) (two emaciated hostages featured in a terrorist propaganda video)? A few reporters nodded and began scrolling through their phones to show examples. One held up a photo of an elderly Gazan man, visibly emaciated.

The official glanced at the image and responded curtly: ‘You’re showing me a man over 70, very thin, like you can find in many countries around the world. But did you notice his wife next to him?’ The room fell briefly silent. ‘She looks well-fed,’ he continued. The journalists exchanged glances and nodded, but none pursued the point further.

Figures shared by COGAT (Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories) indicated that over 91,000 trucks have entered Gaza since the war began on Oct. 7, delivering approximately 1.9 million tons of [humanitarian aid](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-863404). Of that total, only 27% came from UN agencies. The remainder was supplied by NGOs, donor states and private-sector providers. ‘Most of the aid didn’t come from the UN,’ the official said. ‘And most of the denied trucks are also not theirs.’

The official stressed that Israel is not limiting the volume of humanitarian aid entering Gaza but accused UN agencies of failing to collect and distribute it effectively. ‘There is no limit. The problem is not entry — it’s what happens inside.’ He pointed to the presence of over 550 aid trucks currently waiting on the Palestinian side of the crossings due to a breakdown in coordination and said that Gaza needs approximately 100 trucks of food per day to meet basic needs.

**United Nations agencies hire local staff affiliated with Hamas**

One of the army’s core grievances is the UN’s reliance on local staff. ‘The UN doesn’t have the capacity to distribute. They hire locals,’ he said, noting that many of those individuals are directly affiliated with Hamas or operate under coercion. ‘Why are they not bringing international teams? They’re allowed. The IDF is asking them to bring them.’ He emphasized that most NGOs present in the Strip had little or no operational experience in Gaza and lacked training in military coordination.

The military further accused Hamas of turning humanitarian relief into a revenue and smuggling channel. ‘Eighty percent of the aid is looted — by Hamas, by gangs affiliated with Hamas or by civilians under their control,’ the official said. ‘Hamas defined that 15 to 25% of all aid will be automatically intercepted.’ According to the briefing, civilians are taxed at distribution sites, trucks are redirected or seized, and goods are sold to finance the group’s operations.

The army highlighted the case of Razi Hamed, a Hamas official based in Egypt, who allegedly buys flour and other supplies, then reroutes them to Gaza under the guise of NGO donations. ‘He takes money and moves it to Gaza. He tells Hamas which trucks to steal,’ the official said. Egypt was described as the central point of smuggling, with the system relying on what the military called ‘trusted families.’

To counter this, Israel has launched a new multi-stage aid mechanism designed to bypass intermediaries and reduce Hamas control. The model includes SRS-secured distribution sites, direct food delivery to civilians and aerial drops coordinated with international partners including Jordan, the UAE, France, Germany, Belgium and Canada. ‘The goal is to prevent the diversion of aid and the empowerment of Hamas,’ the official explained. ‘We are trying to break the cycle.’

That cycle, according to COGAT, begins with trucks entering Gaza through crossings like Kerem Shalom, Zikim and Rafah, where aid is then taxed, stolen or sold by Hamas, which in turn uses the proceeds to pay salaries and finance its armed wing. ‘Since the opening of the crossings on May 18, Hamas has had financial difficulties,’ the official said. ‘That’s why they want to break the new mechanism and return to the old one.’

The official also cited recent examples of Hamas operatives disguising themselves as civilians or humanitarian workers. In one case, an individual presented himself to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) as a physiotherapist and was hired as a messenger without undergoing proper vetting. ‘He lied to MSF and got hired without checks. He was a terrorist,’ the official said. After the man was killed, MSF reportedly stated publicly that Israel had struck a civilian. However, according to the official, internal communications within the organization later acknowledged the error. ‘They asked not to tell international media they had hired a terrorist,’ he said.

He also described a deadly incident in which a Gazan man approached Israeli forces carrying what appeared to be a prayer rug. Soldiers assumed he was preparing to pray. Instead, he pulled a rocket-propelled grenade from the rug and fired, killing several Israeli soldiers during a hostage search. ‘They don’t wear uniforms,’ the official said. ‘They take advantage of our rules of engagement.’

Despite operational and diplomatic challenges, Israel is continuing to expand its aid channels. Three secure roads are currently operating for delivery, with four more planned, including the Salah al-Din and export roads. The IDF is also working to open the Erez crossing. ‘There is enough food in Khan Yunis and the central camps,’ the official said. ‘We want to reinforce the secure roads and keep the system functional.’

He reiterated that Israel’s goal is to isolate Hamas from the humanitarian effort and shift distribution directly to the civilian population. ‘This is not a failure of logistics. It’s a failure of will,’ he said. ‘We’re doing our best.’