

## The 'Gaza Humanitarian Foundation'

### Background

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) is a private Israeli- and US-backed body established in February 2025, ostensibly to distribute aid in the Gaza Strip.<sup>1</sup> It is led by military contractors, not humanitarian professionals, operating with Israeli government oversight and without transparency, independence, or accountability.<sup>2</sup> Due to the Israeli blockade of food and aid the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates that one in five people in Gaza face starvation.<sup>3</sup> The stated motivation for replacing UN mechanisms with the GHF, to prevent aid diversion by armed groups in Gaza, has been rejected by humanitarian organisations - who state that diversion is negligible and that the majority of aid reaches Gaza's civilian population.<sup>4</sup>

Instead of restoring support to experienced, neutral aid agencies like UNRWA and the World Food Programme, the GHF puts control of humanitarian operations in the hands of armed actors. This breaks international standards and ignores calls from global aid organisations for a safe and comprehensive humanitarian response.<sup>5</sup> On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025, more than 170 NGOs called for the closure of the GHF due to Israeli forces and armed groups "routinely" opening fire on Palestinians seeking aid.<sup>6</sup> The GHF serves to aid and abet atrocities in its sites against civilians, while providing meagre amounts of actual aid.

### Administrative Controversies

On 26<sup>th</sup> May, GHF's Executive Director Jake Wood resigned, stating that the GHF could not adhere to "humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence".<sup>7</sup> On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025, Switzerland initiated proceedings to dissolve the Geneva branch of the organisation as it had not fulfilled legal requirements to operate in Switzerland, including having the correct number of board members, a postal address or a Swiss bank account.<sup>8</sup>

Boston Consulting Group (BCG) were assigned to work on a plan to model ethnic cleansing by "relocating" Palestinians from Gaza using the GHF's aid distribution facilities and instruments.<sup>9</sup> Despite these plans being labelled as 'voluntary' deportation, they have been widely condemned as representing the crime against humanity of forced displacement.<sup>10</sup>

### Logistical failings and inadequate aid provision

The UN had used 400 distribution points spread across Gaza to deliver aid.<sup>11</sup> However, under the GHF, there are now just four distribution sites located in Israeli militarised zones – three in the far south-west of Gaza and one in central Gaza.<sup>12</sup> Firstly, this implicitly encourages Israel's ethnic cleansing strategies by not providing aid in an evenly distributed manner.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, it concentrates people in an unsafe manner. Thirdly, it prevents vulnerable people, including the elderly and people with physical disabilities, from reaching the sites, which are located some distance area from populations in Gaza.<sup>14</sup>

As well as logistical failings, the quality and quantity of aid is insufficient. Reports indicate that GHF boxes appear to be limited to canned food, pasta, rice, cooking oil, biscuits and lentils.<sup>15</sup> The supplies being given to families should be accompanied by medical support, hygiene and water purification kits. Water is scarce and electricity is almost non-

<sup>1</sup> Al Jazeera (20<sup>th</sup> May 2025) [What is the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, and why has it been criticised?](#)

<sup>2</sup> Friends Committee on National Legislation (June 5<sup>th</sup> 2025) [Gaza Humanitarian Foundation \(GHF\) and the Weaponization of Aid](#)

<sup>3</sup> UN News (12<sup>th</sup> May 2025) [Gaza: Starvation looms for one in five people, say food security experts.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Al Jazeera (20<sup>th</sup> May 2025) [What is the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, and why has it been criticised?](#)

<sup>5</sup> Friends Committee on National Legislation (5<sup>th</sup> June 2025) [Gaza Humanitarian Foundation \(GHF\) and the Weaponization of Aid](#)

<sup>6</sup> BBC (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) [US-Israeli backed Gaza aid group must be shut down, say 170 charities](#) ;Al Jazeera (5<sup>th</sup> July 2025) 'Going hungry': More than 700 Palestinians killed seeking aid in Gaza

