News



A Palestinian woman walks along a street surrounded by buildings destroyed during Israeli air and ground operations in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood, in Gaza City, Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025. (AP/Abdel Kareem Hana)



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Israel on Tuesday said it had suspended more than two dozen humanitarian organizations, including Doctors Without Borders and CARE, from operating in the Gaza Strip for failing to comply with new registration rules.

Israel says the rules are aimed at preventing Hamas and other militant groups from infiltrating the aid organizations. But the organizations say the rules are arbitrary and warned that the new ban would harm a civilian population desperately in need of humanitarian aid.

Israel has claimed throughout the war that Hamas was siphoning off aid supplies, a charge the U.N. and aid groups have denied. The new rules, announced by Israel early this year, require aid organizations to register the names of their workers and provide details about funding and operations in order to continue working in Gaza.

The new regulations included ideological requirements — including disqualifying organizations that have called for boycotts against Israel, denied the Oct. 7 attack or expressed support for any of the international court cases against Israeli soldiers or leaders.

Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs said more than 30 groups — about 15% of the organizations operating in Gaza — had failed to comply and that their operations would be suspended. It also said that Doctors Without Borders, one of the biggest and best-known groups in Gaza, had failed to respond to Israeli claims that some of its workers were affiliated with Hamas or Islamic Jihad.

"The message is clear: humanitarian assistance is welcome — the exploitation of humanitarian frameworks for terrorism is not," Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli said.

Doctors Without Borders, also known by its French acronym MSF, said Israel's decision would have a catastrophic impact on their work in Gaza, where they support around 20% of the hospital beds and a third of births. The organization also denied Israel's accusations about their staff.

"MSF would never knowingly employ people engaging in military activity," it said.

'Exhausted local staff'

While Israel claimed the decision would have limited impact on the ground, the affected organizations said the timing — less than three months into a fragile ceasefire — was devastating.

"Despite the ceasefire, the needs in Gaza are enormous and yet we and dozens of other organizations are and will continue to be blocked from bringing in essential life-saving assistance," said Shaina Low, communications adviser for the Norwegian Refugee Council, which has also been suspended.

"Not being able to send staff into Gaza means all of the workload falls on our exhausted local staff," Low said.

Some aid groups say they didn't submit the list of Palestinian staff, as Israel demanded, for fear they'd be targeted by Israel, and because of data protection laws in Europe.

"It comes from a legal and safety perspective. In Gaza, we saw hundreds of aid workers get killed," Low explained.

The decision not to renew aid groups' licenses means offices in Israel and East Jerusalem will close, and organizations won't be able to send international staff or aid into Gaza.

Israel says militants exploiting aid groups

According to the ministry, the decision means the aid groups will have their license revoked on Jan. 1, and if they are located in Israel, they will need to leave by March

1. They can appeal the decision.

The Israeli defense body that oversees humanitarian aid to Gaza, COGAT, said that the organizations on the list contribute less than 1% of the total aid going into the Gaza Strip, and that aid will continue to enter from more than 20 organizations that did receive permits to continue operating.

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"The registration process is intended to prevent the exploitation of aid by Hamas, which in the past operated under the cover of certain international aid organizations, knowingly or unknowingly," COGAT said in a statement.

This isn't the first time Israel has tried to crack down on international humanitarian organizations. Throughout the war, Israel accused the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, or UNRWA, of being infiltrated by Hamas, using its facilities and taking aid. The United Nations has denied it. UNRWA, the top U.N. agency working with Palestinians, has denied knowingly aiding armed groups and says it acts quickly to purge any suspected militants.

After months of criticism from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his far-right allies, Israel banned UNRWA from operating on its territory in January. The U.S., formerly the largest donor to UNRWA, halted funding to the agency in early 2024.

NGOs say Israel vague over data use

Israel failed to confirm that the data collected from the new regulations wouldn't be used for military or intelligence purposes, raising serious security concerns, said Athena Rayburn, the executive director of AIDA, an umbrella organization representing over 100 organizations that operate in the Palestinian territories. She noted that more than 500 aid workers have been killed in Gaza during the war.

"Agreeing for a party to the conflict to vet our staff, especially under the conditions of occupation, is a violation of humanitarian principles, specifically neutrality and independence," she said.

Rayburn said organizations expressed their concerns and offered alternatives to submitting staff lists, such as third-party vetting, but that Israel refused to engage in

any dialogue.

Palestinian girl killed in Gaza

A 10-year-old girl was killed and another person was wounded by Israeli fire in Gaza City near the Yellow Line that delineates areas under Israeli control, the territory's Shifa Hospital said Tuesday.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the incident but have said troops operating near the Yellow Line will target anyone who approaches or threatens soldiers.

The Gaza Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-run government, said on Monday that 71,266 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, not including the girl. The ministry does not differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count. The United Nations and independent experts consider the Health Ministry the most reliable source on war casualties. Israel disputes its figures but has not provided its own.