# Israel Defies ICJ Order, Intensifies Rafah Assault Despite Criticism



**Israel Continues Rafah Assault Amid Criticism and ICC Orders**

**Jerusalem, May 25, 2024:** Despite an order from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to halt its offensive on Rafah, Israel has intensified its military operations in the southern Gaza Strip. This assault aims to prevent future arms smuggling by securing Rafah and its border with Egypt.

The ICJ ruling came amid Israel’s strategic push to dismantle Hamas infrastructure in Rafah, which reportedly includes major tunnels and rocket launchers. The court has condemned the actions for endangering civilians, although it stopped short of calling for a total ceasefire.

Efforts to evacuate civilians from targeted zones have led almost one million people to move towards the sea, where conditions are dire. The closing of the Rafah border crossing has further complicated the delivery of necessary humanitarian aid.

The operation involves five Israeli brigades, totaling approximately 10,000 troops. For Israel, securing the entire border, dismantling the remaining Hamas battalions, and ensuring the return of hostages are critical objectives.

In response, Hamas fighters are reportedly blending with civilians, complicating the military operation. International criticism, particularly from the United States and other allies, has pressured Israel to moderate its tactics.

Adding to the complexity, the ICC has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, accusing them of war crimes. This development has drawn strong reactions from Israeli and US leaders who insist their actions do not constitute genocide.

Efforts for a ceasefire continue in diplomatic circles. CIA Chief Bill Burns met Israeli representatives in Paris, and French President Emmanuel Macron discussed conflict resolution with regional leaders. The Rafah crossing remains a focal point in these negotiations, as pressure mounts on Israel to ensure the flow of humanitarian aid.

As the conflict persists, the international community watches closely, stressed by the urgency of humanitarian concerns and the unresolved political future of Gaza.