# Risk to Aid Workers Increases Amid Israel-Hamas Conflict in Gaza



**Aid Workers at Risk Amid Israel-Hamas Conflict in Gaza**

Gaza has been declared the world's most dangerous place for aid workers, according to a United Nations report released on June 17, 2024. Since the conflict started on October 7, 2023, at least 250 humanitarian workers have lost their lives, with nearly 200 of them being employees of UNRWA, the U.N.'s main agency for Palestinian refugees. The conflict has severely hampered humanitarian efforts as hundreds of thousands face famine conditions.

The primary cause of these casualties has been Israeli bombardments and airstrikes, which have ravaged Gaza during the eight-month war, resulting in the deaths of over 37,000 Gazans. This conflict was triggered by a Hamas-led assault in southern Israel that killed approximately 1,200 people and resulted in the abduction of 240 individuals, as per Israeli officials.

The International Crisis Group states that the Aid Worker Security Database logged 234 deaths from 308 incidents targeting aid workers in Gaza, marking the highest number since 1997. The high rate of fatalities has been attributed to inadequate systems ensuring the safe movement of aid workers.

Dr. Tanya Haj-Hassan, who volunteered in Gaza, criticized the "deconfliction" process, claiming it is ineffective, with aid workers being hit despite no military targets nearby. In April, seven World Central Kitchen workers were killed in an Israeli airstrike, despite coordination efforts with the Israeli military.

Israel's ongoing military operations have also faced scrutiny over adherence to international law. In Rafah, the southernmost city of Gaza, the Israeli military claimed to have killed 500 Hamas militants and discovered significant smuggling tunnels. However, civilian casualties, including nine people killed in an Israeli strike in eastern Rafah on June 17, have raised concerns.

Protests erupted in Jerusalem, demanding an end to the conflict and criticizing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's handling of the war. Amid international pressure, including potential sanctions from the U.S., Israel announced measures to increase the flow of humanitarian aid.

The situation continues to evolve with both humanitarian and military dimensions heavily impacting the region.