

## Diseases and Epidemics Part of the Genocide in Gaza

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### ABSTRACT

With the start of the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, a severe blockade was imposed that affected all necessities of life and imports of all kinds, including food, medicine, fuel, medical supplies, cleaning materials, and sterile materials, which is an act of genocide. The supply of water to the Gaza Strip was almost completely stopped, which had a negative impact on the individual's health one of them is the spread of diseases and epidemics, which led to the death of thousands of Palestinians.

**Keywords:** Genocide, War in Gaza, Environmental epidemic, Human rights

### INTRODUCTION

International conventions affirmed the right in health is one of the most important human rights, but for Israeli occupation had a different opinion, and this was proven in the war of Gaza after 7 of October operation. In addition to human losses and indiscriminate bombing of civilian objects using internationally prohibited weapons, and one of the silent victims of this war was the environment of Gaza Strip whose air and water polluted, and environment changes resulting from the policy of collective punishment were contrary to the rules of international law, resulted in serious damage to the health of Palestinians, due to the relationship between the impact to environment on the spread of infectious diseases, and the most prominent of these diseases and epidemics resulted from the breakdown of health facilities and water and sanitation networks, and this is goes of acts of genocide because it increases the suffering of civilians leading them to death.

### DEFINITION OF GENOCIDE

International charters and agreements stipulate the human right to life without discrimination because of his religion, color, gender. Therefore, violating his right to life for certain reasons is considered the most dangerous type of international crime which is "Genocide". It is derived from the Greek word "genius" which means the group and word Caedere which means killing, so it is means killing the group [1,2]. It is a new name for an ancient phenomenon known to humanity, but it was not known internationally and was not punished except in the twentieth century, which witnessed the most severe types of violations against humanity, as it resulted losing of thousands of lives, as it was merely criminal behavior that falls under description of crime

against humanity, and then claims multiplied for the crime of genocide as an independent crime. Genocide indicates the sadism of this crime, and it does not constitute an attack on a single individual, but rather a group of people in a particular society as a whole, whether in time of war or in time of peace, this is what made it distinguishable from other crimes and constitutes a common crime between International human rights law and International Criminal law, punishing their perpetrators and prosecuting them at international and regional levels. The 1948 Convention on Combating and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by United Nations General Assembly, along with the system of the International Criminal Court, Was a crime in International Law because it conflicted with the spirit and objectives of the United Nations, the civilized world condemned it because it would cause many human losses, and this requires International cooperation, they formed the basic international rules in terms of definition and characteristics [3,4]. Article 2 of the Genocide Convention, and Article 6 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, define that the acts mentioned below, committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religion group are the following:

(a) Killing members of group

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- (b) Causing serious physical or mental harm to members of the group
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEFINITION OF GENOCIDE AND SPREAD OF EPIDEMICS IN GAZA**

The environment is the basis for the growth and spread of diseases because of the presence of factors that lead to the interaction between this environment and viruses, and the factors of the comprehensive blockade interacted with the environment in Gaza Strip, it made it an environment ready for the spread of gastrointestinal epidemics such as typhoid, hepatitis A and Cholera, which are diseases resulting from contaminated food and drink or contact with a person carrying the disease, according to the World Health Organization and the Spokperson for the United Nations Children's Fund which confirmed that thousands of Palestinians were infected with these diseases and death number of them, due to the factors were crimes, [5-8] which are:

- 1- There is no water in Gaza suitable for drinking of personal use, they drink polluted sea water or sewage water, which causes hepatitis and other viral diseases, although there are water desalination plants that in Gaza depends on, due to the comprehensive siege and the prevention of electricity to the city, it has been out of service, also preventing the entry of fuel has led to the cessation of all sewage treatment plants, which is what caused polluted water to reach the sea.
- 2- The Israeli army follows a policy of starvation against Palestinian civilians as a method of war that violates International Humanitarian law, and this by preventing the arrival of water and food, and obstructing entry of all humanitarian aid through land crossing, and continuous bombing and leveling of lands to the destruction of agricultural areas in Gaza. This is spread famine and malnutrition of the immune system and infection with infectious diseases.
- 3- Forcing civilians to forcibly displace them from their homes and areas and resorting to crowded shelter centers and tents that lack the minimum necessities of life, as the overcrowding of the displaced, the lack of health facilities, the lack of cleaning materials, and the spread of garbage that cannot be removed due to the dangerous conditions of war, all of these factors are

considered... A primary source of the spread of skin diseases and epidemics in the digestive system.

- 4- The continuous targeting of the medical sector, including hospitals and their staff, and obstructing the access of medical materials led to a collapse in the health system that led to an increase in the possibility of the spread of epidemics and diseases due to its inability to provide the necessary care for patients, whether by providing medicines and vaccines or the materials required for disinfection and sterilization.

**CONCLUSION**

The spread of epidemics and diseases was an indirect weapon that struck Palestinian civilians and caused them health and physical harm. This is part of the acts of genocide in the Gaza Strip, as they are among the forms that lead to destruction, and with the continuation of acts of genocide in various forms and without Israel's regard for the decisions of the International Court of Justice that it approved. Acts of genocide when it accepts the lawsuit and issues temporary measures that guarantee all forms of protection for civilians in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the countries that have relations with Israel to replace their silence by severing relations with Israel and preventing any commercial exchange with it, and for all countries to join the lawsuit before the International Court of Justice. As a means of pressure for a ceasefire in Gaza.

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