



GAZA: IF THIS IS NOT GENOCIDE...

The situation for civilians in Gaza is worsening by the day. The level of conflict with Israel is rising, and international institutions seem unable to act decisively to bring a resolution to the conflict.

TEXT BY / GAVINO MACIOCCO / DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE

Frantz Fanon (1925–1961) was a doctor, psychiatrist, and author of a seminal book on colonialism *The Wretched of the Earth*. His words about the relationship between colonizers and colonized people describe the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians exactly. “At times this Manicheism goes to its logical conclusion and dehumanizes the native, or to speak plainly, it turns him into an animal. In fact, the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms.” This is exactly like what Yoav Gallant, Israeli Minister of Defense, said in the aftermath of October 7, “We are putting a complete siege on Gaza.

No electricity, no food, no water, no gas – it’s all closed.” He added, “We are fighting human animals and acting accordingly.” These words spoken by a member of the Israeli government were part of what led the International Court of Justice to accept in part the demand for “urgent measures” made by South Africa, which accused the Israeli state of violating the Convention against Genocide in its war against Hamas. The judges in The Hague recognized that there is a case to be assessed – rejecting Israel’s request for dismissal – and that the situation in Gaza requires rapid intervention to protect civilians. But they did not go so far as to impose an immediate ceasefire, which was South Africa’s first demand.

Almost a month has passed since January 26, when the Hague Court decided not to close the case against Israel, whose government was asked to prevent genocidal acts and to take immediate measures to allow the provision of basic services and humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip. The January 26 sentence did not change the course of the war: the slaughter of civilians has continued along with attacks on the few still functioning health facilities. The people’s living conditions have worsened dramatically due to the absolute lack of essential resources and malnutrition among children is increasingly widespread.

While I am writing these words, I read on the BBC “The World Food Programme has paused “life-saving” food deliveries to northern Gaza,” leaving the 300,000 people left in the northern part of the Gaza Strip without food. What should we call this?

Dissenters from the Ethics, the Values, the Ideologies, and the Faiths. It is the capital letters that should make us suspicious. We need a dissenter’s manual that reminds us that good is not being right in “everything” and that the “just battle” (and there are and have been just and sacrosanct battles) remains just only to the extent that it remains human.

Radical dissidence is calling us. There is no choice but that of truth and the doubts that come with it. We need an ethics of dissent.

We doctors have a lofty task: to remind everyone that before history there are the houses of everyone (“...all the houses I will enter, I will enter for the benefit of the sick...”).

Because the justifications of history are often just tanks that crush all life they encounter.