

August 13, 2025

## Press Release

### Halt the Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) joins organizations and nations around the world in calling for an immediate ceasefire of hostilities and the urgent restoration of humanitarian aid access to civilians in Gaza. International humanitarian law, including Article 54 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, explicitly prohibits the deliberate denial of food to civilians--a practice defined as a war crime under Article 8(2)(b)(xxv) of the [Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court](#).

In April of 2024, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) reported that more than 1.1 million people in Gaza were experiencing catastrophic levels of food insecurity-- the [highest ever recorded](#) in a modern conflict. Conditions have worsened sharply. In March of 2025, restrictions on humanitarian aid intensified, resulting in the longest and most severe blockade of humanitarian assistance since the conflict began.

On May 12th 2025, World Health Organization Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated: [“We do not need to wait for a declaration of famine in Gaza to know that people are already starving, sick and dying, while food and medicines are minutes away across the border.”](#) [By July 29th 2025, the IPC confirmed that famine levels had been reached in most of Gaza.](#) Civilians, medical personnel and emergency workers alike are suffering severe hunger, with many unable to provide essential care due to illness and exhaustion.

CUGH urges the following actions:

- **The US should join other nations and support the submission of an urgent request to the UN Security Council to authorize the deployment of a UN Protection Force** as was recently proposed by the Arab League to ensure the rapid and safe distribution of food, water, shelter, medical supplies and care; establish protected safe zones for civilians, civil society, and humanitarian workers; and maintain civil order in accordance with international law.
- **All parties to the conflict must act immediately to remedy this situation.** US support for immediate action is also needed.
- **The global community**, including governments, multilateral agencies, and civil society respond decisively to meet the humanitarian needs of the civilian population in Gaza.
- **End the blockade of Gaza** by allowing unimpeded, sustained access for humanitarian aid and medical services.
- **Uphold humanitarian principles** by ensuring all parties adhere to humanity, impartiality, independence, and neutrality.
- **Establish a permanent ceasefire** to protect civilians, secure the release of hostages, and create conditions for recovery and rebuilding.

[Children under the age of 18 constitute nearly half of Gaza’s population.](#) Starvation inflicts irreversible physical and cognitive harm on children, with lifelong consequences. Without immediate, coordinated action, preventable deaths will continue, and an entire generation will face disability and trauma.

This is a wholly preventable humanitarian catastrophe. The time to act is now. The global community must work together to protect civilian life, uphold humanitarian law, and restore the conditions necessary for health and dignity.

For additional information contact Dr. Keith Martin, Executive Director,  
CUGH [executivedirector@cugh.org](mailto:executivedirector@cugh.org) tel: 202 974 6363