

Israel Takes Away 44% of Gaza Land ... Herds Gazans Into Remaining Area

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Global Research, July 29, 2014

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Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

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Already Crowded Gazans Are Now Being Jammed Into a Much Smaller Area

Daily Beast [reports](#) (hat tip Wall Street Journal reporter [Tom Gara](#)):

This narrow strip of land that used to be called “the Gaza Strip,” **already one of the more densely populated places on earth**, is growing dramatically smaller. The Israeli military, relentlessly and methodically, is driving people out of the three-kilometer (1.8 mile) buffer zone it says it needs to protect against Hamas rockets and tunnels. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the buffer zone eats up about **44 percent of Gaza’s territory**.

What that means on the ground is scenes of extraordinary devastation in places like the Al Shajaya district approaching Gaza’s eastern frontier, and Beit Hanoun in the north. **These were crowded neighborhoods less than three weeks ago. Now they have been literally depopulated**, the residents joining more than 160,000 internally displaced people in refuges and makeshift shelters. Apartment blocks are fields of rubble, and as I move through this hostile landscape the phrase that keeps ringing in my head is “scorched earth.”

It’s not like Israel didn’t plan this. It told tens of thousands of Palestinians to flee so its air force, artillery and tanks could create this uninhabitable no-man’s land of half standing, burned-out buildings, broken concrete and twisted metal. During a brief humanitarian ceasefire some Gazans were able to come back to get their first glimpse of the destruction this war has brought to their communities, and to sift through their demolished homes to gather clothes or other scattered bits of their past lives. But many were not even able to do that.

This map shows the area Israel is seizing, courtesy of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs:



Postscript: In related news, Lisa Goldman [tweets](#):

IDF is calling now for evacuation of Jabalyah Camp in Gaza. **That means 110K people.** Per [@galberger](#) <https://twitter.com/galberger/status/493818637460180992>

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