<sup>7</sup> The Guardian (26<sup>th</sup> May 2025) [Head of US-backed Gaza aid group resigns, saying he will not abandon 'principles'](#)

<sup>8</sup> Reuters (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025) [Swiss authorities launch proceedings to shut branch of U.S.-backed Gaza aid group](#)

<sup>9</sup> Financial Times (4<sup>th</sup> July 2025) [BCG modelled plan to 'relocate' Palestinians from Gaza](#)

<sup>10</sup> The Guardian (7<sup>th</sup> July 2025) [Israeli plan for forced transfer of Gaza's population 'a blueprint for crimes against humanity'](#)

<sup>11</sup> BBC (31<sup>st</sup> May 2025) [How controversial US-Israeli backed Gaza aid plan turned to chaos.](#)

<sup>12</sup> BBC (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) [US-Israeli backed Gaza aid group must be shut down, say 170 charities](#)

<sup>13</sup> Al Jazeera (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) [Charities urge shutdown of US- and Israel-backed Gaza aid group](#)

<sup>14</sup> BBC (31<sup>st</sup> May 2025) [How controversial US-Israeli backed Gaza aid plan turned to chaos.](#)

<sup>15</sup> BBC (31<sup>st</sup> May 2025) [How controversial US-Israeli backed Gaza aid plan turned to chaos.](#)

existent in Gaza, which has long been exacerbated by policies of water apartheid even before the current genocide.<sup>16</sup> GHF's inadequate aid provision makes it nearly impossible for people to use the limited supplies they manage to obtain.<sup>17</sup> It is even more outrageous that so many are returning without boxes for their families.

### **Atrocities committed at GHF sites**

Hardin Lang, Policy Vice President at Refugees International, stated that "the GHF is designed to further a military objective as opposed to a humanitarian one".<sup>18</sup> The use of only four distribution sites concentrates the civilian population into zones where they are then shot. Two anonymous U.S. contractors, speaking to AP News revealed that security staff hired were often unqualified, unvetted, heavily armed and seemed to have an open license to do whatever they wished. Bullets, stun grenades and pepper spray were used at nearly every site. The testimonies from the contractors included videos, one of which shows at least 15 shots fired, followed by a voice saying "I think you hit one," followed by the exclamation "Hell, yeah, boy!". The contractor who filmed saw other contractors shooting in the direction of Palestinians who had just collected their aid.<sup>19</sup>

Since the GHF began operations on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 743 Palestinians have been killed and 4,891 injured while seeking assistance at aid distribution sites (for a full list of reported incidents and casualty figures see Appendix A).<sup>20</sup> Out of 77 distributions at GHF sites between 5<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July, 23 included fatal shootings, many with dozens killed. At Site SDS4 in central Gaza, as many as half of all distributions were followed by fatal shootings.<sup>21</sup> Yousef al-Ajouri describing how he feared for his life amid Israeli snipers, saw multiple dead bodies, and had to push and shove other starved Palestinians to try to obtain food parcels.<sup>22</sup> The UN has labelled this food distribution system as "a death trap" due to the GHF.<sup>23</sup> By allowing the GHF to continue to operate in such an unprecedented manner we are allowing the meaning of humanitarian aid to completely shift to something inhumane and unjust.

### **Recommendations**

The UK and other stakeholders should call on all parties to demand the dismantling of the GHF, instead supporting the restoration of a unified, UN-led coordination mechanism. The Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) should continue to ensure that it does not co-operate with the mechanisms of the GHF, and advocates at the highest levels, including at the UN Security Council and bilaterally with Israel and the US, for the restoration of UN aid delivery throughout Gaza – including as part of any formal ceasefire.

