

Islamic Relief statement on the situation in Gaza



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Islamic Relief Worldwide is appalled at the fatalities in Gaza over the past 24 hours, and the escalation of violence which has injured more than 700 people across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Israeli airstrikes on Gaza last night reportedly killed 24 people, including at least nine children, and injured more than one hundred. Rockets launched from Gaza also struck southern Israel, reportedly killing two and injuring 10 people. Islamic Relief condemns all violence against civilians and calls for respect for international humanitarian law.

“What is happening in Gaza right now is horrific and we demand an immediate end to the violence. It is appalling that so many children have been killed. “But we must remember that the people of Gaza are suffering every day from the ongoing Israeli blockade. The blockade cuts Gaza off from the West Bank, Jerusalem and the wider world. It prevents people and essential goods moving in and out of Gaza. It stops families from seeing each other, stops people from getting medical treatment and prevents access to markets. It has destroyed livelihoods and turned Gaza’s once vibrant and thriving economy into an area where 80 per cent of people now have to rely on aid. Nearly half of adults, and 70 per cent of young people, are unemployed. “The blockade has crippled basic services, with the health system under-resourced, overburdened and on the verge of collapse. Many families cannot afford to feed their children and are going hungry every night. “A generation of young people are psychologically scarred from bombings and the blockade. Children cannot sleep because of nightmares. Youth feel like they have no hope for the future. “The international community has been silent and accepting of this suffering for far too long. We urge world leaders to step up efforts to

prevent any further escalation of violence, and also to demand an end to the blockade and the occupation.”

Islamic Relief has worked in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since 1997. Our humanitarian programmes in Gaza provide food and nutrition, essential medical care, access to education and skills training for unemployed youth. Last year we provided support to more than 400,000 people in Gaza.

Spokespeople are available from Islamic Relief in Gaza.

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