



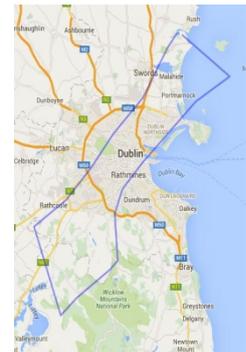
Gaza – Ireland must work to end the Blockade

The steady destruction of Gaza and the people who live there

The UN recently reported that Gaza would be unliveable by 2020 if the political status quo continued – stating:

“without action, the daily lives of Gazans in 2020 will be worse than they are now. There will be virtually no reliable access to sources of safe drinking water, standards of healthcare and education will have continued to decline, and the vision of affordable and reliable electricity for all will have become a distant memory for most.”

This report was published **before** Operation Protective Edge in July/August 2014, an Israeli offensive which killed 2,104 Palestinians including 495 children. 475,000 people were displaced and sheltering in UN schools and relatives' homes. 1,500 children were orphaned. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 10,224 Palestinians, including 3,106 children and 1,970 women and 368 elderly, were injured; with almost a third of those children having a permanent disability. The infrastructure of Gaza was destroyed – homes, schools, churches, mosques, agricultural land, sewage and water facilities. All of this in a population of just under 1.8 million (approximately the same as the Greater Dublin Area) and in an area smaller in size. Not a single person in this population has avoided the experience of multiple traumas.



Israel remains in control of the Gaza Strip

Despite the withdrawal of settlers from Gaza in 2005, the Israeli military remains in control of Gaza, controlling almost everything and everyone that goes in and out of the Gaza Strip. A 'buffer zone' has been created by Israel and is enforced using lethal means. The 'buffer zone' is entirely on Palestinian land and Palestinians are excluded from entering that zone – blocking access to farmland and fishing areas. The lack of building materials, medical supplies and food required to re-construct and maintain a basic standard of living in the Gaza Strip is a direct result of Israeli control. In legal terms, Israeli policy on the Gaza Strip constitutes collective punishment and involves major breaches of international law.

Ireland must act

Ireland has a responsibility arising from our commitments to international law to end the collective punishment of the Palestinian people of Gaza and as importantly, we have a moral obligation to ensure the plight of 1.8 million people is not abandoned to the destructive and lethal Israeli policies on the people of Gaza.

Ireland should vigorously campaign for an end to the blockade of Gaza.