

“Gaza is on the Brink of Collapse”: Humanitarian Crisis, Imminent Explosion to Rock Gaza

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The figures and the statistics regarding the humanitarian situation in Gaza have never been shocking as is the case in these days; as they unveiled the miserable lives of about two million citizens which may lead to what Palestinian observers called an “explosion”.

Abdul-Sattar Qassem, a Palestinian writer and a Professor of Political Science at Birzeit University in Ramallah, told Anadolu news agency: “The humanitarian situation in Gaza has reached an unprecedented level of deterioration, alarming numbers issued by international institutions warn of the rising unemployment rates and poverty in conjunction with the lack of any political solution in sight and the delayed reconstruction process of Gaza. We are talking about a ticking bomb of anger and despair that might explode at any moment.”

Qassem also warned: “People in Gaza feel like they have nothing to lose which may prompt them to explode and revolt against the Egyptian siege, Israel, and the different factions that rule them.”

In his visit to the blockaded enclave on Monday, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier described the situation in Gaza as a “powder keg” and said in a press conference held in Gaza seaport: “The conditions in Gaza are catastrophic and must not continue, Gaza is a powder keg that must not ignite.” Steinmeier said that he is working with Palestinian and Israeli officials on amending the tragic situation in Gaza as well as assuring the prevention of a new coming war with Israel.

UN warning

For his part, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, warned of the repercussions of the continued dire humanitarian situation in besieged Gaza and said in a statement on Wednesday in New York on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of “The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA)”: “Gaza is a powder keg, mounting frustration and anger will surely light the fuse. Action is needed now.”

The World Bank issued on May 22 a statement saying that the unemployment rate in Gaza reached 43% which is the highest rate in the world, while it rose among youths to more than 60% by the end of 2014 which is a cause for concern.

Steen Lau Jorgensen, the World Bank Country Director for West Bank and Gaza, pointed out that poverty, unemployment rates, and the economic expectations in Gaza are very worrying, and highlighted that the continued siege and the Israeli war on Gaza in 2014

caused disastrous effects on the economy and on people's lives.

Catastrophic situation

"Gaza is on the brink of collapse," Maher al-Tabba a Palestinian economist said, adding: "life in Gaza is worse than people can imagine, it has been turned into the biggest prison in the world," and clarified: "Gaza is in a state of clinical death; no reconstruction, no crossings, no water, no electricity, no work, no medicine, no development, there is no life at all." He called for necessarily pressuring Israel into lifting the unjust siege.

Israel has been imposing land and sea blockade on Gaza since the democratic elections that brought Hamas to power in January 2006.

The Israeli war on the Strip in summer 2014 led to a decline in the gross domestic product (GDP) by about \$460 million, and construction, agriculture, industry, and electricity sectors were affected the most, according to the World Bank statistics.

World Bank data show that the Gazans are suffering from the poor essential public services and that 80% of them receive a form of social welfare assistance and 40% are still living below the poverty line.

Muin Rajab, a professor of Economics al-Azhar University in Gaza, said that the reports and the economic indicators issued by local and international institutions warn of the gravity of the situation in besieged Gaza and called for alleviating the humanitarian situation to avoid any more deterioration.

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