Full cooperation with United Nations aid mechanisms is required not only to ensure the rights of Palestinians in Gaza to safely access aid and receive protection, but also to comply with international humanitarian law. In the Genocide Convention case *South Africa v Israel*, the International Court of Justice issued provisional measures that Israel must "*Take all necessary and effective measures to ensure, without delay, in full co-operation with the United Nations, the unhindered provision at scale by all concerned of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance*".<sup>24</sup>

For the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence to be upheld, the UK should condemn the GHF and take action against it for its perpetration of atrocities against Palestinian civilian aid seekers in Gaza. While the FCDO has made its opposition to the GHF clear, it must take active measures to push for the GHF's dissolution. The GHF is a humanitarian catastrophe that cannot be ignored, the weaponisation of relief in Gaza must end.

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<sup>16</sup> ICJP. (11<sup>th</sup> December 2023) [Sovereignty over Natural Resources – Water. Briefing 109A.](#)

<sup>17</sup> Al Jazeera (29<sup>th</sup> May 2025) [Visual guide to how the Gaza aid distribution turmoil unfolded](#)

<sup>18</sup> Al Jazeera (4<sup>th</sup> June 2025) [GHF suspends aid: Timeline of a 'death trap' in Gaza](#)

<sup>19</sup> AP News (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025) [Takeaways from AP's report into claims of excessive force by American contractors at Gaza aid sites](#)

<sup>20</sup> Al Jazeera (5<sup>th</sup> July 2025) ['Going hungry': More than 700 Palestinians killed seeking aid in Gaza](#)

<sup>21</sup> Sky News (3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025) [Deaths in Gaza rise significantly when a controversial group distributes aid, Sky News analysis reveals](#)

<sup>22</sup> Middle East Eye (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) [More than 170 NGOs call for US and Israel-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's closure](#)

<sup>23</sup> BBC (24<sup>th</sup> June 2025) [UN condemns Gaza aid 'death trap' as dozens reported killed by Israeli fire](#)

<sup>24</sup> International Court of Justice (24<sup>th</sup> May 2024), 24 MAY 2024

[Order: Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip \(South Africa V. Israel\)](#) [p.4]

## APPENDIX A: Atrocities Committed at GHF sites

Date	Fatalities	Injuries	Notes
28 <sup>th</sup> May	1	48	UN official states the shooting was from Israeli forces
1 <sup>st</sup> June	31	200+	Israeli tanks open fire at aid centre near Rafah
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	27	37	Israeli tanks, quadcopter drones and helicopters opened fire on civilians near an aid site
7 <sup>th</sup> June	6	several	Israeli gunfire near an aid centre
8 <sup>th</sup> June	4	-	Israeli gunfire enroute to an aid distribution centre
9 <sup>th</sup> June	6	99	Near aid distribution centres
11 <sup>th</sup> June	57	200+	Rafah aid centre
12 <sup>th</sup> June	21	~300	Multiple aid sites
14 <sup>th</sup> June	15	-	Israeli gunfire near aid centre in central Gaza
15 <sup>th</sup> June	26	117	At aid distribution sites
16 <sup>th</sup> June	30+	-	Near aid distribution sites
17 <sup>th</sup> June	51	-	Israeli forces open fire near an aid distribution site in southern Gaza
18 <sup>th</sup> June	11	-	Palestinians seeking aid killed by Israeli gunfire and shelling
19 <sup>th</sup> June	12	60	Israeli forces kill Palestinians waiting for aid in central Gaza
20 <sup>th</sup> June	23	100+	Israeli tanks and drones open fire on crowds gathered near an aid distribution site
21 <sup>st</sup> June	8	-	Injuries caused by drones and tank rounds
24 <sup>th</sup> June	46	150	Two incidents in central and southern Gaza
25 <sup>th</sup> June	6	-	Israeli forces open fire at crowds waiting near GHF food distribution centre
26 <sup>th</sup> June	3	several	Israeli fire while waiting for aid
27 <sup>th</sup> June	10	-	Killed by Israeli fire while waiting for aid at separate sites
30 <sup>th</sup> June	23	-	Israeli kill civilians waiting for aid; drones firing indiscriminately
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	6	-	Israeli fire near two aid sites
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	38	several	Israeli fire across three aid distribution sites